

It's a Happy Place

Unit E
Epilogue
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Principal Edward Aguires says, "Teachers and students love to come to this school." Read how he did it in the **Going Beyond** folder for the *Epilogue* at EffectiveTeaching.com.

Ed Aguires is principal of Samsel Upper Elementary School in Parlin, New Jersey. He shares the following about his life and his school.

"At the age of 35 I got the unique opportunity to open a brand new public school. I sat for a long time and thought, "What would Harry tell me to do?" I then reread your book and watched your video series and took notes on what I imagined my building could be like with the **proper procedures**.

"Every new teacher gets a copy of ***The First Days of School*** to understand why all of our teachers have classroom procedures.

"In short, we learned ("stole"), we incorporated our own procedures, and we have become a learning community that is open to ever-changing challenges. For the first time in four years, since this school opened, we have gone a month and a half without sending anyone into our Time Out Room or In School Suspension. Expectations are set, and procedures to meet those expectations have been established, practiced, and made routine. It has made all the difference.

"We continue to get the most compliments in the district about how happy our teachers and our students seem, even though our expectations for student and teacher performance continues to rise. It seems that rigor is not such a dirty word in education if everyone involved knows what is expected of them.

"I am truly a blessed individual. I am a professional educator, who every year becomes more involved with other professional educators around the state and around the country to share, "steal," and borrow ideas in order to provide the best education possible for our children.

"The best, first step I ever took was reading ***The First Days of School***. It changed my life, and in doing so has allowed me to change the lives of novice and veteran teachers alike. By changing their lives, they have been given the tools to positively impact the lives of their students.

"Some don't believe me until they visit my school, but once they have seen my building in action they want to know how we do it.

"I can only tell you that teachers and students love to come to this school. **It is a happy place filled with 900 fourth and fifth grade students.**"