



Blind Brook Middle School

Fall 2019



UPCOMING EVENTS:

December 2 - Modified Winter Sports begin

December 10 - BBMS Winter Band Concert

December 12 - PTA Meeting, 7 PM

December 18 - BBMS Winter Choral Concert

December 19 - Shared Decision Making meeting

December 19 - Principal's Conversation, 9AM

December 21-January 1 - Holiday Recess

January 2 - School Opens

January 14 - PTA Meeting, 8:45 AM

January 16 - Shared Decision Making meeting

January 20 - Martin Luther King Day
(Schools Closed)

January 23-25 - BBMS Musical

A Message From the Principal

Dear Members of the BBMS Community,,

The 2019-2020 school year is off to a great start! As a faculty we share a common goal of making the middle school experience a positive and safe environment for all our students. This edition of our Newsletter highlights a number of activities and challenges that students have participated in this fall to support this important initiative. We encourage you to discuss these "happenings" with your child and welcome any feedback or suggestions that you might offer to enhance future programming.

Report cards for the first marking period were posted to the parent portal on November 20th. Please take some time to discuss your child's progress. It is important to keep in mind that grades represent a student's progress in meeting standards established by the NYSED and the district and usually reflect a student's effort and commitment to learning. Middle school is a time for students to challenge themselves in all aspects of their lives. As expectations become more rigorous, some students struggle with the increased demands and may not be immediately successful. Helping students persevere and remain positive in their attitude toward learning by welcoming challenges is a valuable lesson that will serve them well in all future endeavors.

I hope you enjoy this edition of the Newsletter! Enjoy the remainder of the fall season!

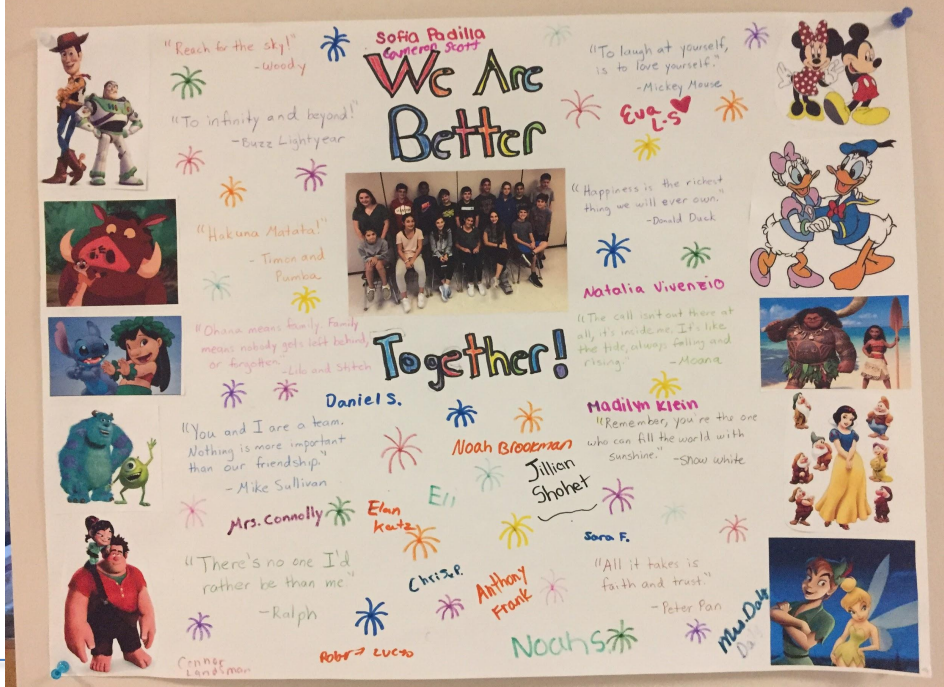
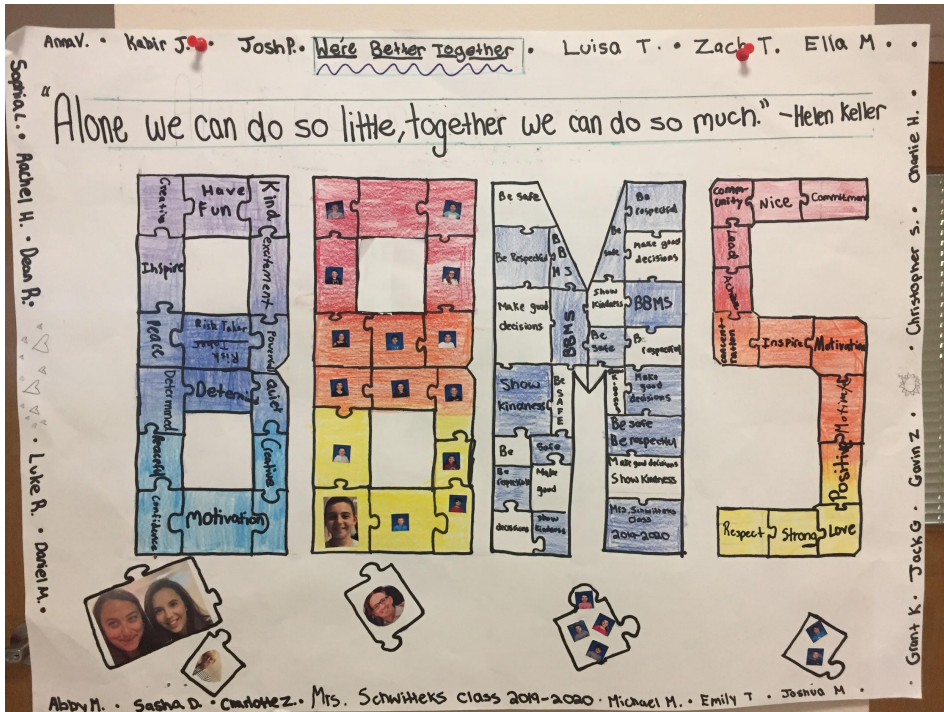
Best,

