

Blind Brook Middle School

Winter 2020

IMPORTANT DATES & EVENTS:

March 5 - *Incoming 8th Grade Parent Meeting, 7:00 PM*

March 11 - *Incoming 7th Grade Parent Meeting, 7:00 PM*

March 19 *-*
**Principal's Conversation, 9:00 AM*
**Shared Decision Making, 11:30 AM*
**Incoming 6th Grade Parent Meeting, 7:00 PM*

March 20 - *8th grade trip to the Tenement Museum*

March 25-26 *- New York State ELA Exam*

March 27 - *2020-2021 Course Selection Forms due*

April 6-10 *- Spring Break*

April 22-23 *- New York State Math Exam*

May 6-8 *- 8th grade Washington DC Trip*

A Message From the Principal

Dear Parents,

As we are teased with the indicators that portend the arrival of spring, I want to share with you some of the cyclic procedures that we are engaged with at BBMS. This time of year is monopolized by evaluating our current progress and planning for next year.

The State of New York has clear expectations as to what our students should be learning and be able to do at various intervals during their Pre-K-8 education. Progress towards these standards is measured annually in grades 3 through 8 in ELA and math with science being assessed at grades 4 and 8. Unfortunately we have come to resent the testing and disparage the data gleaned from the testing results. I purposefully use the word "unfortunately" as I believe there are benefits to be had from the testing program. The State has been responsive to the criticisms leveled against the program and has made many improvements over the years. The tests may be rigorous but they are relatively "low stakes" assessments that provide valuable diagnostic information about our programs and student progress. This information is only valid however, when the tests are taken seriously. Teacher analysis of the individual tests have revealed some elements of concern. It has become apparent that students who apply the strategies taught at each grade level are successful while those who don't are not. For example; students who provide evidence of reading the questions carefully and underlining the key components of a question, write annotations as they read, highlight the connections between the question and the lines in the passages, utilize the "pre-writing" pages etc. tend to fare at the high continuum of proficiency.

continued on page 2

Those who don't show evidence of dedicating time to the strategies that result in full understanding of the questions, prompts and the reading passage score low. We are currently in the process of sharing with students their ELA tests from last year. It is our hope that students can be reflective and honest about their performance when given the opportunity to review their prior assessment. Hindsight is 20/20. If students recognize the correlation between applying the skills noted above and success, or not utilizing the strategies and a disappointing performance, will they be more likely to succeed? My hope is that they will. For the tests to be true indicators of student progress towards mastery - they need to take them seriously. Here's how you can help:

1. Recognize that standardized testing is a part of life. Your child will take a minimum of 5 Regents exams with the possibility of additional AP exams, and the SAT and/or ACT. Most students will sit for a college entrance exam at least twice as they work for a score that will position them to apply to the college of their choice. All these assessments require students be able to concentrate for extended periods of time. Middle school State tests are low stakes but they provide your child with an opportunity to develop the stamina needed to engage with text over a prolonged period of time. The State has removed the timed element of the tests so students can take as much time as necessary to work with the material.
2. Encourage your child to do their best. Many teachers feel that since the State tests do not impact a student's grade, students do not put in their best effort. Unfortunately this was verified in a number of cases when we reviewed the tests this year. When a straight A students earns a 1 or 2, we look for a reason. Test anxiety may be an issue but more often than we would like to believe the evidence points to anywhere from lack of effort to blatant self-sabotage. If a student believes the test to be irrelevant - they are emboldened to doodle an answer, directly address the test reader about their opinion of the test and in one case even draw a cartoon. Your encouragement and support of your child's serious approach to the test will help ensure that these types of distortions do not continue.
3. Make sure your child has a good night sleep prior to the tests, has a healthy breakfast, and has a stress-free morning. When students arrive late to school on a testing day - they are already agitated. We will do our part to ensure the days leading to the tests are homework free and that students are given time after the tests to decompress.

State testing does not have to be our nemesis. Together we can help ensure that the tests provide us with valuable feedback regarding your child's progress towards important learning standards and the skills they need for success as they continue their education and how our curriculum is meeting (or not meeting) their needs.

Planning for next year is the other major concern at this time of year. We are hosting grade level parent meetings beginning next week to share with parents the curriculum and programs offered at each grade level. I'm happy to report that based upon student input from our current 8th Grade Advisory Board, we are planning to offer elective choices for our rising 8th grade students. These changes and other exciting changes that will result from the implementation of the new schedule will be discussed at the meetings. We look forward to seeing you there!

Sincerely,

Pat Lambert



This I Believe

Our 7th graders recently finished writing their *This I Believe* personal narratives. The goal of this project was for students to create a sense of empathy within the reader, and to hone in on a lesson they have learned through an impactful moment in their lives. Mrs. Fellin and Mrs. Schwittek refer to this as the “universal truth” or “human truth” within their writing.

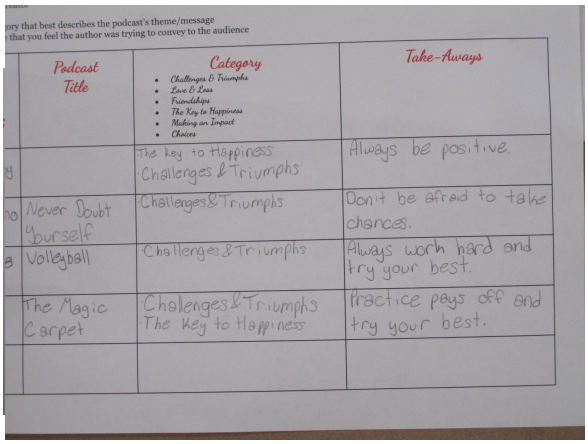
To undertake this task, students immersed themselves in the genre of memoir and studied how to connect with their audiences to show, rather than simply tell, their personal stories. Once the writing phase was complete, students learned how to make their writing come alive with the help of Mr. Soto. Students not only practiced recording their stories, but they investigated diction, inflection, and timing in order to share their stories orally through their very own podcast. Our students then edited their podcasts using the We Video program, under Mr. Soto’s mentorship, and continued to revise their writing in order to truly honor their stories and this particular genre of writing.

Upon completion of the project, students shared their stories and podcasts with their peers. They had the opportunity to respond to each others' memoirs and connect these universal truths to our grade-wide essential question: How can one person make an impact?







