



MIDLAND PARK PUBLIC
SCHOOLS

Week of Respect Newsletter

October 1-5, 2018



Midland Park Take Action Peer Leaders

Week of Respect Calendar of Events

October 1st

**Student Senate distributing
Orange Ribbons**

**K-2 Read Aloud with the
Principal "Be Kind" by Pat
Zietklow Miller (all week)
Godwin**

October 2nd

**Diversity Circus
Grades K-2 Godwin**

October 3rd

**Keynote Presentation:
"Dignity and Respect"**

**By Mr. David J. Flood
Grades 6-12**

**Intro Lesson to the Chil-
dren's Therapy Center
Grade 7**

October 4th

**Mr. Lloyd Bachrach, Special
Olympics Athlete
Grades 3-5
Highland**

October 5th

**Holocaust Presentation:
Reflections on Eu-
rope/Washington, D.C.
Grades 11-12**

Harassment, intimidation and bullying are serious offenses that will not be tolerated in the Midland Park Public Schools. To report an incident of alleged harassment, intimidation and/or bullying, please contact the school principal, the school's Anti-Bullying Specialist, and/or the District Anti-Bullying Coordinator. Contact information for these staff members may be found on our district website: www.mpsnj.org

A Message from Mr. Craig R. Rush District Anti-Bullying Coordinator

It has been eight years since the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act was signed into law. Our school district continues its mission to maintain a climate that fosters a caring and inclusive community for all of our students. In 2011, Midland Park Public Schools set the goal to become a New Jersey school of excellence in the area of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) preven-

Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Legislation

Dr. Marie C. Cirasella, Superintendent

The New Jersey Department of Education's (NJDOE) website provides information for parents with regard to Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) and our state's Anti-Bullying Statute (ABS), "*The ABS was established in March 2012 as part of an amendment to, the "Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act," (N.J.S.A. 18A:37-13.2)...offering guidance to the NJDOE for educators, principals, chief administrators, anti-bullying specialists, anti-bullying coordinators, and others in the field regarding a clearer understanding of the complexities in the ABR.*" One of the greatest challenges with regard to ABS compliance is in identifying HIB under the law and the difficulty in attaining a global definition of these terms. In Midland Park, we continue to work with students, staff, and community partners to develop a greater understanding of what accurately defines HIB incidents or those which are more rightly remediated under the

student code of conduct. Ensuring a safe and civil environment for all students is a primary concern in our district and we remain dedicated to working collaboratively as we remain in compliance. This year, we reaffirm our shared commitment to ensuring all incidents, whether identified as HIB or student code of conduct violations, are swiftly and appropriately addressed. On-going staff training, survey analyses, and the support of our School Safety Committees, make our district schools instructional environments where everyone feels safe, valued, and welcomed. For more information on HIB and the ABS, please refer to the NJDOE website: <https://www.state.nj.us/education/students/safety/behavior/hib>



tion. The district continues to work with Dr. Paula Rodriguez - Rust, Sociologist and Bullying Prevention Specialist. Dr. Rust serves as a consultant on best-practices program implementation when addressing school climate. In the spring of 2018, students (with parental consent) participated in a school climate survey for the eighth year in a row. Dr. Rust

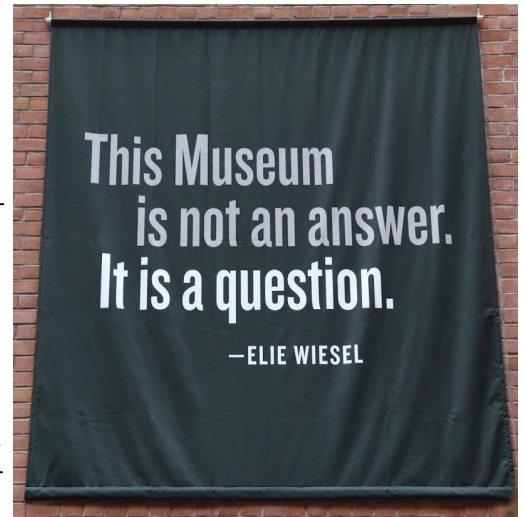
was able to interpret the data and compare and contrast the results of the 2018 survey with the data from the previous seven surveys. Dr. Rust will be making a presentation to the community on the results of the School Climate Survey on the evening of November 26, as part of our annual HIB Community presen-