Pat Lambert



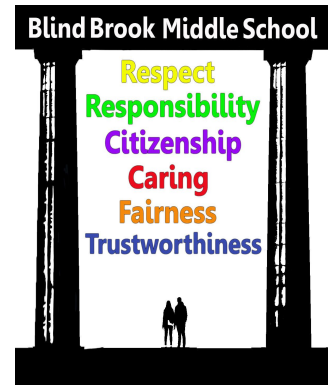
BBMS: Better Together!

This year, to build and strengthen our community while celebrating our individual differences, homerooms and grade levels will be competing in a series of competitions and challenges. Our first competition of the year involved homeroom classes creating posters based on the theme “BBMS: Better Together.” To celebrate their title of winning grade, our 7th graders celebrated with an ice cream party, while our grand prize winner, Mrs. Schwittek’s homeroom, celebrated with a pizza party!



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, our Character Education Committee has created a program which incorporates the following research-based best practices related to character education:



- 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

Our Character Education Program is structured around monthly themes, activities and projects which are interwoven into all courses. Here are some highlights of how our students have already been engaged and what's coming up:

September: **Respecting our School Community**

Creating building rules and expectations

Homeroom Poster Challenge (BBMS: Better Together)

An emphasis on respect and self-respect in all courses

The introduction/practicing of our school wide "Stop, Walk, Talk" bully prevention program

October: **Persevering through Struggles in Healthy Ways**

What is perseverance and why is it important? (Science)

An emphasis on perseverance in all courses

Red Ribbon Week: Making Safe Choices (Drug / Alcohol Awareness)

November: **Citizenship & Empathy**

What responsibilities do members of a society have? (Social Studies)

How can we each make a difference?

Pajama Day to benefit the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (Student Government)

December: **Caring & Empathy**

Chicken Noodle Soup Drive

Toys for Tots (Student Government)

Making Math Meaningful

Our 6th graders are currently studying numbers in the real world. Using fractions, decimals, percentages and recognizing their equivalence is essential to everyday life. Students have discussed how decimals, fractions and percentages surround us in technology, money, science, measurement, sports, cooking, nutrition, exercise, finance, shopping and much more! They are using this knowledge to solve real world problems.

