Weekly Class Meeting

Make it safe for kids to tell: Every week or two, give students a writing topic for a 5 minute silent write. Give them the choice of writing instead an anonymous note about what you should know, e.g. problems with classmates, who is being picked on, how people are feeling, a question, a change they’d like to make in the class, etc. At the end of the writing time, everyone turns in their papers with no one knowing who wrote on the assigned topic and who has given you other information. If you do this early in the day, you can read the comments privately and address them in an appropriate way in a class meeting.

Sample class meeting format for a 25-30 minute meeting:

After the first few meetings which I chair, pairs of students take turns chairing the meetings.

1. Student of the Week: reads chart written about him/herself
2. Chairperson asks “Who has something in common with the Student of the Week?” – nobody can repeat an example
3. News flashes (students read prepared compliments to the S.O.W.)
4. S.O.W. chooses what kind of applause s/he wants
5. S.O.W. chooses what kind of vehicle s/he will be, driving through the carwash. As s/he drives around the circle, other students call out compliments while circling their hands in the air like scrubbers.
6. S.O.W. chooses someone to lead the Zap. This means that everybody shakes their hands to work up some energy and then on the count of 3, they point their fingers at the S.O.W. and yells “Zap!” to direct the energy to them.
7. After s/he is “zapped”, S.O.W. yells “YAY me!” and gets applause.
8. Problems that have come out of the silent write or are brought up in the meeting.
9. Business, e.g. planning upcoming event or gym class
10. Appreciations
11. Game