

Initiative For Staff, Students and Families

# The Optimistic School District

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Prepared by Andrew Greatrex and Devin Hughes  
Created with Harvard Positive Psychology expert Shawn Achor





# What is Positive Psychology?

## A Brief Introduction

Positive psychology focuses on the positive events and influences<sup>2</sup> in life, including:

- Deepens student, family, staff and school community development.
- Positive experiences (like happiness, joy, inspiration, and love).
- Positive states and traits (like gratitude, resilience, and compassion).
- Positive households (applying positive principles within families).

# Shawn Achor Career Highlights

- Author - The Happiness Advantage, Big Potential and The Orange Frog
- TED Talk - 22.7 million views
- Super Soul Sunday with Oprah
- Most popular program at Harvard 7 consecutive years
- Most Popular Course on Harvard Campus for 7 years
- Most popular training “Workshop on Happiness and Optimism”.





## Words of Inspiration

“When we are happy—when our mindset and mood are positive—we are smarter, more motivated, and thus more successful. Happiness is the center, and success revolves around it.”

— Shawn Achor





# The Purpose of Positive Psychology Activities

## **What evidence (science) supports this decision**

Research shows that people make better decisions when they are in a positive state of mind.

Research shows we become more successful when we are happier and more positive.

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## **Rationale**

As a school and community partnership, our goal is to provide the highest quality educational experience we can envision and to support the wellbeing of staff, families and students. During this time our primary focus is on creating a highly positive school community that recognizes the importance of positivity, optimism and hope.

# Positive Psychology Menu for School Community

Program/Timing

Overview Points

Key Benefits

**Leadership Wellness 2 x 90mins**

December '20

The key points of this session by your expert facilitator Devin Hughes will emphasize:

- Building a resilient positive psychology
- The impact of social connections on positivity and rational optimism for wellbeing
- Steps to build a happiness hygiene for self care
- What are you doing to raise the levels of happiness of yourself, family, staff and students?

Wellbeing strategies for leaders

**"Optimistic School District"**

December '20

Six (6) Bi-weekly SEL Lessons | Resources for Parents and Families

1. Happiness and Gratitude in Challenging Times;
2. Increasing social connection in a time of social distancing;
3. Inoculating your brain about anxiety and stress;
4. Being adaptive in the midst of uncertainty and change;
5. Uncovering possibilities with a growth mindset;
6. Restart forward progress – creating a virtuous cycle

Parent University sessions

Strategies for entire school community

**Monthly Wellness Series**

Jan - May '21

5 monthly themes on-demand and live on wellness and self care scaled for all staff (and families?)

Monthly coaching for leaders to embed for staff and model behaviors

On-going staff wellbeing based on scientific evidence

**Orange Frog**

Jun - Nov '21

School facilities to learn Shawn Achor's Orange Frog – including TTT and certification of staff model

- Develop Happiness School Committees for implementation success

Monthly coaching for leaders to embed for staff and model behaviors on Achor's 7 Principle's and tactics

Gateway to Positive Psychology Transformation Project

**"Student SEL"**

Jan '22 onward

Develop approx. 30 themed lessons for students to embed into school curriculum with PLC's and SEL Teams

Implementation of tactics

Develop Student Ambassador Program

Family Reading Guide

Parent University

Expand Roll-Out's to students and drive new ideas in school facilities

# Optimistic School District Transformation Process

## Leadership Wellbeing

- Leaders attend 2-day workshop
- Leaders learn Shawn Achor positive psychology principles
- Develop an Orange 'Congress'

## Optimistic School District

- 6 videos and activities for staff and families
- Monthly review and preview

## Wellness series

- 5 – 9 monthly themed activities for staff , students and families
- Monthly review and preview
- On demand and live