Batting Averages

Pete Alonso 1B	161	153	.260
Michael Conforto RF	151	143	.257
Robinson Cano 2B	107	100	.256



Verizon Msg: You've used about 90% of your 8GB data (cycle ends the 28th). Overage data for this cycle will be \$15 per 1GB. Or, to increase your data by 2GB for \$15 more per month, reply YES. There's no contract extension. To learn more about new data pricing visit go.vzw.com/verizonplan Thank you for choosing Verizon.



You have 83% data remaining.



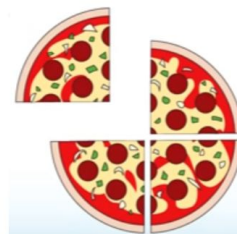
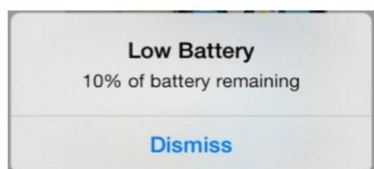
You're good on data.
14.79 GB remaining with 15 days left.

WARM UP OVEN TO 400°F
mix together:
1/4 c Flour
3/4 c Corn Meal
1/4 c sugar
2 teaspoons Baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt

Passing Yards  1,984	Rushing Yards  402
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Passing

NAME	GP	CMP	ATT	CMP%	YDS
Daniel Jones QB	9	187	297	63.0	1,984
Eli Manning QB	2	56	89	62.9	556
Total	10	243	386	63.0	2,540



Full STEAM Ahead!

Science 6

6th grade science is off to a phenomenal start! Our students spent some time learning about Mrs. Krishna's favorite saying - "Perfect children aren't real....real children aren't perfect" and how this relates to growth mindset. Middle school is a great time to make mistakes and learn from them!

Students have been exploring Pangaea, continental drift and Alfred Wegener. They worked with maps to see how the continents have drifted over hundreds of millions of years! While they first explored the evidence as to "HOW" the continents moved, now they are putting the pieces together (haha) to learn about "WHY" they've moved apart. For a quick refresher, click [here](#)!

Our 6th graders have also enjoyed working with microscopes as they explored the parts and functions of a microscope, using the letter "f" on a slide, and seeing how switching from low power to high power can change what we see in a specimen. They also enjoyed seeing some interesting specimens such as a bee's abdomen, bamboo shoots and even an ant!

Technology 6

Students who had Technology during the first quarter recently completed designing, constructing, and testing their GRAVITY car. Students used Lego Digital Designer to design their GRAVITY powered car prior to constructing it. They then used their cars to explore time and distance relationships, calculate speed, and explore other aspects of physics.

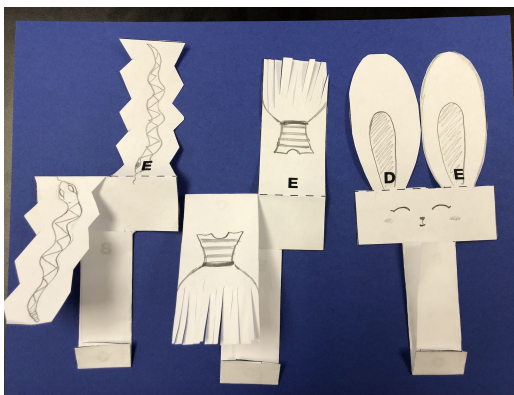


7th Grade STEAM

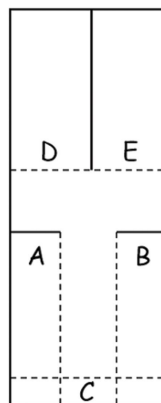
Students in Ms. Schaefer's 7th grade science classes learned a little about engineering design in their science classes. Mr. Giglio and Ms. Schaefer collaborated in creating a lesson in which students designed mini-helicopters to find out which design characteristics would impact how quickly the helicopter would fall to the ground. Some of the characteristics that students changed were the length, width, shape, or angle of the helicopter wings. Some students punched holes in the wings, feathered the edges, or added weight to their helicopter by adding paper clips. Each student group created 3 different designs. This activity built on what students learned in 6th grade science about forces and motion and introduced the concepts of engineering design.