tation. All parents and interested community members are invited to attend. As the district Student Assistance Counselor and Anti-Bullying Coordinator, I am proud to say that Midland Park remains committed to expanding its prevention efforts and initiatives. During the 2017 – 2018 school year, our members of the elementary and secondary School Climate Committees created Action Plans for each building. Our high school Take Action Peer Leaders made prevention-based presentations to our sixth grade, seventh grade and ninth grade students. Our high school Spectrums Diversity Club created a safe and caring environment for our students to celebrate the diversity of all students. Our middle school students received an annual “Cyberbullying” assembly provided by the Bergen County Prosecutors Office. Our seventh grade students had an opportunity to work directly with disabled students at the Children’s Therapy Center. In the classroom, our teachers used curriculum-based infused lessons to provide “teachable moments” in bullying prevention throughout the academic disciplines. In the spring, Mr. Nicholas Capuano, Principal,

organized a Holocaust Study Trip to Washington, DC for thirty-nine of our high school students. I was one of the advisors on this trip. It is humbling to listen to our students discuss their thoughts and reactions to this experiential visit to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum. Our students are exposed to powerful and thought-provoking learning opportunities as they formulate their philosophies and prepare to be the leaders of tomorrow.

During adolescence, students make “social mistakes.” These mistakes are developmental and part of maturing. As educators, we will always dedicate ourselves to addressing these issues as they arise and strive to continue to raise expectations for tolerance, acceptance and kindness towards one another.

The Week of Respect serves to remind our community that kindness does matter as we celebrate our diversity and treat one another with dignity throughout the year.



Highland and Godwin Schools recognize Respect Week

Peter Galasso, Highland Principal & Danielle Bache, Godwin Principal

Highland School Principal: Peter Galasso

There has been a lot of change at Highland School in the past 4 years both in facility and in curriculum. Of course those improvements will continue as we always want to make the educational experience for our students better and more empowering. This year we are adding a new caveat to our school program that is worth mentioning because it goes beyond the normal scope of academic curriculum and program. Social and emotional learning for the first time, will be formally scheduled during the school week at Highland School. For the past couple of years administration and teachers have been looking over the data, listening to testimonials, and informally applying SEL strategies to get a feel for how effective this type of program can be. Based on what we have seen first-hand and when coupled with the research, we believe that now more than ever with all the social, educational, and extracurricular strains on students, this endeavor can be very powerful. So what is Social and emotional Learning, or SEL?

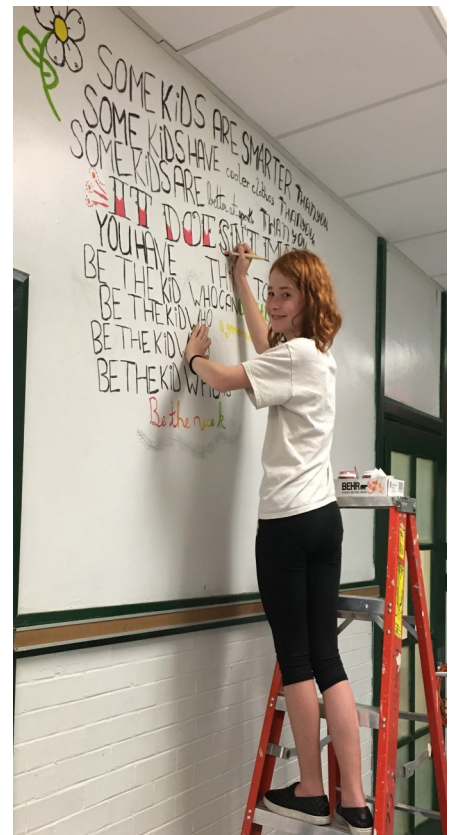
Social and emotional learning (SEL) refers to the way by which children effectively process events and feelings that they encounter in their life. SEL gives students the skills they need to do the following: understand and manage emotions; set and

achieve positive goals; feel and show empathy for others; and make responsible decisions. Students in SEL programs are more likely to attend school and receive better grades, and are less likely to have conduct problems. Successful infusion of SEL and a defined SEL curriculum can result in positive behaviors, increased academic success, and caring communities. Of course, this is the hope for our school, as we strive to make Highland Students even more successful and even more caring than they already are. We look forward to rolling out this program early in the year and as always thank-you for your continued support of the Highland School and the district. Should you have any questions about the SEL program at Highland School please feel free to contact me at any time.

Parent Resources on Bullying:

www.stopbullying.gov

www.netismartz.org



Godwin Principal: Danielle Bache

The Week of Respect has become a staple in schools across New Jersey since 2011. Respect is part of our everyday practice and vocabulary, but during this week, we pay extra attention to focusing lessons, assemblies and discussions on respect. But how do you teach a 5, 6, or 7 year-old child the meaning of respect? They can't see it or touch it? They hear the definition but can they really define it? *The dictionary defines respect as (n.) a feeling of deep admiration for someone or something elicited by their abilities, qualities, or achievements; (v.) have due regard for the feelings, wishes, rights, or traditions of.* Based on those definitions, of course our youngsters understand what respect means.

