



MIDLAND PARK PUBLIC
SCHOOLS

Week of Respect Newsletter

October 5-9, 2015



Midland Park Take Action Peer Leaders

Week of Respect Calendar of Events

October 5th

**Student Senate is handing
out Orange Ribbons**

**Mental Health Awareness
Presentation
(Ganley Foundation)
Grades 9-10**

Highland School

**"The Golden Rule"
Assembly Grades 3-5
Inspirational Quotes Every
Morning**

Godwin School

**"The Golden Rule"
Assembly Grades K-2
Inspirational Story Read to
each Class**

October 6th:

**Keynote Presentation:
Timothy Shoemaker
Grades 6-12**

October 8th

**F.A.I.T.H Foundation
Presentation**

October 9th

**Sticks and Stones
Grade 9**

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

This September, we began our fifth school year under the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act. Our school district takes great pride in creating 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

Anti-Bullying Legislation—an Ongoing Initiative for New Jersey Schools

Dr. Marie C. Cirasella, Superintendent

The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) website identifies the importance of the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights legislation (ABR) and our state's role in seeking to maintain healthy and safe school environments for all children, "New Jersey has been a leader in the establishment of a strong statutory, regulatory, policy, and program framework to support the prevention, remediation, and reporting of harassment, intimidation, and bullying (HIB) in schools." In Midland Park, we remain committed to working with students, staff, and community partners in developing an increased understanding of that which accurately defines an HIB incident or is more rightly remediated under the student code of conduct. Our district has always sought to ensure a safe

and civil environment for all students, a goal which is of primary concern. The administration and staff work collaboratively to maintain ongoing ABR compliance and reaffirm this shared commitment annually through ongoing professional development and the provision of special programs for students. We are proud of our strong record of swiftly and appropriately addressing all issues brought forward and will continue the training, survey analyses, and focus on the work and input of our School Safety Committees. For more information on this important issue, we hope you will access the district website: www.mpsnj.org and review resources on the NJDOE website: <http://www.state.nj.us/education/>

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

in the area of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) prevention. The district continues to work with Dr. Paula Rodriguez- Rust, Sociologist, Bullying Prevention Specialist. Dr. Rust serves as a consultant on best-practices program implementation when addressing school

climate. In the spring of 2015, students (with parental consent) participated in a school climate survey for the fifth year in a row. Dr. Rust was able to interpret the data and compare and contrast the results of the 2015 survey with the data from the 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014 surveys. Dr. Rust will be making a presentation to



2015 school year, our parent members of the elementary and secondary School Safety Teams received a full-day in-service training. In addition, select members of our staff received training in dealing with the specific needs of LGBTQ students. Our High

School Take Action Peer Leaders, made anti-bullying presentations to our middle school 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. In the classroom, our teachers used curriculum infused lessons to provide

the community on the results of the School Climate Survey on Monday evening January 25th, at 7:30 pm, in the High School Media Center. 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 2014 –

"teachable moments" in bullying prevention throughout the academic disciplines. Students make "social mistakes" during adolescence. 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

Reflecting upon my first year as an elementary Principal at Highland School, I was impressed with overall student behavior. I was even more impressed with our student's response to misbehavior. Behavior was not perfect, there were times when students forgot to treat their peers with respect, or, simply, were not nice to each other, or did not adhere to school wide rules. This can be expected when there are over 300 students in grades 3-6 trying to get along over a seemingly endless

school year. I am sure I speak for every teacher and administrator in Midland Park when I say, it is not so much the misbehavior that we are concerned with, but how students respond to a negative behavior being brought to light, whether it be a disciplinary intervention or consequence. Will students learn from their mistake? This is the most relevant question when considering healthy social growth for children and teens. I can say in almost every case, that the students who were in my office as a result of a negative behavior, did not have repeat offenses with the same student, or groups of students, once an intervention took place. What does this mean? We have a population of students who are teachable and I would like to build upon this foundation with the Highland Team going into this 2015-2016 school year. It is only with a consistent message, constant reminders, and persistent modeling of healthy social habits that we can continue to make positive strides with student to student relations and improve our school climate. Our "Do the Right Thing" campaign will still be in effect

for the 2015-2016 School year, and our School Safety Team, along with the Highland Staff, will continue to brainstorm ideas that will help our students navigate the complex social structure that we call adolescence. I am confident we will have a wonderful school year, because every year WE WILL become a better version of Highland School

Godwin Principal: Danielle Bache

At Godwin School, everything we do and say has a focus on Respect. It is modeled, reinforced, directly taught, and practiced by staff members, to have a positive effect on students. We structured our character education program around Superheroes this year and emphasized the super powers of Kindness, Tolerance, Caring, Teamwork and Respect. After our school wide assembly on Super Powers, the students identified their own super traits as a home activity. The school to home connection is vital so the parents can reinforce our message with their children.

Throughout the year, assemblies, "read-alouds" and direct lessons are taught to emphasize the ideals of good character.



OUR STUDENTS

HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE SAFE, STRONG and FREE.

students to demonstrate; in hopes they will continue it on their own. These formidable years are so important for redirection to ensure our children grow up to be kind and respectful young adults.

Kelly Scala, the elementary school guidance counselor 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. Kelly uses videos, literature and role-plays to highlight important themes and relate to our youngest learners. The program has been successful thus far and allows Mrs. Scala to interact with our students and become a trusted individual in their lives.