In addition to changing the structure of the helicopter, some students combined art and engineering by creating images on the helicopter wings. Others added colors and designs to the wings to see how the twirling of the propellers might change the way the helicopter looked as it fell, creating optical illusions.

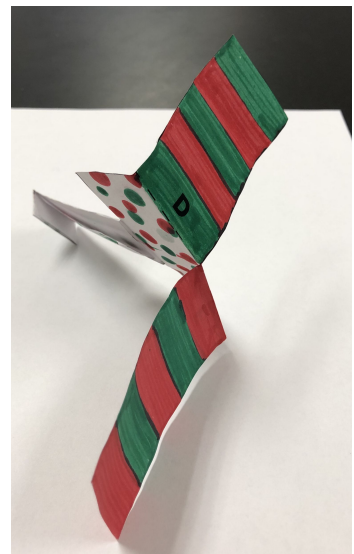
When they were finished trying out each of the different versions of their helicopter, students evaluated the success of their designs. Students will have an opportunity to build on this experience with engineering design later in the year.



Artwork by Iris Gu



Helicopter Design
Template from the San
Francisco Exploratorium



Artwork by Josephine Lim

The Power of Words

Our 7th graders recently participated in the "One Word Project" wherein they discussed the power of positive words and set goals for themselves as 7th grade students. They elaborated on these words and wrote descriptive anecdotes on why they chose the word they did and how it represents their vision. These words are displayed in the 7th grade wing with the title "One Word Can Make A Difference."

In addition, students contributed photos of themselves reading in their favorite reading spot, or their favorite imagined reading spot. Collages were made of these photos and displayed in the classroom to encourage a love of reading amongst our students.



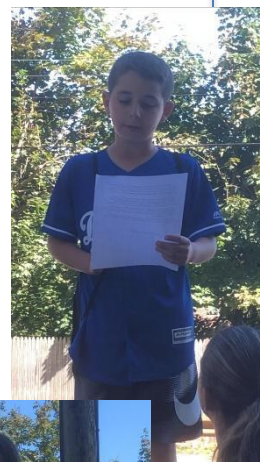
Student Activism

More than one hundred Blind Brook Middle school students, led by the sixth grade, participated in the Global Climate Strike on Friday, September 27th. In Mr. Dakers' social studies class, students discussed global climate change and the Friday's For Future movement led by Swedish teenager Greta Thunberg.

In the days leading-up to the walkout, students designed posters in support of the movement. Two students took it a step further as they addressed the crowd to express their thoughts and feelings on this important issue that impacts us all.

Sixth graders Dylan Striar and Noah Leder spoke eloquently in front of their peers, teachers, and administrators. Dylan read a letter that she had written to our United States and New York State senators. In it, Striar expressed her concerns and frustrations at the lack of initiative and action taken by our elected representatives. Following Dylan's speech, Noah proposed a tree-planting initiative for right here in Rye Brook. In an effort to reduce greenhouse gases in our atmosphere, Leder is asking for town and community support in raising money to plant trees in one of our town parks.

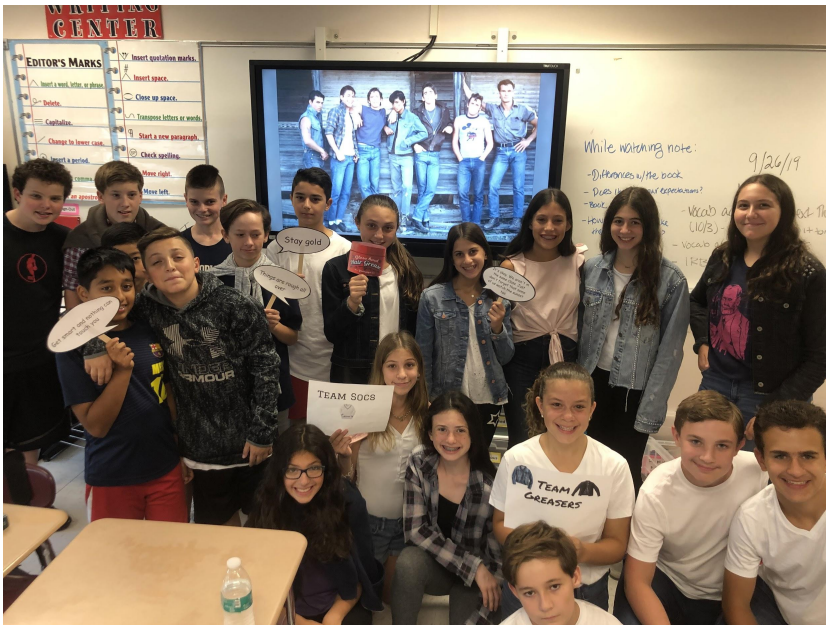
Recently, Noah sent a letter to the Rye Brook Village Administrator in hopes of making his initiative a reality. Should the town approve Leder's request, the next step will be fundraising the money needed to purchase and plant the trees. Please be sure to keep an eye out in the coming months for an opportunity to contribute this worthwhile cause; one that will beautify our parks while helping our planet at the same time.