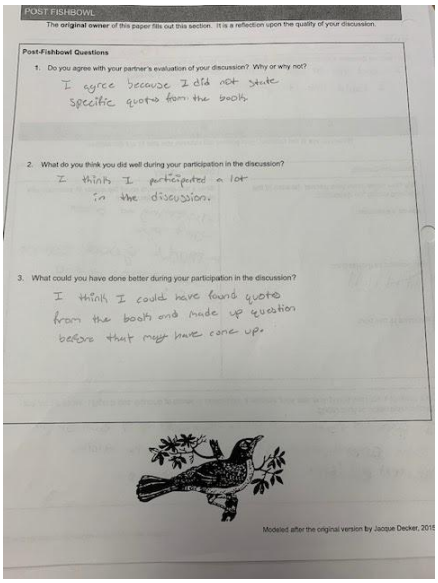


ory that best describes the podcast's theme/message
that you feel the author was trying to convey to the audience

Podcast Title	Category • Challenges & Triumphs • Love & Loss • Friendships • The Key to Happiness • Making an Impact • Choices	Take-Aways
	The key to Happiness Challenges & Triumphs	Always be positive.
Never Doubt yourself	Challenges & Triumphs	Don't be afraid to take chances.
Volleyball	Challenges & Triumphs	Always work hard and try your best.
The Magic Carpet	Challenges & Triumphs The key to Happiness	Practice pays off and try your best.

Life in the Fishbowl

Ms. Treacy's and Mr. Donoghue's English 8 students recently participated in a Socratic Seminar, called the Fishbowl, based on *To Kill a Mockingbird*. In the Fishbowl, the conversation is student-driven and observed by those on the "outside." Students were given discussion questions in advance to prepare themselves with appropriate answers and text evidence to support those answers. Students were then paired up with a classmate or two and had to observe their partners' participation while in the discussion circle. Observers took notes on both quantity and quality of the discussion and gave this feedback to their partners. After both groups of students were able to participate in the fishbowl, each student completed a self-reflection, detailing what their strengths and weaknesses were while participating in the discussion. Students will be able to use this experience to help them in future Socratic Seminars which can take place in almost any subject area.



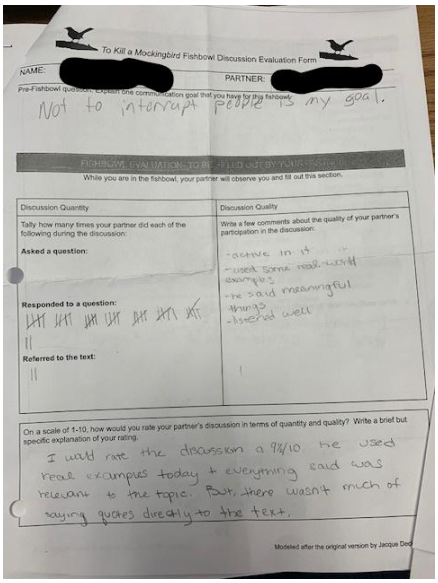
POST FISHBOWL

The original owner of this paper fills out this section. It is a reflection upon the quality of your discussion.

Post-Fishbowl Questions

1. Do you agree with your partner's evaluation of your discussion? Why or why not?
   I agree because I did not state specific quotes from the books.
2. What do you think you did well during your participation in the discussion?
   I think I participated a lot in the discussion.
3. What could you have done better during your participation in the discussion?
   I think I could have found quotes from the books and made up questions before that might have come up.

Modeled after the original version by Jacque Decker, 2015



To Kill a Mockingbird Fishbowl Discussion Evaluation Form

NAME: [redacted] PARTNER: [redacted]

Pre-Fishbowl question: Explain one communication goal that you have for this fishbowl:
Not to interrupt people is my goal.

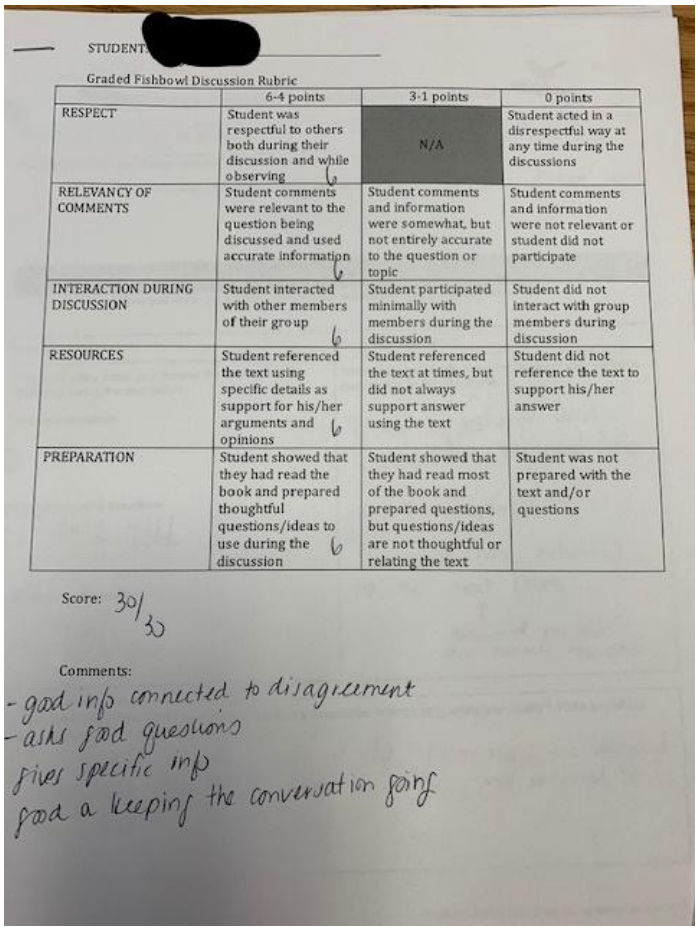
FISHBOWL EVALUATION TO BE FILLED OUT BY PARTNER(S)

While you are in the fishbowl, your partner will observe you and fill out this section.

Discussion Quantity	Discussion Quality
Tally how many times your partner did each of the following during the discussion:	Write a few comments about the quality of your partner's participation in the discussion:
Asked a question:	- active in it - used some real-world examples - he said meaningful things - listened well
Responded to a question:	
Referred to the text:	

On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate your partner's discussion in terms of quantity and quality? Write a brief but specific explanation of your rating.
I will rate the discussion a 9/10 he used real examples today + everything said was relevant to the topic. But, there wasn't much of saying quotes directly to the text.

