Pennypack Elementary Project is a Daily Reminder of Intentions


These are just a few of the words that Pennypack Elementary School students chose as their word of intention.

One word can change a day, a life, the world. That was the purpose behind Heather Brzezinski’s fourth grade writing project “What’s Your Word? – The My Intent Project.” It was inspired of Chris Pan’s My Intent Project, a project he sees as a catalyst for what the world needs more of: meaningful conversations, community support, and lives full of purpose and passion.

The first step to Brzezinski’s two-week project was to understand what an intention was and how that is different from a goal.

“As a class we came to understand that intentions are in the present moment – they refocus us, bring us back and remind us to reflect on what matters,” said Brzezinski. “Intentions are lived each day as we focus on our passion, our purpose. Intentions are about our relationship with ourselves and others.”

Once students began understanding what an intention was, they were challenged to select their own words.

“The class truly took the word selection process seriously and the self-realization that many students experienced was beyond anything I can put into words,” said Brzezinski.

Several students asked to change their words once their understanding of what an intention was grew and gave a lot of thought to the process.

Words of intention included belong, always here, family, fierce, fearless, life, dream, resilient, power, love, strength and be hopeful.

After students’ words of intention were selected, they began a personal writing project to explain why they chose their words. Some students reflected on personal experiences that caused them to select their words while others talked about how they needed something more in their life or a daily reminder to help them focus on what matters.

Brzezinski asked students to dig deep and consider how they would put this intention out into the world every day.

“The thinking I asked the children to participate in was truly higher level,” she said. “The conversations that I had with the children over the last two weeks humbled me and left me in awe of how much of themselves and their hearts they invested into the project. Students took risks allowing themselves to feel vulnerable. They shared personal truths as they trusted their fourth-grade family with their hearts.”

At the end of the two weeks, the final drafts of the project was submitted and the class came together as a family to celebrate. Each student received a bracelet with his or her word hammered into it to wear as a daily reminder.
“It is my hope that when the children look down each day and see their words, they will remember that there is strength through intention, and what they think about, they bring about,” said Brzezinski.

Editor’s Note: If you wish to arrange an interview with Heather Brzezinski, contact Kellie Dietrich at 215-884-6499.

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