



MIDLAND PARK  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

# Week of Respect Newsletter

## October 3-7, 2011



**Midland Park Take Action Peer Leaders**

### ***Week of Respect Calendar of Events***

**October 5**

**Elementary School  
Plays**

**October 7**

**Jacqueline  
Murekatete,  
Rwanda Genocide  
Survivor**

**October 18**

**Maud Dahme,  
Holocaust Survivor**

*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.midlandparkschools.k12.nj.us](http://www.midlandparkschools.k12.nj.us)*

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

*Dr. Marie C. Cirasella, Superintendent*

As New Jersey school districts work to comply with the mandates of the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights, the fact that this piece of legislation is an amendment to existing law is often overlooked. The Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) Prevention Statute was originally enacted in 2001 and revised in both 2006 and 2008 to address electronic communications and notice of policy to the public. Significant research has emerged since the original law was enacted, prompting the Legislature's intent to strengthen the standards and procedures for pre-

venting, reporting, and investigating incidents of HIB, on and off school premises. Our district is fully committed to insuring compliance with this legislation and understands that not every incident investigated will fall under the HIB law and disciplinary consequences will be administered as needed. Through training, compliance, and HIB awareness, the climate in the Midland Park schools is one where preventive measures are in place to promote a safe and civil environment for all students.

### **Midland Park's Community Standards of Kindness & Respect Reflected in Legislative Efforts**

*Craig Rush, District Anti-Bullying Coordinator*

Midland Park has always been a child centered and family oriented community. Midland Park takes pride in being a caring and friendly place to live, work and attend school. The New Jersey Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Law

will complement our community standards for treating each individual with kindness and respect.

Midland Park Public Schools got a head start on addressing the state

of New Jersey Anti-Bullying initiative. In September of 2010, the district hired Dr. Paula Rodriguez-Rust, Sociologist, Bullying Prevention Specialist, to provide an Anti-Bullying in-service to

## Midland Park's Community Standards of Kindness & Respect Reflected in Legislative Efforts

*(continued)*

our K-12 staff. In the spring of 2011, Dr. Rust presented her "Aim Higher" Bullying Prevention Assembly to all students in grades K-12. These assemblies were made possible through a joint effort between the Midland Park Public Education Foundation and the elementary and high school PTA's.

This year, in an effort to become a New Jersey school of excellence in the area of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) Prevention, the district hired Dr. Rust to serve as consultant in best-practices program implementation. In June,

students, staff and parents participated in a school climate survey. Dr. Rust will be using the results of this survey to assist the district in identifying new and exciting ways to improve school climate and therefore reduce incidents of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying or any other unkindness.

This September, Dr. Rust in-serviced the staff and the parents on the New Jersey Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Law. The students in grades K-12, also participated in classroom lessons on bullying and school climate. The district has put

in place an elementary and secondary Anti-Bullying Specialist and an elementary and secondary School Safety Team.

As the district Student Assistance Counselor and Anti-Bullying Coordinator, I am excited about our prevention efforts and initiatives this school year. I am excited about working with the community to raise the bar and to use teachable moments to remind Midland Park students of something they already know: treat every human being with kindness, respect and dignity.

## Highland and Godwin Schools recognize Respect Week

*Danielle Bache, Principal*

Ask any student in Highland and Godwin schools for Ms. Bache's two favorite words and they will tell you, Kindness and Respect. At the opening day assembly two years ago, I told the children my two favorite words and my mantra has not changed. It is the easiest message to remember and it carries a lot of weight. When children exhibit behaviors that demonstrate those two simple words, they are caring for others while caring for themselves. They are filling someone else's bucket while filling their own bucket.

I was delighted when the Department of Education declared the first week of October, "The Week of Respect". We get to focus on this powerful word for the entire week and help students gain a deeper understanding of its meaning. On October 5th, the elementary students will enjoy an assembly program spotlighting the word "respect". The K-3<sup>rd</sup> grad-

ers will see the production "Maggie McGee and the Good Character Bandwagon". Maggie helps her friends climb aboard the good character bandwagon because she is tired of rudeness, disrespect, and bad manners. This play addresses the six Pillars of Character, which is a focus for us this school year.

The 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> graders will see "Project America". This show takes students on a poignant journey through our national holidays and instills in them a sense of pride, genuine respect, and appreciation for the people who sacrificed to make our country great.