Seventh Grade Outsiders

Our 7th graders read the iconic novel, *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton, as their summer reading selection this past summer. As they worked through important elements from the book, students explored the various characters and discussed the characters' choices and motivation throughout the novel. Students also discussed the historical context of the novel and themes such as "how does our environment shape us?" The unit culminated with our annual "Dress Like an Outsider Day" wherein students celebrated with costumes and props, and made connections to the novel and the opportunities they have in their own lives.



Sixth Graders Explore the NY Hall of Science

On November 7th, our sixth graders traveled to the NY Hall of Science in Queens, NY, where they participated in four different activities: The Design Lab, The Main Level, Connected Worlds, and 3D movie about service dogs entitled SuperPower Dogs.

The Main Level consisted of fun, interactive exhibits. Students were encouraged to explore all of the interactive displays to help understand difficult topics at their own level. For example, the evolution of the bird, the kiwi, is a very challenging topic to understand, but an animated video at the main level helped students learn how the kiwi evolved.



The Design Lab was a station of creativity, teamwork and strategy. Here, students worked together to face a challenge by using their ingenuity. Noah Lowenthal enjoyed using headphones to listen to the sounds that different materials made as they hit each other. He found metals were louder than softer items.



Connected Worlds was a great testament to team building. In Connected Worlds, groups of students had to work together to keep the virtual biomes alive. This was accomplished by planting seeds and moving the logs around to direct the water from the waterfall to the biomes. This activity required a lot of strategic thinking in order to get the water to the areas most in need.



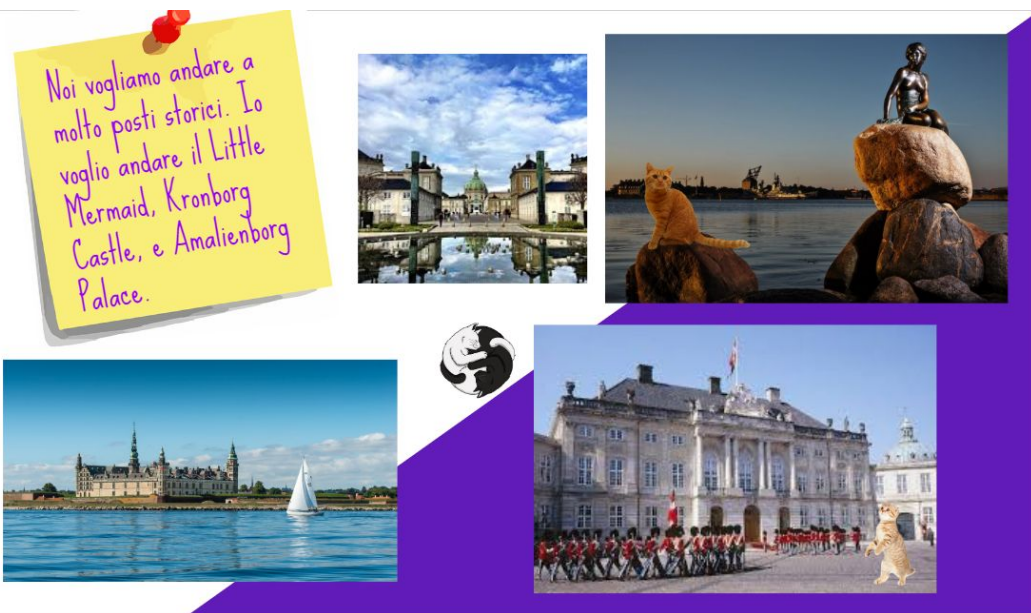
The final activity was the 3D documentary about SuperPower Dogs which enabled students to learn about how these special animals help save lives, and the incredible bond they share with their human companions.