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. Nina Fasciano, & Ms. Elizabeth Chase Ph: (201) 444-7400, ext. 212, Email: nfasciano@mpsny.org
echase@mpsny.org

Message From The High School Principal

Nicholas Capuano, Principal

This past spring three Midland Park students and myself participated in the Holocaust Study Tour and traveled to Germany, Czech Republic and Poland to create a tactile classroom for understanding the importance of tolerance and respect for differences. The impact from this experience is indelibly imprinted in our psyche. This emersion in history helped our students and myself to put a perspective on our recent past to help ensure a better future for all people regardless of their differences.

Upon my return from this trip, I felt such pride in our school climate. We are a place that works hard to model kindness and respect. I am witnessing positive changes every day. This experience serves as an opportunity to promote tolerance of others and a celebration of humanity with all of its uniqueness and differences.

As educators we are committed to enhancing the lives of our students. We

plant seeds of knowledge hoping someday those seeds will flourish and our students will share this knowledge to make the world a better place

Parent Resources on Bullying:

www.stopbullying.gov

www.netsmartz.org



Holocaust Study Tour 2015



Holocaust Study Tour 2015

Respect

Jason Cata, Assistant Principal

Respect is such a powerful word no matter what language it is spoken. It is so important, that it is known as the “Golden Rule.” We all have different beliefs and values which make us unique. Respecting other peoples’ unique beliefs and values makes us powerful. Taylor Swift is one of the most influential people on the planet today. She says “We don’t need to share the same opinions as others, but we need to be respectful”. Her voice and influence is so powerful that she was able to make changes to one of the world’s most lucrative companies, Apple. The company was not going to pay musicians during the three month roll out of Apple Music. Swift’s comments about how unacceptable that was quickly changed Apple’s policies which helped support thousands of artists.

As we reflect on what is important in life, we must always remember other people’s lives as well. Many of you have the opportunity to show respect to a handful of people each day. These acts of kindness will come back to you and continue to make the community of Midland Park so special.

A Message about our District School Safety Teams

Midland Park Jr./Sr. High School
Nina Fasciano

We are excited to kick off this school year and continue to serve our students in the best possible environment. ***The School Safety Team*** is a committee that addresses ways to improve school climate for our students. This committee is comprised of teachers, administrators, guidance counselors, case managers and parents. During the 2014-2015 school year our School Safety Team suggested the creation of a ***Student School Climate Committee***. This past Winter/Spring The Anti-Bullying Specialists and Anti-Bullying Coordinator met with selected students to get a pulse on our school climate and identify areas for improvement. We will continue to work with student representatives as well as the School Safety Team members to keep our school a safe, positive welcoming and accepting place for our students and staff. Keep an eye out for The School Safe Team’s future initiatives!

Meet our members!

MS/HS School Safety Team

Nick Capuano, *Principal*

Craig Rush, *Anti-Bullying Coordinator*

Nina Fasciano, *Anti-Bullying Specialist*

Elizabeth Chase, *Anti-Bullying Specialist*

Debbi Kochajki, *SHIP Case Manager*

Ethan Grubman, *HS Teacher*

Emily Walker, *MS Teacher*

Lisa McNerney, *MS/HS Teacher*

Mary Hosier, *Parent*

Toni Carrea, *Parent*



Holocaust Study Tour 2015

Highland and Godwin Kelly Scala

The School Safety Teams at Highland and Godwin have been busy working with the staff, parents, and students over the past few years to improve our schools' climate with great results.

At Godwin school, the team consisting of Ms. Bache (Principal), Mrs. Scala (Anti-Bullying Specialist), Craig Rush (Anti-Bullying Coordinator), Ann Baker (CST HIP Representative), Mike Winters (Teacher), Megan Martinez (Teacher), Mrs. Tuosto (Parent), and Mrs. Mayer (Parent) used data provided by the School Climate Survey to focus their efforts and create effective action plans.

The lunch and recess periods were noted as a time when students most have conflict, so Ms. Bache met with lunch aides, to discuss ways to change the climate in these areas during this time in the school day. The team also created a buddy bench on the playground for students who do not have anyone to play with during recess. It has been a successful way for students to connect and make new friends.

In effort to increase sensitivity and improve school climate, the team created a skit to present to the school. The skit was based on the book, *One* by Kathryn Otoshi and emphasized the notion that it only takes one person to stand up to a bully. Students from kindergarten through second grade watched and then

completed an extension activity that helped reinforce appropriate behavior toward their peers.

A mentor program has been established, pairing fifth graders with second graders for the purpose of fostering responsibility and easing their transition to Highland School.

Signs around Godwin, created by Ms. Bache, reinforce the type of positive environment the team has been striving to establish.

The Highland Safety Team is made up of Mr. Galasso (Principal), Mrs. Scala (Anti-Bullying Specialist), Craig Rush (Anti-Bullying Coordinator), Ann Baker (CST HIP Representative), Mrs. Kirsch (Teacher), Mrs. Mullady (Teacher), Mrs. Olsen (Parent), and Mrs. Mahoney (Parent). The team has committed time to understanding the issues affecting our varied age range. All the members attended a workshop on teasing and bullying last year which has helped improve efforts to address these concerns.

Mr. Galasso has initiated "Do the Right Thing" assemblies in which he rewards students who stood out as positive role models throughout the year. The T-shirts he hands out have become coveted symbols of a positive school environment.

Every year the district holds a HIB Community Presentation where the law is reviewed and results of our annual school climate survey are discussed.



Godwin School Buddy Bench



Holocaust Study Tour 2015