



College of

# Education

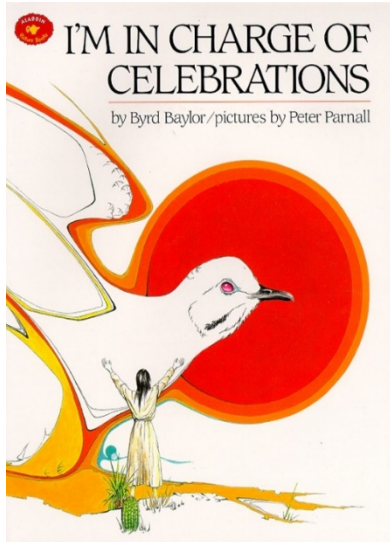
WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY  
TRI-CITIES

## Leading Tips

*"Little moments, big impact."*

WSU Tri-Cities College of Education is committed to quality leadership during this time of uncertainty and new circumstances. "Leading Tips" is a quick resource for educational leaders.

### "Gratefulness and Celebrations" by Kathleen Cowin



Baylor, B. (1986). *I'm in charge of celebrations*. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster.

As the leader, your school community looks to you to let them know how things are going. In times of uncertainty or change, communication is vital and personalizing that communication can be of comfort in letting those who you lead know how you see what is happening. Communication comes in many forms, and one way to personalize your communication to be of comfort to others is to practice gratefulness and then to celebrate. Now, more than ever, I believe that leading celebrations are an important part of a leader's work. When considering what to celebrate, I turn to the practice of gratefulness. The practice of gratefulness can take just a few minutes a day. Let's try it right now.

Take a moment to think of one thing you are grateful for in this moment.

Say what you are grateful for out loud and then take another moment to write it down.

You have just taken the first steps in practicing gratefulness. Now on to combining gratefulness with celebrating. The next step expands your gratefulness practice into

a celebration by including others. Tell someone what you are grateful for. When you tell another person or group of people what you are grateful for, a celebration can begin.

A practice of gratefulness can also help one focus on what needs to be celebrated. My practice is not perfect and is a work in progress. I try to end my day thinking of one thing I am grateful for and writing it down. Then the next morning I read what I had written the day before and consider that as a possible point for celebration. Maybe I share the idea with another person, maybe I write a text, brief email, or note to someone. This small act can grow into a celebration. The celebration can be taking that minute to share with someone else, or something even larger.

A few weeks ago, several of my colleagues and their families drove by my house honking car horns with party hats on and sang happy birthday to me from their cars. I was so touched, and my heart was happy. Social distancing did not keep the celebration from happening; in fact, it created a new way. It will be a birthday memory I long remember. I am so grateful to my colleagues for this touching act of kindness. In sharing the story with you I hope I may have sparked an idea or a new way the celebrations may continue.

I highly recommend Byrd Baylor's book, "I'm in Charge of Celebrations." The book will inspire you with 108 creative ideas of what you can celebrate and help you connect to the things you are grateful for. I've used this book at faculty meetings, at family engagement events, and with students of all ages. I know many of you are facing the challenge of how to celebrate the "big moment" event as our students, especially our senior class of 2020, complete their school year. I encourage you to explore Baylor's ideas for celebrations today and for the days ahead.

To all of you leading in our schools and communities, please know this: I am deeply grateful for you and for your leadership. I am celebrating you!

## Your Statewide Educational Leadership Team...

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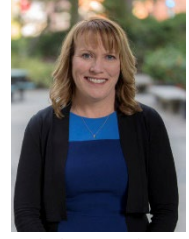
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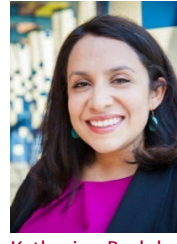
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