Modeled after the original version by Jacque Dec



STUDENT [redacted]

Graded Fishbowl Discussion Rubric

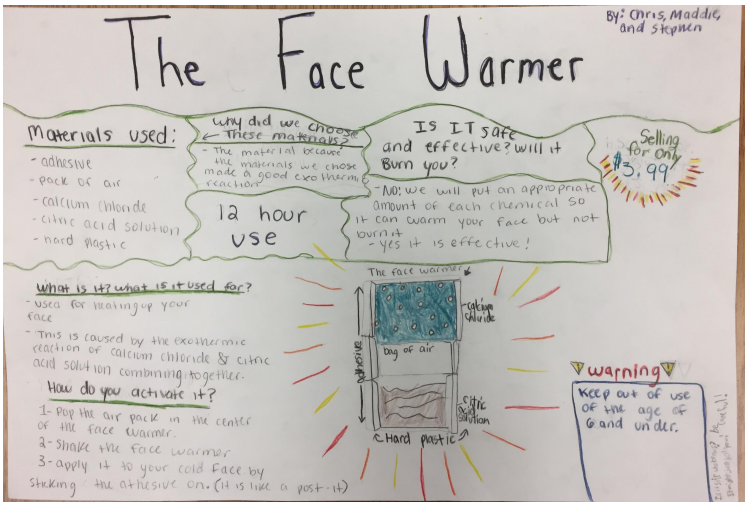
	6-4 points	3-1 points	0 points
RESPECT	Student was respectful to others both during their discussion and while observing 6	N/A	Student acted in a disrespectful way at any time during the discussions
RELEVANCY OF COMMENTS	Student comments were relevant to the question being discussed and used accurate information 6	Student comments and information were somewhat, but not entirely accurate to the question or topic	Student comments and information were not relevant or student did not participate
INTERACTION DURING DISCUSSION	Student interacted with other members of their group 6	Student participated minimally with members during the discussion	Student did not interact with group members during discussion
RESOURCES	Student referenced the text using specific details as support for his/her arguments and opinions 6	Student referenced the text at times, but did not always support answer using the text	Student did not reference the text to support his/her answer
PREPARATION	Student showed that they had read the book and prepared thoughtful questions/ideas to use during the discussion 6	Student showed that they had read most of the book and prepared questions, but questions/ideas are not thoughtful or relating the text	Student was not prepared with the text and/or questions

Score: 30/30

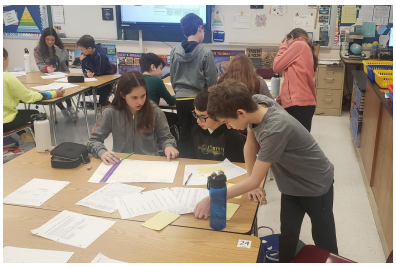
Comments:
- good info connected to disagreement
- asks good questions
gives specific info
good at keeping the conversation going

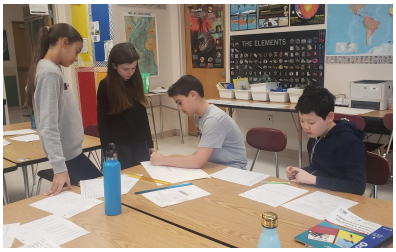
Sixth Grade Scientists

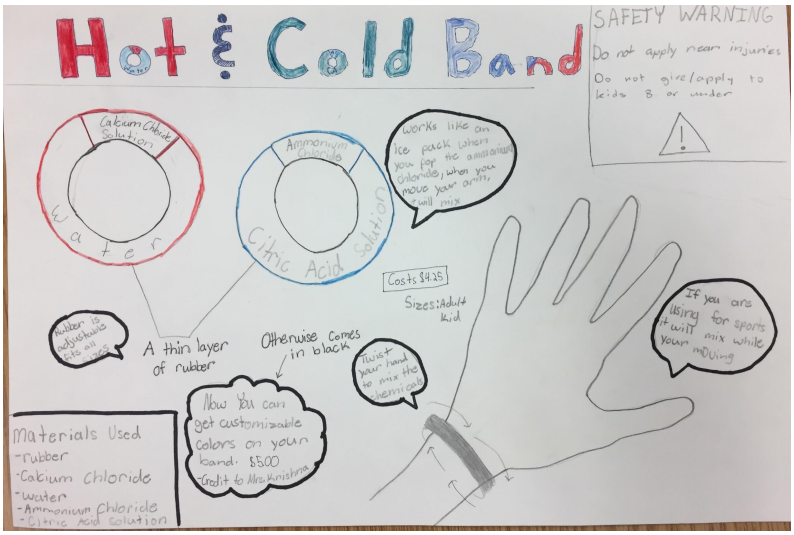
During the past few weeks, our 6th grade scientists have been exploring the question, “What are chemical reactions?” Students started their exploration by mixing chemicals to see the differences between endothermic and exothermic reactions. They then moved onto Engineering Design and have been tasked with designing some sort of product that can be self-warming or self-cooling. To do so, students had to refer back to the chemicals they had previously tested. During their exploration, our students have created products which can be used to skiers, nurses and doctors, children, etc.! Students will present their projects during the coming weeks.











Exploring the Roaring Twenties

Our 8th graders recently immersed themselves in research regarding the people and events of the 1920s. With a focus on further developing students' ability to conduct research and improve their note-taking skills, our social studies classes spent several days working in the library. During that time, Mr. Lombardi, Ms. Weistrop and Mrs. Brown collaborated in teaching and reinforcing effective research skills. Once their research was complete, students wrote newspaper articles documenting their discoveries. Each class then published their own newspaper to highlight the events of the Roaring 20's.

Ragtime Is Out and Charleston Is In

By Jinju Prince Harlem, New York



The loose style with flapping legs of the Charleston became popular in 1923 which led to Lindy Hop in 1927 and the revival of the tango. Originating in Charleston, South Carolina it was popularized by the famous Josephine Baker. In Harlem, the Savoy Ballroom is a well-known place for doing the Charleston, Lindy Hop, Tango, and the new Foxtrot to live jazz music. These new styles of dance became famous due to Broadway and movies like those of Rudolph Valentino.

People like James P. Johnson, Josephine Baker, Rudolph Valentino, Frank Furman, Frankie Manning, Norma Miller, and "Shorty" Geroge Snowden are credited for starting this new era of dance. Ragtime is out, now with the bouncy rhythms and high energy the Charleston and Lindy Hop has made a splash in the new world of dance. This new style suits the modern American woman and leaves room for self-expression and letting loose. Langston Hughes remarked "The lindy-hoppers at the Savoy even began to practice acrobatic routines, and to do absurd things for the entertainment of the whites…The Harlem nights became show nights for the Nordics."

This new style has also brought changes to the ballrooms. Harlem ballrooms like the Savoy, Alhambra, and Renaissance are resisting segregation inside the ballroom. Inside with their happy go lucky and loose atmosphere band plays for black and whites alike, anyone can dance together. Now that women can vote, and own property it inspired change in America and especially the ballrooms with their short dresses, desires to date, and new scandalous dance moves. Not only does the Savoy ballroom have the Charleston, Lindy Hop, and the Tango, it also has the dances Jitterbug Jive, Rhumboogie, and the Mambo which are some of the Savoy's original dances. To accompany these dances there are usually two bands playing at alternate sides of the ballroom usually erupting in what the regulars call the battle of the bands, where the winner is declared by the longest applause following a song.