After enjoying the four different and unique activities provided by the NYSCI, our students returned to Blind Brook Middle School having a greater understanding of not just science, but how the world is more than the sum of its parts!

Leaving on a Jet Plane...

Signor Castelli's Italian 1 students have utilized the beginning of the year to review travel vocabulary, but with a twist! Using Project-Based Learning, students planned a trip to somewhere outside of the United States they have never visited. Destinations included Tokyo, Greece, Iceland and New Zealand. Students utilized various websites to research flights, hotels, food and drink, and attractions that are both entertaining and cultural.

In completing this research, students were able to realize things about traveling that they may not have known prior to this assignment; mainly the amount of time and effort it takes to plan an incredible vacation. Buon viaggio!



Memoirs in the Making

Our seventh graders recently began their exploration of memoirs by investigating different texts in the library and choosing one to read as their independent read for this unit. They will utilize this text to learn crucial memoir elements and reading strategies.



Destigmatizing Mental Health Disorders

In 7th grade health class we made pamphlets to inform people about mental health disorders such as ADHD, Alzheimer's, OCD, Tourettes, PTSD and more. The reason we did this project is because there is a stigma surrounding mental health and we want to try to break that stigma. We learned that if you think you have some sort of disorder, you shouldn't be scared to tell anyone or be scared to get any treatment for it.

We also learned about stress and the effects it has on all parts of our health. We made a stress square on how it can affect our minds, bodies, emotions, and behaviors. In the next few classes we will be learning about healthy stress relieving techniques.

-Luisa Toller, Ms. Murphy's 7th grade health class.

M
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d

- Kill brain cells
- Reduce size of brain
- Makes it harder to learn & remember
- Increases risk of develop depression
- Makes it harder to regulate emotions



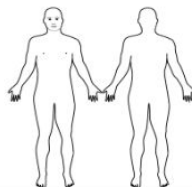
1. You could get into a fight with someone and intentionally hurt them.
2. Physically abuse someone
3. Destroy Property
4. Make them feel bad about themselves
5. Turn to drugs or alcohol



STRESS

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1. Speeding up of motor functions
2. Stomach pains
3. Headaches
4. Lack of sleep
5. Heart attacks



- Depression
- Overwhelmed
- Lack of confidence
- Worried
- Anger



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Musical Notes

We are pleased to announce that BBMS students have been accepted into the 2020 All-County Music Festival. Austin Lu, Violin and Fiona Chen, Flute have been accepted into the All-County Orchestra while Rachel Horn, Flute has been accepted into the All-County Band. Additional students from the 6th grade band auditioned for this festival in November, with results posted later this month. The All-County Music Festival is held the first weekend of March at SUNY Purchase.

The BBMS Bands and Choirs are preparing for their winter concerts. The students will showcase their musical achievements in December, with the Middle School Bands performing on Tuesday, December 10 and the Middle School Choirs performing on Wednesday, December 18. We invite all community members, parents and students to join us for these festive events! All concerts are held at the George C. Trautwein Theater with free admission!

Fiona Chen and Rachel Horn were both accepted to the 2020 New York State Band Directors Association State Wide Honor Band. They will both perform on flute as part of the Middle School Honor Band in Liverpool, NY in March, along with the highest achieving Middle School Band students from across New York State.



Beautifying our Building!



Special Thanks to the following students who have their work displayed in the library: **Top Row** (left to right) Veronica Babiuk gr 7, Dylan Florio gr 8, Jordan Sternschein gr 8, Zoe Axelrod gr 8, Charlie Hammer gr 7, Paige Garber gr 8, Rachel Coffey gr 8 **Bottom Row** (left to right, all grade 6) Abigail Weintraub, Avery Smith, Allison Low, Kyra Fischer, Steven Romanella, Maddie Margolis, Ella Rosenfeld

Safety Reminder:

Please refrain from bringing any nut products to school. Baked goods are not permitted to be distributed in school.