At Godwin School, we must constantly model the meaning of respect and discuss how to show respect to oneself, others, and property. Through lessons, videos, role-playing, and discussions; students begin to understand the concept of respect and the importance of it. Our mission is to raise students who become upstanding members of the community and are consciously aware of how they are treating others. It becomes our job to use teachable moments and remediate student behavior on the spot in the hopes of creating a harmonious school environment. This year, the Godwin School motto is Godwin PRIDE and the R stands for Respect and Responsibility. We plan to further develop the students' understanding of these terms and encourage them to put their learning into practice. Character Education needs to start at this young age to ensure the success of our students' social and emotional development. Thank you for partnering with us to provide an enriching and respectful environment at Godwin School.

Message From The Jr/Sr High School Principal Nicholas Capuano, Principal

As you drive up the circle to the front of the junior-senior high school you will notice the new banners on our new light posts. You will see words such as: "tradition", "respect", "integrity", "character", "citizenship" and "acceptance". These are the values we want the children of Midland Park to instill and embrace.

We continue to focus on school climate. Our seventh graders, for the fourth year, will be working with students at the Children's Therapy Center to reinforce the importance of lending a helping hand and learning to respect each other's differences.

I am witnessing more kindness and respect for others. We are a positive welcoming school culture. Our students have more awareness as to what is appropriate and not appropriate when communicating with each other.

Last spring about thirty-nine Midland Park students, four staff members and myself participated in the Holocaust Study Tour and traveled to Washington DC. This was an experiential learning opportunity where the students learned first-hand respect for differences. This was an opportunity for our students to see the new exhibit "Americans and the Holocaust." This ex-

hibit explored the many factors including isolationism, xenophobia, racism, and antisemitism – that influenced decisions made by the US government, the news media, Hollywood and individuals as they responded to Nazism. These experiences were turn-keyed back to the students during the "Week of Respect" and a presentation to the Board of Education.

The "Week of Respect" serves as a reminder for the entire community to focus on kindness and tolerance for others every day. The Senate will be distributing orange ribbons to all students and staff to symbolize the common purpose of treating everyone with respect and dignity. Together we can continue to make Midland Park High School an ever improving learning environment.

District Anti-Bullying Coordinator: Mr. Craig Rush, Ph: (201) 444-7400, ext. 206
Email: crush@mpsny.org

Godwin & Highland Anti-Bullying Specialist: Ms. Kelly Scala, Ph: (201) 445-3880, ext. 319,
Email: kscala@mpsny.org

MPHS Anti-Bullying Specialist: Ms. Theresa Soda & Ms. Elizabeth Wall Ph: (201) 444-7400, ext. 212, Email: tsoda@mpsny.org
ewall@mpsny.org



Respect

Jason Cata, Assistant Principal

The Week of Respect is a wonderful time to reflect on the “Golden Rule.” Spending our days in Midland Park schools sets us up in a climate that is like no other place you will experience. Our teachers, staff, coaches, and advisors are committed to the children of Midland Park. In turn, we see positive attitudes and behaviors from our student body. Please replicate this climate and sense of belonging and respect when you are outside of our schools.

When we celebrate our Student Citizenship awards, we acknowledge many different character traits. Respect is not one of the traits we use. This is because the traits we celebrate such as hard working, reliability, leadership and school spirit have respect embedded in each. John Cena said, “Be loyal to those who are loyal to you. And respect everyone, even your enemies and competition.” To truly follow the Golden Rule, a person needs to respect themselves, others and any struggles that come their way. That philosophy will make us at Midland Park stronger and more resilient in the real world.

A Message about our District School Safety Teams

Midland Park Jr./Sr. High School Anti-bullying Specialists

Theresa Soda and Elizabeth Wall

The School Climate & Safety Team has been hard at work helping to make MPHS as safe and as inviting as it can be for our students. This past year, the committee created and modified action plans to increase positive school climate. Based on the School Climate Survey and student input, the School Climate and Safety Team created action plans. The action plans were geared towards enhancing empathy of the student body and diminishing “hot spots” where conflicts had the potential to occur.

The gymnasium and Media Center are open for middle school students to utilize during their lunch period. There is a bell halfway during period 4, where students either go to the Media Center or gym, or they head to the cafeteria. This makes the middle school lunch period more structured, with more adult supervision.

