

This project began over coffee with a friend as I was raising the question of how to introduce the quality of compassion to a group of elementary students. My friend, a middle school teacher, said that she had heard a young homeschool boy who had celebrated the 100th day of school this year by sending 100 of his personal "I Believe" statements to NPR for their, "This I Believe" segment. This comes from Edward R. Murrow who used to do this bit years ago. John lambeck found some stuff including the original "I Believes" of the kid on the NPR I site.

I decided to take this on and introduced it by having Mark K's class draft 100 statements for the compassion assembly... I believe personally, that understanding another's beliefs is the beginning of compassion. After Mark's class read their "I Believe" statements aloud at the assembly, I challenged each class in the school to draft 100 statements more or less and to post them on their doors for "100's Day". It happened a little, but I decided to try and see if I could make it happen in a larger way by going public. With Ken and Marianne's support, we began the initiative of reading 5 or 6 each morning after the pledge. Stretch kids read them first, now more kids are doing it. I have opened this up to my friends on the web and encouraged them to send it out and have their friends do it too. I would love to have the parents involved. I have collected the statements from the lunch ladies and am working on the custodial staff. I plan to hit teachers by grade level and administrators as well.

Along with this is the peace flags project by Sarah Haskell of York who has read 450 of our I believes aloud in Market Square Portsmouth in the rain. She makes strips and has people weave them into flags which she sends all round the

world to people who have contributed statements about
peace for her to weave, so one day we will get some back...
a long story, a good cause.

Jody Fuller