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

Upcoming Principal's Conversations:

- December 19, 2019 - 9:00 AM
- February 27, 2020 - 7:00 PM
- March 19, 2020 - 9:00 AM
- April 23, 2020 - 7:00 PM

Contributing to our Community

A big thank you to our 8th graders who have recently volunteered to serve as school ambassadors!

6th Grade Orientation Guides:

Jonah Bassuk	Austin Lu
Alex Berk	Rose Pennan
Fiona Chen	Sophie Possick
Devin Dayal	Zoe Possick
Ryan Frieman	Jinju Prince
Jordan Goldstein	Marissa Savner
Will Jaffee	Ian Sherman
Jessie Kron	Alex Thompson
Bennett Kulla	Derek Wang
Jeffrey Kuo	



The 8th Grade Advisory Committee is comprised of student volunteers who meet with building administration during lunch to discuss concerns and ideas for enhancing their BBMS experience. Our students have already identified a number of discussion topics including field trips, study halls, choice of elective courses, fundraising, and community service. We look forward to working with our 8th grade student advisors in bringing their ideas to fruition.

8th Grade Advisory Committee:

Brooke Barnett
Fiona Chen
Lana Kim
Gavin Korpi
Zoey Possick
Jinju Prince
Ana Savitt
Brooke Sosin
Jordan Sternschein
Lauren Sun
Eli Zimmerman

BBMS Counseling Program

We are excited about the new structure of the middle school counseling program where students are now assigned to one counselor who will work with them through the 6th, 7th and 8th grades. This new model is aligned with the middle school philosophy as it will facilitate the building of meaningful, supportive relationships between students and their counselor. While each middle school student is assigned to their school counselor alphabetically, both Mrs. Arzt and Ms. Sosnow are always available to help any student.

Mrs. Arzt and Ms. Sosnow began the school year by visiting all of the 6th, 7th and 8th grade ELA classes. Students were welcomed back to school and informed that the role of the counselor is to support the students while they learn how to advocate for themselves, navigate their academic responsibilities and take part in the many activities that BBMS has to offer.

Both counselors have now met individually with all 6th and 7th grade students, and are currently in the middle of meeting with our 8th graders. Mrs. Arzt and Ms. Sosnow will continue to meet with students both individually and in small groups throughout the year. In addition, they look forward to pushing into various classes to work with our students on different middle school topics.

Students are encouraged to visit the Guidance Suite to make individual counseling appointments. Parents may make appointments to discuss any concerns by calling their child's counselor:

First Letter of Student's Last Name	Counselor	Phone extension
A - K	Mrs. Amanda Arzt	x3210
L - Z	Ms. Elise Sosnow	x3132

As a reminder, as of this year, the 6th grade counseling program is designed to prepare students to participate effectively in their current and future educational programs, to help students who exhibit any attendance, academic, behavioral or adjustment problems, to educate students concerning avoidance of child sexual abuse, and to encourage parental involvement.

The 7th and 8th grade programs consist of advisory and individual or group counseling assistance to enable students to benefit from the curriculum, to help students develop and implement postsecondary education and career plans, to help students who exhibit any attendance, academic, behavioral or adjustment problems, and to encourage parental involvement. In addition, 7th and 8th graders will receive instruction focused on various careers and career planning skills.

BBMS Prevention Specialist Monique Tricarico

Blind Brook Middle School, along with 39 other secondary schools in Westchester County, is continuing Student Assistance Services prevention programming for the 2019-2020 school year. These activities are funded by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention through a Drug Free Community Support Grant to the school district, and by corporate and private donations. The program will provide alcohol, tobacco, and other drug prevention and education, including early identification of students experiencing, or at high risk for, substance related problems, and students involved in bullying situations and problem gambling. It is anticipated that this combination of services will accomplish the following goals:



1. to prevent the development and reduce the incidence of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use or related problems;
2. to improve school performance and attitudes toward school among program participants

Mrs. Monique Tricarico is Blind Brook Middle School's Prevention Specialist. She will be working full time in the district and have evening hours available to meet with parents and community groups. Mrs. Tricarico has a Masters Degree in Psychology, previous experience working with adolescents, and specialized training in prevention and early intervention strategies with adolescents at risk of having substance or gambling related problems. Her services are being funded and supervised by Student Assistance Services Corporation and the District.