The Empire of Jazz

By: Evan Levitan
Harlem, NYC



Duke Ellington and Louis Armstrong playing together.

The Harlem Renaissance was an influential time period for black literature and music during the 1920s in Harlem, NY. Many famous black musicians emerged from this revitalization including Count Basie, Duke Ellington and Dizzy Gillespie. As blacks slowly started to gain rights, their migration to NY led to a time of indulgence. These musicians combined their African culture and American culture to create a new style of music called Jazz.

The Harlem Renaissance was a crucial turning point for African American musicians. Black Blues music and White Classical, along with other types of musical genres, combined and created the new style of music called Jazz. This time period also was characterized by more people fighting for black rights. This was a breaking point in African American history because black people were starting to gain rights and become more of a part of society. The powerful musical aspect of this movement brought white people pouring into the jazz clubs to watch these artists perform. Whites were pouring into famous clubs such as the Cotton Club and the Suvoy. Color barriers were broken as both black and white individuals filled these clubs. For one of the first times skin color didn't matter as much, everyone wanted to hear this new style of music and stop the fighting against each other. The Harlem Renaissance changed America for the better and still influences music and many other aspects of American culture today.

The Harlem Renaissance was not just a time that Jazz was evolving and black rights were changing, it was also when black writers emerged. These writers told stories of black life in the South and North and what they have been through. One of the most famous writers from this time period was Langston Hughes. He wrote about his life experiences so that white people could read about the life of a Black person and the difficulties they had. He helped create literature that changed America and changed the style of writing forever.

The Fads Crazes of the 1920's

By: Veronica Pallotta, New York City

The 1920's is an exciting time in America because of all the new trends being created every day. There are new foods such as jello and caesar salad, wingwalking, and flagpole sitting. The main reason all these things grew popular was one for one reason. The radio. As the radio spread the word the people became interested with the social aspect and the fact that it gave people things to do.



Without the radio most of these fads would not have taken over the country because this decade radio sales increased by 1400% and there were 10 million households across the US with a radio. One activity that became known because of the radio was wingwalking which was when daredevils would stand and perform stunts on the wings of planes. This promoted flying circuses so they would travel around the country doing a tour. Leslie Locklear was one of the trailblazers and his performance was called "The Dance of Death " and one of the stunts was him jumping from plane to plane and sometimes the pilots would even switch. Sadly the flying circuses were put to an end when the Air Commerce act made all pilots have to be licensed. Another activity that became very popular was flagpole standing and it was created purely out of boredom. The person mainly responsible for this activity being born was Alvin Kelvin and it originated in Brooklyn. His first time flagpole sitting lasted 13 hours and 13 minutes but over the years it all added up to 14,000 hours. Some people earned their living through this because it attracted many crowds and companies would pay them to sponsor their brand. They would stand most of the time on the flagpole, only during storms would they bring up a small rod and attach it onto the pole so they have something to hold on to. As more and more people recognized what Alvin Kelvin was doing, more and more people started doing it. It was a very popular trend until it died out in 1929 because of the approaching depression. Another thing that was reported live to almost 300,000 people was the Miss America Pageant which started in 1920. The first winner was Margret Gorman from Washington DC. Even though these events were heavily protested by religious groups the girls would make around $100,000 from sponsors and that was more than what Babe Ruth or President Wilson was making per year. Sadly these events were ended due to the heavy objection from many groups

Some of these fads and crazes were deadly but popular was because most people lived with the mindset, "Eat, Drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die." This shows that this whole decade was a time of celebration because the "war to end all wars" was over.

The Red Scare

Byline: Joaquin Otero, New York City, 1920



A. Mitchell Palmer, the man behind the Palmer Raids.

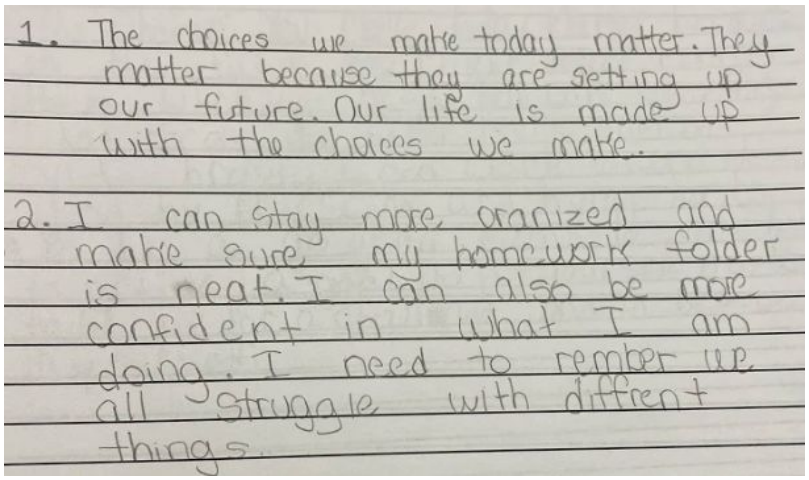
During the years 1919-1920, there was an epidemic. Not the epidemic one would think of, however. This was more of a mental epidemic. The widespread fear of communism known as The Red Scare. This fear was fueled by post WWI intolerance of radical aliens, and the belief that Communist foreigners were planning on taking over America. Another factor was the unemployment present in the US at the time, leading to much crime and many bombings, which was blamed on the Communists. All of this fear and craze led the Attorney General of the United States, Alexander Mitchell Palmer, to order the General Intelligence Division of the Bureau of Investigation to launch raids on the homes of 4,000-10,000 aliens, 4,000-6,000 of which were arrested. After this, About 600 were deported, and the rest detained or released. Here, in New York City alone, 650 foreigners were arrested. These actions impacted citizens in a way that made them angry. Angry about a violation of basic civil rights.