## Orange Frog Workshops, TTT and Certification

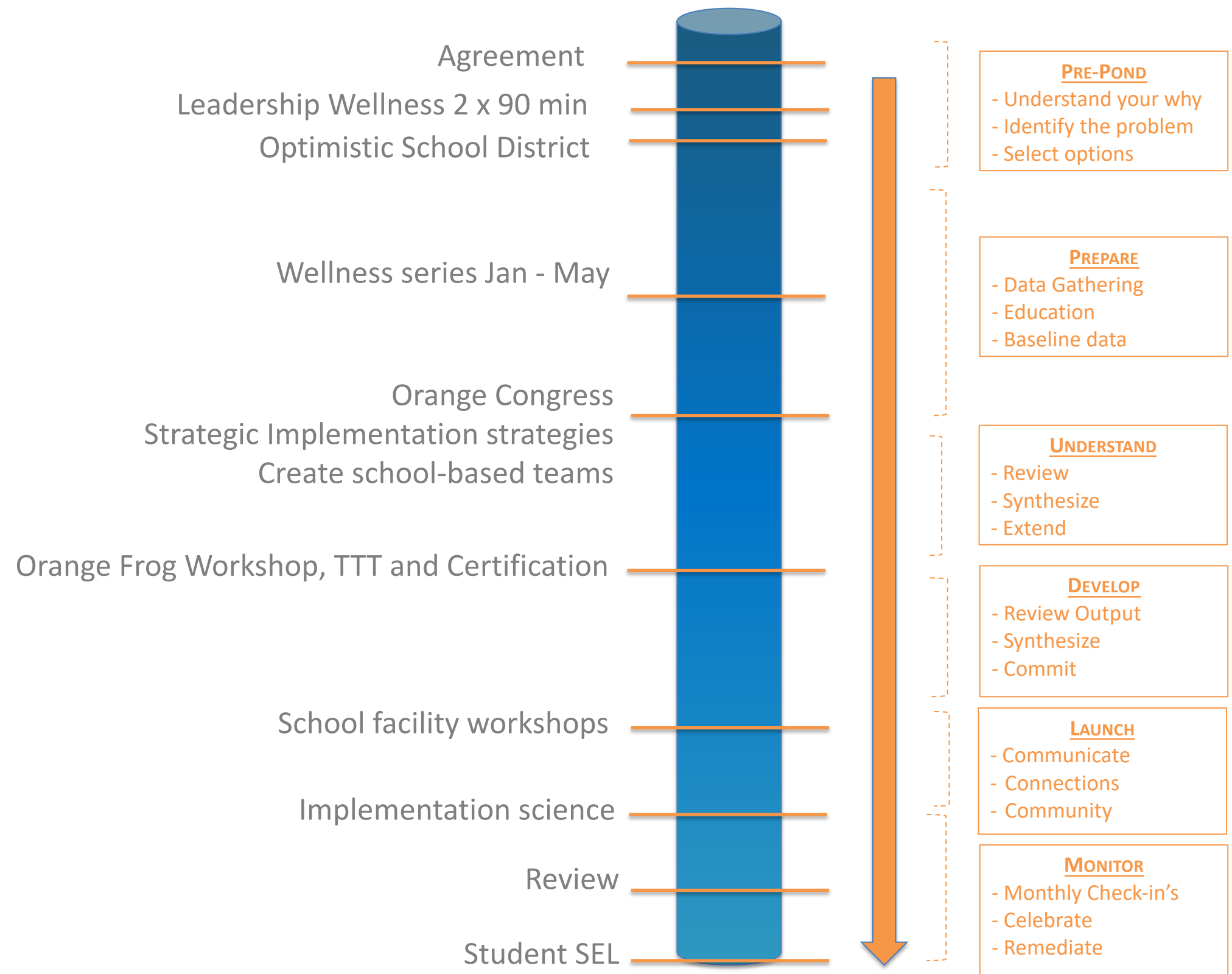
- Process includes nine trainers (approx.)
- Trainers learn activities within workshop
- Customized for School District

## Implementation

- Improvement in Employee Engagement | Wellness
- Improvement in Change Readiness
- Customized Cultural Acceleration Plan

## SEL Integration for students

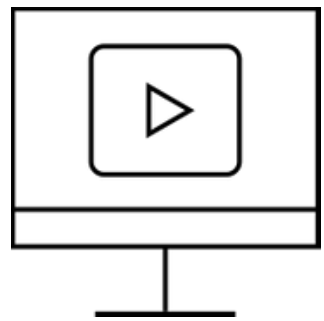
- SEL embedded into student lessons



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# What is included

## Elements to Create Optimistic School Communities



### Videos

Six pre-recorded videos to learn more about the science of optimism, positivity and happiness



### Activities

A series of family activities to increase optimism.



### Workshops

A series of workshops for leaders, TTT and coaching



### Readings

A series of resourceful articles and readings



### Quizzes and Tips

A series of quizzes to provide insight on levels of stress and optimism.



# Outcomes



## Be Positive

Assist people to scan for the positives



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## Be Optimistic

Assist families to be rationally optimistic



## Be Happy

To provide happiness habits to enable people to be happier

# Optimistic School Community

## MEET THE TEAM MEMBERS



**Shawn Achor**

Thought Leader



**Devin Hughes**

Practitioner and Facilitator



**Andy Greatrex**

Happiness Development



**Mellie Greatrex**

Happiness Events and

Support

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**WELLBEING  
SELFCARE  
HAPPINESS**

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