

Q&A with Choose Creativity Champions

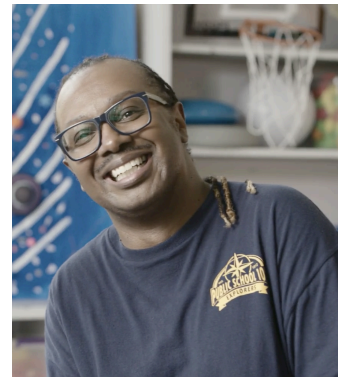
Choose Creativity Champions is a leadership program of highly dedicated educators, brought together by their belief in the 10 Principles of Creativity. This group of standout educators helps drive the culture of our community and inspire the next generation of creative educators.

Lamar Devine, P.S. 102

Years using LwCC: 3

What changed for you as a teacher once you started thinking in terms of building Creative Confidence?

Creative confidence changed the way I teach. Instead of focusing on having all the answers, I started encouraging students to explore, take risks, and learn from their mistakes. It also pushed me to be more open to trying new ideas, making my classroom more collaborative and engaging.



What would you say to a teacher who is interested in getting started with LwCC but feels like they don't have time for one more thing?

I'd tell them they don't have to do everything at once. Creative confidence isn't about adding more to your day — it's about making small changes to the lessons you already teach. Even giving students a little more choice or time to think creatively can make a big difference. Starting small is enough.

Jocelyn Morel, P.S. 146

Years using LwCC: 3

What's a moment from that first year that reminded you why this was worth it, even before you felt like an expert at it?

Choose Creativity is a silent confidence booster and I couldn't have really known this at first. My first year, although we introduced all the words, I focused on just a couple of them that I wanted to own and really make them a



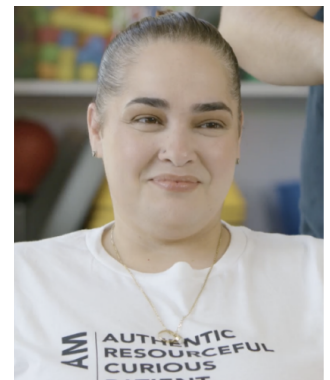
part of my everyday vocabulary. Looking for ways to use them as often as possible. The more I integrated the words into my language and became comfortable with using them, I eventually saw some of my students using them and then it all came together. How we talk to ourselves is such a major part of developing our own self confidence. To me, that's what this is all about, building our student's confidence from the inside. For them to see themselves with creativity. To develop the confidence to approach difficult tasks and situations with an inner voice that reminds them that they are all these things. How we speak to them is how they will eventually speak to themselves. This definitely doesn't happen all at once, but I have seen that by the end of the school year, my students have used the words and when they can't remember the word, they describe the behavior and that is also a win.

Jessica Gonzalez, P.S. 102

Year using LwCC: 2

When you started with LwCC, did you try to use everything right away, or pick just one or two things to focus on first?

My first year doing LwCC, I tried doing everything right away and it was a hot mess. I was overwhelming myself with trying to do too much. The following year, my co-teacher and I planned better and chose different ways to implement the 10 Principles. It was more organized and engaging for the students. One particular activity we did in the beginning of the year was focused on being Authentic. The students were given a blank flag and were informed to draw or write about what represents them. Some students drew their families, things they like to eat, or do, they drew sports they like and things that make them happy. Afterwards, we shared our flags and it was a great way to learn about our students.



Karissa Delli Carpini, P.S. 102

Years using LwCC: 1

What's different about your classroom now versus before you started using LwCC?

After starting Choose Creativity in my classroom, my students have become more comfortable in the classroom. They are more comfortable with being themselves and expressing themselves in different ways. They have learned that they are all different and learn differently as well. They have learned how to be Resourceful in the classroom – using



different resources in the room to help them answer questions before asking for help and being more independent. They have learned how to be their Authentic selves.

Danette Suarez, P.S. 146

Years using LwCC: 3



What's one simple way you started weaving the 10 Principles into your classroom that first year?

During the first year of Choose Creativity, I was fortunate enough to participate in an online training with a few of my colleagues. When we were put into breakout rooms, I think our first reaction was, “Oh my goodness... another thing to add to our day!” But once we started talking, we realized that we were actually already incorporating a lot of SEL lessons and practices into our day.

At my school, we have a monthly calendar that highlights a Book of the Month. Throughout the month, we use that book to incorporate different ways of following CARE, which is part of our PBIS program. We dug a little deeper and thought, “How can we make this work with Choose Creativity too?” We came up with the idea of introducing one of the 10 Principles each month, connecting it to our Book of the Month and our CARE matrix.

This really made me feel at ease. It made Choose Creativity feel much more manageable. I could take my time, get to know each Principle, and really be intentional about how I brought it into my classroom.

And that's something I would encourage you to try. If you're fortunate enough to be doing this PD with a colleague, or even if you can take some time with your teacher team at the beginning of the school year, start by looking at what you're already doing. Talk about the SEL practices, routines, books, or activities you already have in place, and then ask yourselves, “Where do we see the Principles already showing up? And how can we weave them in a little more throughout our day?” I found that approach made it feel much less like one more thing and more like a natural extension of the work we were already doing.