***Kindness Committee mural paintings at Highland & Godwin playgrounds. Volunteers pose with their Children and Ms. Bache***

A classroom lesson designed by our Guidance Counselor, Kelly Scala, will be the follow up to these assembly programs. Through a story, role playing, group activity, and a take home family worksheet, students will further examine the concept of respect. The goal is to embed the importance of respecting others into our students and have that carry over into everything they do.

## Vision of Respect for the High School

*Nicholas Capuano, Principal*

When a visitor walks into the high school, I want them to observe that Midland Park students are kind and caring people. They respect and accept the differences of others and welcome newcomers and guests to their community. A Midland Park student should model citizenship by communicating and creating a co-operative environment.

Throughout this school year, there will be many initiatives to address the school climate. This past summer, the high school appointed Ms. Stacie Millman, high school guidance counselor, as the Anti-Bullying Specialist. Ms. Millman will work collaboratively with Mr. Craig Rush, the District Anti-Bullying Coordinator as well as our School Safety Team to assess and implement programs to improve school climate.

Some of our initiatives are the following:

- On Thursday, September 8, teachers taught a lesson on school climate. Students developed a shared sense of acceptable behavior in the school setting.



**Jacqueline Murekatete, Rwanda Genocide Survivor** (photo courtesy of Jacqueline)

- On Friday, September 16, grade level assemblies were conducted to review the new Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights. Students were educated on how they should conduct themselves in the school

environment.

- Mrs. Stepien's grade seven exploratory class will continue to develop their writing skills in preparation of the NJASK test using the following themes: school citizenship, group cohesion, harassment and bullying, tolerance, genocide and respect.
- Prior to "Back to School Night" Dr. Paula Rodriguez Rust, Anti-Bullying Specialist, hosted an educational meeting for the parents that addressed the new Anti-Bullying legislation.
- As we gear up for the "Week of Respect" (October 3-7), Mrs. Manicone, Ms. Kelley, Mrs. Horn, and the ninth grade will be traveling with Mrs. Goodell's Holocaust class to the Museum of Tolerance (Simon Weisenthal Center) in New York. The students will be exploring digitally interactive programs which focus on a variety of topics such as: the power of words and images, human rights, challenges in the world today, history of the holocaust through eye-witness testimony and confronting prejudice and discrimination today.

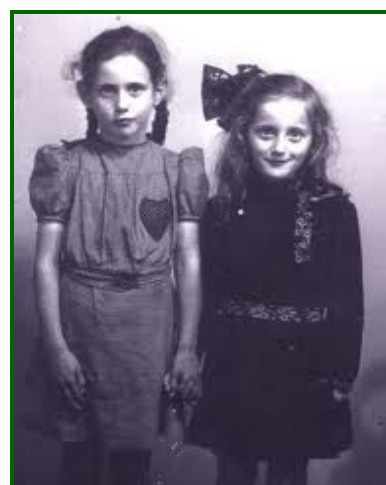
- The students in the Mr. Ersalesi's Broadcasting class will be working on the HIB videos that cover how bullying impacts peoples' lives. Each group of students is responsible for two: 60 second public service announcement videos. Once the videos have been completed, Mr. Ersalesi will send the videos to the elementary



**Maud Dahme, Holocaust Survivor** (photo courtesy of N.J. SBA)

school for the teachers to utilize. The videos will also air on MPTV.

- Maud Dahme, Holocaust survivor and retired NJ State Board of Education president has agreed to speak to the students in grades 7, 8 and 9. She and her sister were hidden by several Christian families in the Netherlands during the war.
- The high school needs to be a caring and nurturing environment. Students need to respect and treat each other with dignity and kindness. I want to continue to establish a positive tone by working with students, faculty and parents. The goal is to improve the overall climate by implementing programs to heighten awareness and respect.



**Maud Dahme and her sister** (photo courtesy of PBS)

**District Anti-Bullying Coordinator: Mr. Craig Rush**, Ph: (201) 444-7400, ext. 206  
Email: [crush@midlandparkschools.k12.nj.us](mailto:crush@midlandparkschools.k12.nj.us)

**Godwin & Highland Anti-Bullying Specialist: Ms. Kelly Scala**, Ph: (201) 445-3880, ext. 319,  
Email: [kscala@midlandparkschools.k12.nj.us](mailto:kscala@midlandparkschools.k12.nj.us)

**MPHS Anti-Bullying Specialist: Ms. Stacie Millman**, Ph: (201) 444-7400, ext. 212,  
Email: [smillman@midlandparkschools.k12.nj.us](mailto:smillman@midlandparkschools.k12.nj.us)