

BEAT THE BLUES. BE YELLOW.

THE BLUES

I know there is a lot of work and stress related to going back to school. You're trying to get your classroom ready, your office ready, your lesson plans ready, your wardrobe ready, your own children ready, your supplies ready, and your mind and emotions ready for the journey ahead . . . and the blues can set in.

Summer is a much-needed, well-deserved break for each of you, a time to unplug and undo all the tumult of the previous year, and just as you start to really unwind and rebuild, you realize it's time to gear up to do it all again!

The idea of not being able to eat and pee and sleep-in when you want, of not being able to go all day with no make-up and no email, of not being able to roll around on the floor with the kids or with the dog and then jump in the pool and float and tan and chat with neighbors, the idea of not being able to fly by the seat of your pants and being trapped by the tardy bell, the idea of being on a set schedule, away from your family and home, up at dawn and late at night . . . all that is enough to bring on the blues.

I understand. I get the blues as August inches close, too. Here's what we must do:

SEE YELLOW

We must focus on the yellow.

Yellow is your disposition and the impact you have on students each time they walk into your room.

Yellow is your smile and how it can cut through the fears and tears of a student with first-day and all-year jitters.

Yellow is the sunrise you share with each student, bell to bell, as you broaden their horizon and propel them to their future.

Yellow is the fun you bring to their day, even while teaching comma splices, algebraic equations, causes of tornadic activity, consequences of the Revolutionary War, and how to set up an Excel worksheet.

Yellow is the ease you give parents when they know you care for their children.

Yellow is the hope you bring to each who doesn't think they can face yet another year.

Yellow is the courage you give them to not only face it but also to make it and to aim for greatness despite the insecurity, uncertainty and adversity they face.

Yellow is YOU, the bright spot in their day. No kidding. Many of your students are desperate for the kindness, patience and attention you give. Many of your students wouldn't see themselves as being able to believe and achieve without you.

MORE VIBRANT

Yellow is stronger and brighter and more inspiring than blue.

Yes, we all feel blue from time to time, and post-summer blues can strangle us, BUT if we hold on to yellow and focus our attention on the ways our students need us and on the powerful way in which we impact students every single day, and if we remind ourselves of the importance we play in their success, in their esteem, in their future . . . then we will see our work through yellow lenses of hope and purpose and strength.

Teaching is hard work. Hard work. The weight of teaching is almost unbearable at times. Teaching requires tenacity, passion, endurance, persistence, and down-right grit of steel. Teaching is not for the weak—it's for the bold.

Yes, you will be blue in the days to come as school winds up, but seek the yellow. Set your mind on it. Transfix on it.

And everything will be better.

BE YELLOW

I invite you to get a pep talk from one of my favorite people, Kid President—Search for "Kid President Pep Talk" on YouTube. I also invite you to be inspired by one of my favorite music videos: Search for "Hall of Fame" music video on YouTube. Not to be least is one of my favorite education moments of all time—when Mr. Holland helps a struggling student, Gertrude Lang, play the sunset. Search for that, too.

Please know that you are in my heart and mind as you work through the first days and weeks of school. I know it's a lot of hard work. I know you'll have moments of stress and dread. I know you'll be exhausted and uncertain that you can get it all done.

But you can, and you will.

And if you need me, I am happy to help. Just let me know the ways in which I can be helpful to you the first weeks of school, and I'll jump to it.

See yellow.

Be yellow.