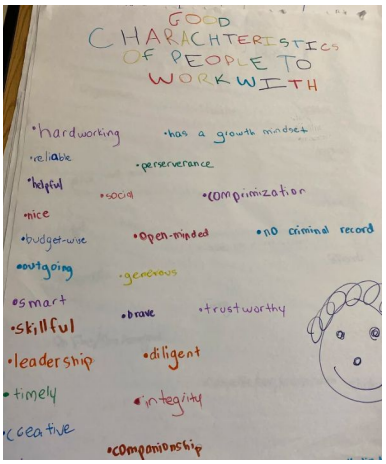
"Why not ask what will become of the United States Government if these alien radicals are permitted to carry out the principles of the Communist Party as embodied in its so-called laws, aims and regulations?" - A. Mitchell Palmer.
This quote shows Palmers belief on the Communist Party. His belief was truly only that they wanted to harm the US. Some factors to his belief was the new Communist leader in Russia, Vladmir Lenin that emerged to power after the Russian Revolution. His thoughts led him to raid over 30 different cities, and most without a proper warrant. These raid were based on solely racist beliefs on foreigners. The post-war intolerance was fed by the ever growing nationalism following the end of WWI. Adding to that, the US was in fear of other countries and the chance that they would cause violence similar to that they were just in.

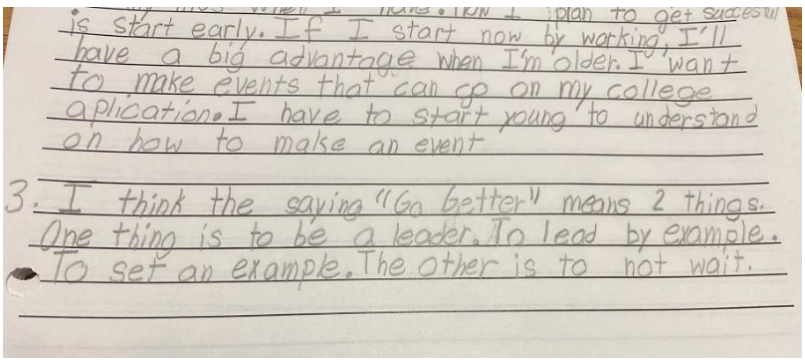
Overall, The Red Scare was a widespread belief, fear, or way of thinking that was fueled by nationalism following WWI. This fear was one against the Communist party, and led to racist raids on the homes of aliens across 33 cities in the US from 1919-1920.

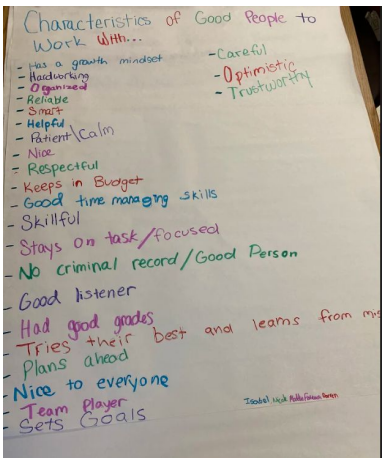
Building Character and Trustworthiness

To kickstart 2020, our 6th graders worked on a character building exercise where they were asked to imagine themselves in charge of their own company/organization. With the ultimate goal of success in mind, they came up with a list of characteristics they would look for when interviewing candidates to employ in their business. Students then made connections between these desired characteristics and how they are embedded in school, sports, music and our everyday lives even when we may not realize it.











Celebrating the New Year!

While exploring the influential river valley civilization of ancient China, our 6th graders celebrated the arrival of the “Year of the Rat” with a variety of activities designed to enrich their learning experience. In addition to their more conventional classroom studies, our students created and exchanged Hong Bao, the traditional red envelopes meant to bring well-wishes and good luck throughout the New Year. It was ‘all hands on deck’ as students created lanterns, practiced the art of Chinese calligraphy, and explored other facets of Chinese culture. As their study of ancient China continues over the coming weeks, students will be creating their own terracotta warriors and learning how to write an essay in which they will compare and contrast the "army" they make in class to the original created for China's first emperor, Shi Huangdi, over twenty-two hundred years ago.












napple


pot spirit?






Snapple

Connecting Cultures

With the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language standards of Culture, Connections, and Comparisons in mind, Signor Castelli's Italian 1 students examined gift-giving practices around the world as a foundation for learning about the Italian tradition of La Befana. To enrich their learning, students described their own cultural traditions. Students of Jewish heritage described the gift-giving traditions of Hanukkah and how the number 18 is important because it represents "chai" or "life." Students shared that in the Chinese culture, it is tradition to not give monetary gifts starting with the number four, as that word is similar to the word for "death." Students of Hispanic heritage, as well as those of Italian descent, discussed the gift-giving traditions for important feasts such as one's Name Day and Feast of the Three Kings. Our students appreciated the opportunity to share aspects of their own cultures and agreed that it was interesting and meaningful to compare gift-giving traditions from around the world.

A New Twist on an Old Classic

After reading a number of Fairy Tales written in Italian, our 8th graders were tasked with re-writing *The Three Little Pigs* with a modern twist. Instead of pigs and a wolf, students created new characters and updated the classic tale in Italian. Students then wrote scripts and performed their tales.







When You're an Addams

On January 23-25, 2020, students from grades 6-8 put on four incredible performances of *The Addams Family Young@Part* produced by BBMS teacher Cher Treacy, the artistic & musical direction of Julie Colangelo-Dore, choreography by Blind Brook alumni Jordan Singer and technical direction by Zach Dore. The Young@Part edition of the show, licensed by Theatrical RIghts Worldwide, is based on the original Broadway musical but tailor-made for younger performers. Through their participation in the show, students learned about the importance of family, no matter how "different" and the power of love over adversity. Members of the cast will take a trip to Sleepy Hollow High School in March to see a high school production of the show. The Cast, Crew and Production Team would like to thank everyone who came out to see the show and support the hard work of everyone involved.