This year, a new exploratory class is introduced to the 8th grade. Digital Design is a computer class, where students continue to build on their knowledge and practice Internet safety, along with an introduction to computer software. With Technology 7, Digital Design 8, and Intro to Computers (grade 9-12), Internet safety and computer knowledge is integrated throughout all grade levels.

We will continue to work with students, as well as the School Climate & Safety Team members, to keep our school the welcoming and accepting place it is. Keep an eye out for The School Climate & Safety Team’s future initiatives!

This committee is comprised of teachers, administrators, guidance counselors, case managers and parents.

Meet our members!

MS/HS School Climate & Safety Team

Nick Capuano, *Principal*

Craig Rush, *Anti-Bullying Coordinator*

Liz Wall, *Anti-Bullying Specialist*

Theresa Soda, *Anti-Bullying Specialist*

Lisa McNeerney, *MS/HS Teacher*

Morgan Altemus, *MS Teacher*

Hanora Bellucco, *HS Teacher*

Karen Corcoran, *MS/HS Nurse*

Melissa Brockway, *S.H.I.P.*

Jason Tillson, *School Resource Officer*

Padma Dhalwani, *Parent*

Trish Olson, *Parent*



*Highland and Godwin
Kelly Scala , Anti-Bullying Specialist*

The Climate Committees at Highland/Godwin have been working with the staff, parents and students for several years now to improve the school climate.

The Godwin staff consists of Ms. Bache (Principal), Mrs. Scala (Anti-Bullying Specialist), Dana Dispoto (CST HIP Representative), Mr. Craig Rush (Anti-Bullying Coordinator), Mike Winters (Teacher), Megan Martinez (Teacher), Mr. Jason Tillson (SRO), Mrs. McCarthy (Parent), and Mrs. Tarleton (Parent). Over the course of the year, the team has implemented several positive changes after reviewing the School Climate Survey. This survey assisted the team to create several action plans that enabled them to promote a safe climate in schools.

In Godwin School, Ms. Bache really works hard to make sure the focus is always on Respect.

Throughout the year, assemblies, read-alouds, and direct lessons are taught to emphasize the ideals of good character. Mrs. Scala further enhances the character education program through the Second Step Program. Direct lessons are taught in first and second grades to help children understand how to interact and deal with conflict. The team also all participated in a play called, "Chrysanthemum" based on the book written by Kevin Henkes to highlight the important theme the power of kindness. Throughout the year, Ms. Bache would also meet with the lunch aides to discuss ways of changing the climate on the playground and in the lunchroom to reinforce positive behavior. Ms. Bache and the staff tend to focus on teachable moments throughout each day to reinforce the proper behavior which encourages the students to continue to strive to do it themselves.

At Highland, the team consists of Mr. Galasso (Principal), Mrs. Scala (Anti-Bullying Specialist), Dana Dispoto (CST HIP Representative), Mr. Craig Rush (Anti-Bullying Coordinator), Mrs. Chase (Teacher), Mrs. Mullady (Teacher), Mr. Jason Tillson (SRO), Mrs. Tuosto (Parent), Mrs. Dhalwani (Parent). Mr. Galasso told the team he would be conducting "Do the Right Thing" assemblies with the students rewarding those students who exhibited positive role models and were recommended by their teachers. A mentor program was also implemented in Highland with the 3rd and 6th grades to foster positive role model relationships. Mrs. Scala developed an intergenerational program with a fifth-grade class which consists of monthly trips to the Mill Gardens Assisted Living home. She will also launch a program with the fourth grade this year where they will visit the senior center in town on a monthly basis while fostering positive relationships with the seniors living in the community. Throughout the year Mrs. Scala facilitates several charitable fundraisers with both schools for various causes to further enhance the positive ideals of good character.

A Message from the Athletic Director, Mike Gaccione

Often times, athletics can be looked at as a microcosm of society. This, undoubtedly, rings true when comparing Midland Park athletics with the school system and community.

Midland Park is a tight-knit community that always encourages virtuous behavior, especially in the helping of others. This philosophy can clearly be seen through the children of Midland Park on the fields and courts of our athletic events. From fundraising for local families, to donating time and help, to an on the field gesture as simple as helping an opponent up from the ground, Midland Park almost always exhibits characteristics of sportsmanship.

Just as society is ever changing and evolving, we encourage our student-athletes to also continue improving upon their already positive behaviors. Although we encourage this growth each and every day, we believe the "Week of Respect" is a great time to contemplate and reflect on one's actions, and what else can be done moving forward. So, let's continue to make Midland Park a safe and caring place for all of our students.

