

The biggest take-away that I've had up to this point is the concept of talent. Is talent really just something you have or is it something that is created? It's seen in classrooms across the country: children who have been told since the very first day of school that they are the smartest, most talented and "best thing since sliced bread;" yet, far too often, this praise leads to the creation of an inflated ego and students who are afraid of failure. In order to be ready for the successes of adulthood and to truly be "college and career ready," students must be passionate learners, who seek challenge, embrace failure as opportunities to select goals and discover new insights, while possessing a drive that will lead them discover parts of their identities currently unknown. Sure, it may be easy to say, "Yes, we need our students to be passionate!" But how do schools cultivate the environment needed to foster the development of passionate students and educate families on nurturing passion? In order to fully answer that question, we first start by taking a closer look at the differences between students who possess passion and students who possess an inflated ego.

"Two roads diverged in a wood, and I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference." Robert Frost



Passion

A Comparison of Passion vs. Ego



Ego

- Challenge is embraced
- New learning is exciting
- Thinking is challenged

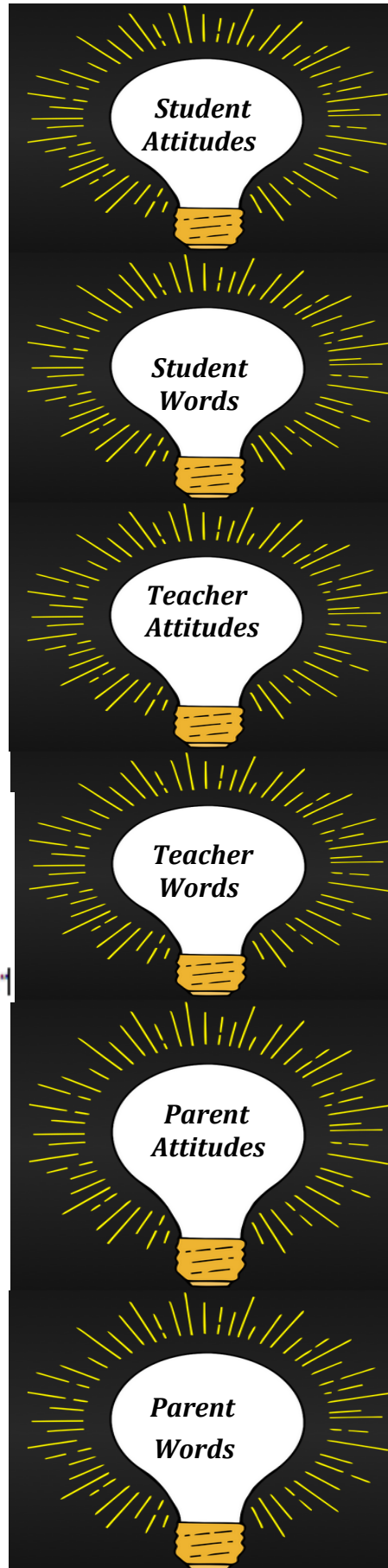
- "I have a plan for my learning."
- "I will try."
- "I can push myself by..."
- "I made a mistake but I can use that to learn..."

- Feedback needs to be Constructive and specific.
- Students need to experience Failure so it can be used for learning.
- All students are good at something But no students are good at everything.

- "How can you continue to grow?"
- "What can I do to help you achieve your goals?"
- "I liked how you"
- "I'm really proud of you for pushing yourself and being brave."

- A child benefits from adults showing sincere interest in a child's interests
- Children earn their grades
- Children should explore their interests
- All children have areas of strengths and weakness

- "My child is interested in..."
- "Teachers should know this about my child..."
- "My child's teacher is my partner."
- "I believe in my child and I can help him grow by...."



- Challenge is avoided
- New learning can be stressful
- Thinking is only enough to "get by"
- Talent is squandered|

- "I already know how to do this so I don't have to try."
- "I don't have to show my thinking because I just know the answer."
- "I wonder if anyone will notice if I rush through my work."

- Feedback as praise
- Some students are just always smarter than others
- Some students don't need to be pushed as long as they master the learning standard.

- "Great job!"
- "You finished early so you can go color."
- "As long as you go the right answer, I don't need to see your work."
- "You finished. Go get a sticker."

- Everybody wins a trophy
- Child success in 10 + select sports teams is expected
- 4(s) or A(s) are expected in all subjects
- Future career for child pre-selected|

- "My kid is SO smart!"
- "Teachers pick on my kid because he is smart."
- "I know more than the school does and I know that my student is the best in the class and he knows it"
- "The answer is the only thing that matters. Not strategies."