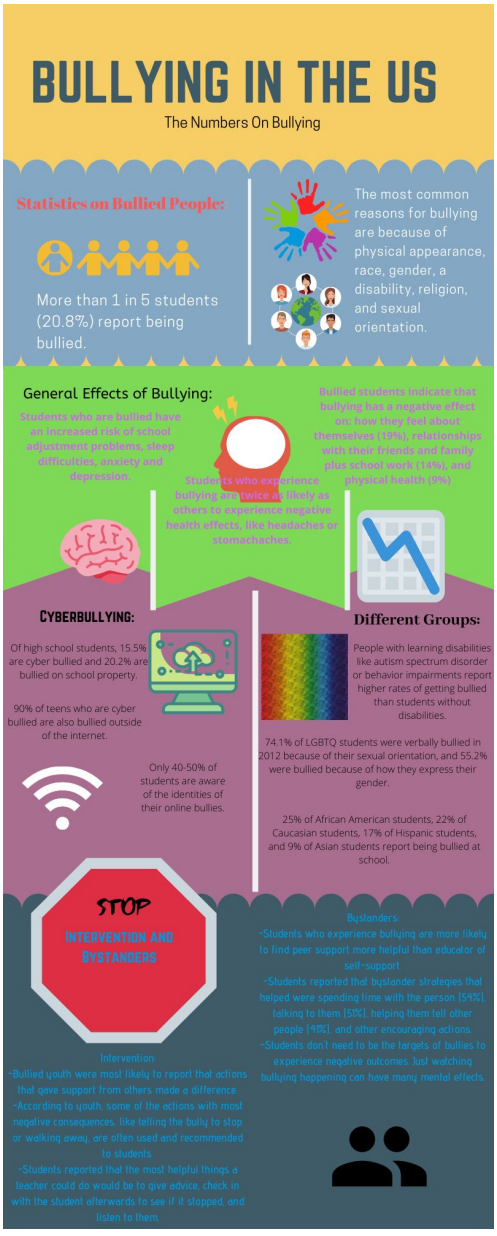


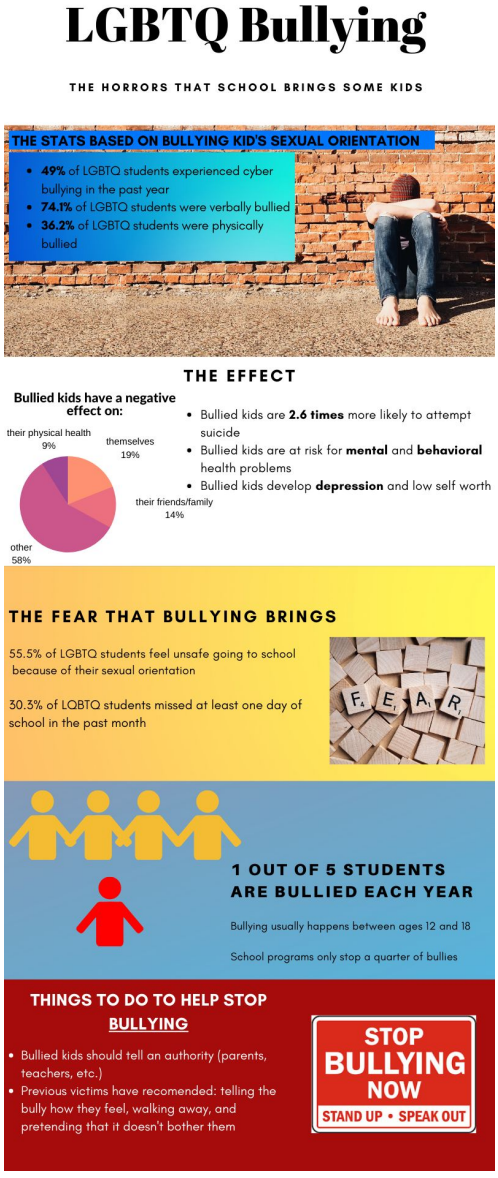


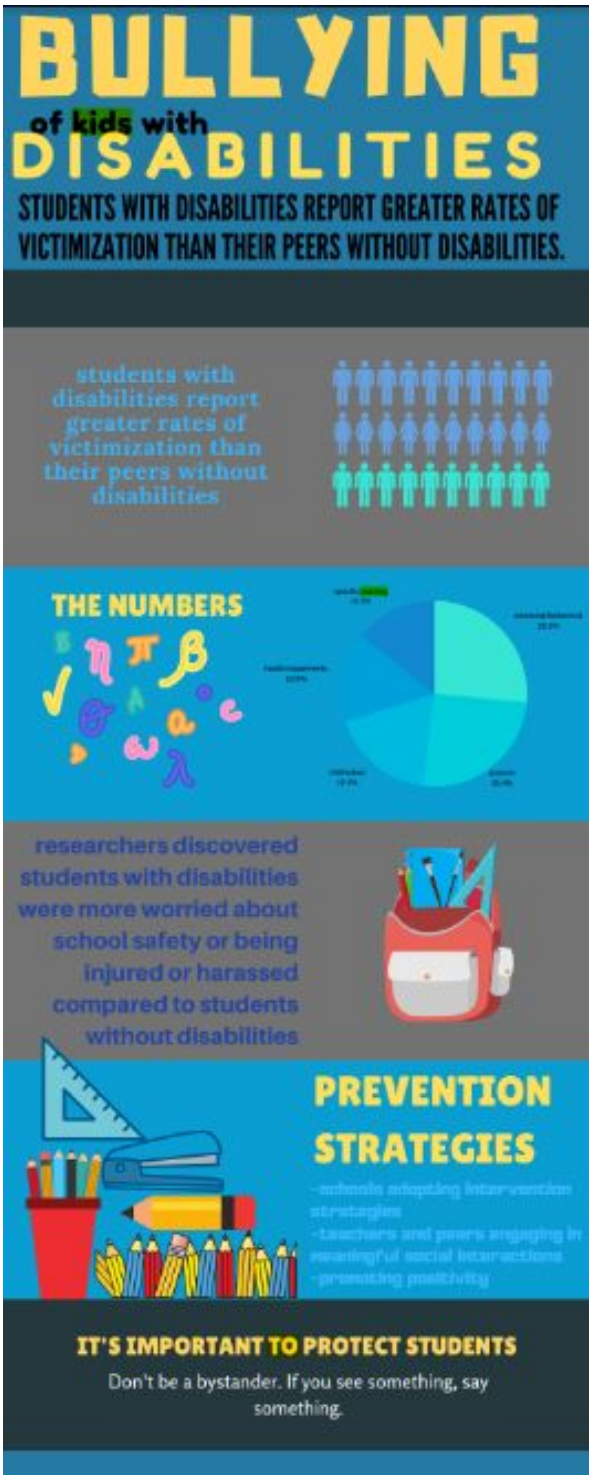


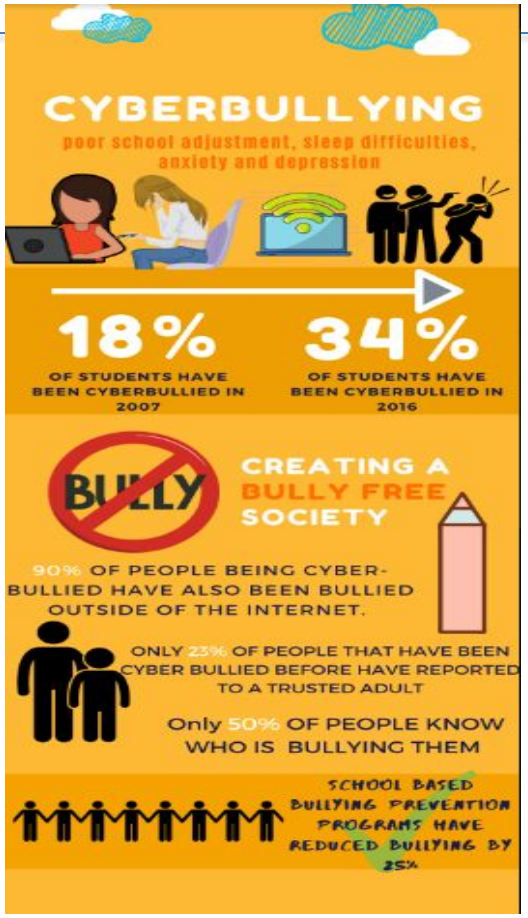
Student Infographics

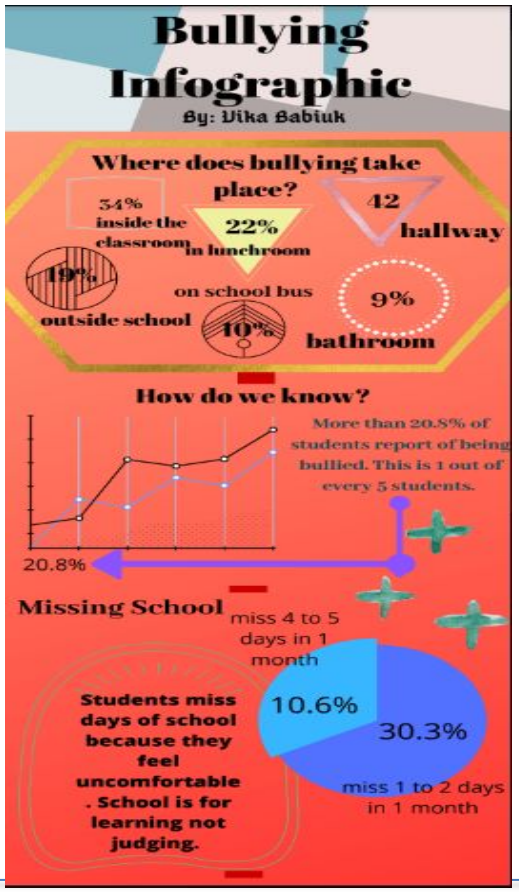
Our 8th grade Digital Media students are currently practicing their research skills while preparing for the production of their podcasts. In doing so, students are learning new ways to present their findings. For example, students have recently created an infographic (a collection of imagery, charts, and minimal text that provides an easy-to-understand overview of a topic) to summarize their data visually. Students will be using infographics throughout the rest of the year to summarize and present their research for upcoming projects.






BULLYING
of kids with
DISABILITIES
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES REPORT GREATER RATES OF VICTIMIZATION THAN THEIR PEERS WITHOUT DISABILITIES.
students with disabilities report greater rates of victimization than their peers without disabilities
THE NUMBERS
researchers discovered students with disabilities were more worried about school safety or being injured or harassed compared to students without disabilities
PREVENTION STRATEGIES
IT'S IMPORTANT TO PROTECT STUDENTS
Don't be a bystander. If you see something, say something.


CYBERBULLYING
poor school adjustment, sleep difficulties, anxiety and depression
18%
OF STUDENTS HAVE BEEN CYBERBULLIED IN 2007
34%
OF STUDENTS HAVE BEEN CYBERBULLIED IN 2016
BULLY
CREATING A BULLY FREE SOCIETY
90% OF PEOPLE BEING CYBER-BULLIED HAVE ALSO BEEN BULLIED OUTSIDE OF THE INTERNET.
ONLY 23% OF PEOPLE THAT HAVE BEEN CYBER BULLIED BEFORE HAVE REPORTED TO A TRUSTED ADULT
Only 50% OF PEOPLE KNOW WHO IS BULLYING THEM
SCHOOL BASED BULLYING PREVENTION PROGRAMS HAVE REDUCED BULLYING BY 25%

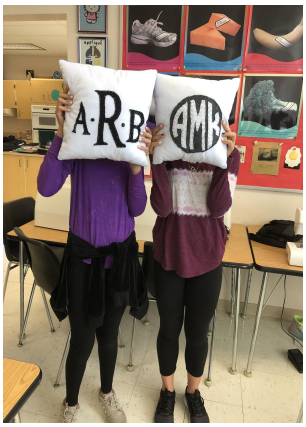

Bullying Infographic
By: Vika Babiuk
Where does bullying take place?
34% inside the classroom
22% in lunchroom
42 hallway
19% outside school
on school bus
10%
9% bathroom
How do we know?
More than 20.8% of students report of being bullied. This is 1 out of every 5 students.
20.8%
Missing School
miss 4 to 5 days in 1 month
10.6%
30.3%
miss 1 to 2 days in 1 month
Students miss days of school because they feel uncomfortable. School is for learning not judging.

7th Grade Sewists

According to *Thread Magazine, "***sewist** is a relatively new term used to describe someone who creates sewn works of art, which can include clothing or other items made with sewn elements." Our 7th grade sewists have been busy creating pillows in their Family & Consumer Science class. Students began by selecting images of their choice and learning how to make them into patterns for applique. After hand stitching their designs, students learned to operate a sewing machine. This enabled for a successful completion of their pillow projects!

P.S. -



















8th Grade Stitchers

In Stitch ‘n Kitchen, our 8th graders have recently finished making their own pajamas! Students began by hand embroidering their initials onto fabric which eventually became a pocket on their pajama pants. Throughout the project, students learned how to use a dressmaker pattern from start to finish. They were amazed at how much work went into making a garment and how successful they felt when their PJs were complete.









INSPIRED BY CARTOON HEROS



Special thanks to the following students and their selected comic creator: **Top Row** (left to right) **Paige Garber-**Scooby-Doo by Iwao Takamoto, **Sophia Carey-**Tweety Bird by Robert Clampett, **Hudson McRedmond-**Bart Simpson by Matt Groening, **Sophie Possick-**Winnie the Pooh by H.E. Shepard, **Gavin Korpi-**Perry the Platypus by Dan Povenmire and Jeff " Swampy" Marsh, **Maddie Campbell-**Patrick Star by Stephen Hillenburg, **Arianna Nachman-**Peppa Pig by Neville Astley & Mark Baker. **Bottom Row** (left to right) **Rachel Coffey-**Bubble Guppies by Eren Unten, **Paige Branca-**Dora by Chris Gifford, **Dylan Florio-**Pikachu by Atsuko Nishata, **Jordan Sternschein-**Care Bear by Elena Kucharik, **Bennett Kulla-** Winnie the Pooh by H.E. Shepard, **Zoe Axelrod-** Stitch by Chris Sanders, **Cade Ascencio-**Charlie Brown by Charles Schulz.





HOW'D THEY DO THAT!?!

Students learned to use the **grid method** to enlarge their images. They began by drawing a grid on top of their reference photo. They then drew a grid of equal ratio onto their work surface. Going one square at a time, students drew their enlarged image before erasing the grid lines and painting.

$$\frac{8}{10} = \frac{16}{20} = \frac{24}{30} = \frac{32}{40}$$

8th Grade Perspectives:



8th Grade Celebrity Portraits:



7th Grade: In the Style of Wayne Thiebaud



7th Grade Family Portraits



Congratulations!

Congratulations to **Sophie Possick** (8th grade) for winning the 2019-2020 Westchester-East Putnam Region National PTA Reflections competition! As a regional winner, Sophie will move on to the state competition.

Congratulations to **Mrs. Fellin's 4th period** class for winning Achieve 3000's Read to Succeed contest! As a prize for winning, the class received a gift card which will be used to purchase a beanbag chair for the classroom.



Mrs. Fellin's 4th period class: Chloe Beal, Christian Boruch, Alex Brzov, Hayden Cohen, Stella DiStasio, Makayla Dutra, Abigail Goldstein, Iris Gu, Josephine Lim, Hailey Mallah, Alexandra Maniscalco, Dylan McRedmond, Luke Miller, William Oh, Alexandra Rubin, Aidan Sachs, Max Sausen, Brandon Schwartzman, Emily Solow, Ava Vickers, Elliot Zwicker

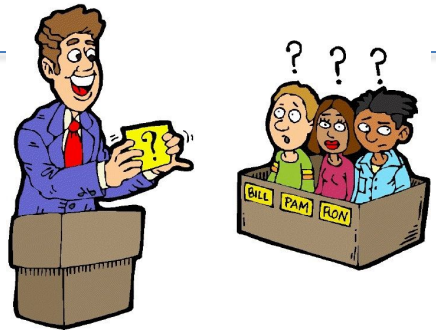
Kudos!

David Scinto (8th grade) has joined the High School FIRST TECH CHALLENGE Robotics Team 4654 Team Jellyfish and is assisting the team with the Elementary school OUTREACH JUNIOR JELLIES robotics after school program being held here at the middle school. Junior Jellies is not only a fundraiser for the HS robotics team but also an important outreach where thirty students in grades 4 and 5 lean how to design & code (program) their robot to compete against other teams.

Amrit Mohapatra (6th grade) is also helping out with the Junior jellies after school program but the current rules requires students to be in 8th grade to officially join the FTC HS robotics team.

Both students have been very helpful to the team and we commended them for their volunteer efforts!

Academic Competitions



National History Bee:
The following students have qualified to compete in the Regional Final on Saturday, March 7th, in Ridgewood, NJ:

Jonah Bassuk
Fiona Chen
Stephen Grazio
Hunter Greenspan
Matthew Grossman
Ben Goldowsky
Jacob Goldowsky
Madeline Hirsch
Rachel Horn
Akash Kumar
Evan Levitan
Hudson McRedmond
Josh Montvelisky
Dylan Striar
Nicholas Violino
Derek Wang
Charlotte Zelin

National Science Bee:
The following students have qualified to compete in the Regional Final on Saturday, March 7th, in Ridgewood, NJ:

Fiona Chen
Ben Goldowsky
Hunter Greenspan
Madeline Hirsch
Rachel Horn
Kabir Joshi
Akash Kumar
Josh Montvelisky
Charlie Rohtbart
Dylan Striar
Lauren Sun
Alex Thompson
Derek Wang
Charlotte Zelin

National Geographic GeoBee:
17 BBMS students participated in the qualifying round of the GeoBee. Ten of these students moved on to our live game show-style School Competition held on January 30th. The top three scores went to:

1st place: Nicholas Violino
2nd place: Kabir Joshi

As our top finalist, Nicholas has taken the qualifying exam to see if he will move onto the State Final. We are awaiting the results!

Character Corner



Our mission at BBMS is to develop the whole child. This encompasses not only academic growth, but social and emotional growth as well. In an effort to help our students reach their full potential as productive members of society, this past June our Character Education Committee met to assess our program. While many strengths were identified, so too were numerous opportunities for enriching our Character Education program to make it more meaningful to our students. After reviewing the research-based best practices related to character education, our committee recommended the following:

- Incorporating character development into the curriculum of all courses
- Engaging students in hands-on character building activities
- Involving students in decision-making related to these activities
- Providing opportunities for cross-age grouping of students
- Identifying opportunities for parental/family involvement

These recommendations have resulted in the creation of our new and improved Character Education Program, structured around monthly themes, activities and projects which are interwoven into all courses. Here are some highlights of how our students have been engaged over the past few months:

November: **Citizenship & Empathy**
Activity: Chicken Soup Drive

December: **Caring & Empathy**
Activity: Holiday Toy Drive

January: **Empathy**
Activity: Hoops for Heart

February: **Fairness**

Coming in March:
Wellness Week

Dismissal and Absence Procedures

To report an absence for the middle school, please e-mail:
msattendance@blindbrook.org or call Mrs. Smithies at 914-937-3600 x 3145

Please use the following guide when you have questions or concerns.

Parent-School Communication

Contact your child's **TEACHER** regarding:

- **Your child's academic work and performance**
- **Homework**
- **Parent conferences**
- **Classroom discipline**

Contact your child's **SCHOOL COUNSELOR** regarding:

- **Academic guidance**
- **Standardized testing**
- **Summer programs**
- **Peer Tutors**
- **Interpersonal and family concerns**
- **Scheduling**

School Counselors
A. Arzt (A-K) x 3210
E. Sosnow (L-Z) x3132

Contact the **DEPARTMENT COORDINATOR** regarding:

- **Academic programs/curriculum**
- **Clarification of above items/subjects**

Dept. Coordinators
Science – M.Sugantino x3190
English – J. Ambrosio x3412
LOTE - M.Castelli x3241
SS – M. Markolovic x 3159
Math – M. McCarvill x3165
Spec. Ed–P. Weistrop x3222

Other concerns or concerns after communicating with the above :

School Psychologist
C. Merlo x 3155

School Social Worker
R. Mileo x 3211

Athletics
D. Goldman x 3118

Special Education
H. Burg x 3033
TBD x3097

Attendance
D. Smithies x 3145

Medical
G. Park x 3139

Administration
P. Lambert
Principal x 3208

S. Horowitz
Asst. Principal x 3126

L. Paisley
MS Principal's Secretary x 3119

Note- Blind Brook email addresses are *first inital last name* @blindbrook.org
Example - Patricia Lambert is plambert@blindbrook.org