Mrs. Tricarico will be meeting with 7th and 8th grade students for education and prevention activities to correct erroneous perceptions about substance use and to teach students skills to identify and resist social and situational pressures to use substances. Parent meetings corresponding to our prevention program will also be offered. Mrs. Tricarico will be available to see students who are using substances, gambling or have personal, peer, school, or family issues that could increase their risk of using substances including involvement in bullying situations. If you would like to speak to Mrs. Tricarico about your child or another student, please call her directly at 937-3600 x 3144. All calls will be confidential.

We are hopeful that this program will show promising results. Data will be collected to assess the overall effectiveness of the program in preventing and reducing risk factors for alcohol, tobacco, other drug use, and related issues. Please feel free to call the main office if you have any questions about the program.

**Important Information available on the Middle School Website:
(please click on following links)**

- [Middle School Family Guidebook](#)
- [The Blind Brook-Rye School District Code of Conduct](#)
- [Middle School Staff Directory](#)
- [BBMS Teacher Websites](#)

Don't forget to check the BBMS website to access [Middle Years](#), a monthly magazine for middle school parents.

December 2019

Blind Brook Middle School

Patricia A. Lambert, Principal

Middle Years

Working Together for School Success

Short Stops



A cozy tradition

Family traditions give tweens a sense of security as they deal with the ups and downs of adolescence. Here's one idea: Have hot chocolate parties on cold winter days. Set out toppings like marshmallows, cinnamon, and nutmeg. Then, chat about your day while you enjoy your treat.

Welcome, second semester!

Before your child goes back to school, remind her to check her schedule for any changes second semester will bring. She should make sure she knows where new classrooms are and what supplies she'll need. *Tip:* Send an email introducing yourself to any new teachers she has.

Middle school dating

If your tween mentions classmates who are dating, ask him what that means in middle school. Often, tween relationships start with "talking," which means texting or chatting on social media. Ask your child whether he's interested in anyone, and share your expectations, such as only exchanging messages and photos he'd be okay for you to see.

Worth quoting

"There are no shortcuts to anyplace worth going." *Beverly Sills*

Just for fun

Q: What word is spelled wrong in

Healthy technology habits

Limiting your middle grader's screen time encourages her to interact with people in real life and focus on schoolwork. Try these tips.

Join in

Setting limits on electronics use for the whole family may make your tween more likely to cooperate. Ask everyone to silence and put away devices during game nights or car rides. You can enjoy conversation and pay attention to each other. Also, set up a charging station where everyone leaves devices at night so that sleep isn't interrupted.

Socialize face to face

Suggest that your child brainstorm screen-free activities to do with friends. *Examples:* Make up dance routines, work on a giant jigsaw puzzle. Or they could use electronics in ways that don't involve staring at screens. Maybe they'll sing along with a free karaoke app or go



outside and see who can take the coolest nature photos.

Stay focused

When your middle grader uses electronics for homework, have her close all apps or windows that she doesn't need for the assignment. She should also turn off notifications so she's not tempted to reopen the apps she closed. And if she takes a break, encourage her to make it screen-free. Perhaps she'll go for a short walk or play with her dog. 🐾

Developing a growth mindset

Does your child know that learning actually makes his brain grow? Help him adopt a *growth mindset*, or an attitude that he can develop his abilities if he works at them, with this advice.

■ **Find alternate routes.** Say the dialogue in a story your tween is writing sounds unrealistic



BBMS Clubs 2019-2020

DAILY:

AM OPEN GYM

7:30 -7:45 AM

Ms. Murphy / Mr. Beatty

TUESDAYS:

ANCIENT/MEDIEVAL GAMES

2:45-3:30 PM

Mr. Dakers

GAMERS

2:45-3:30 PM

Mr. Soto

JAZZ ENSEMBLE

7:10-7:40 AM

Mr. Whitman

YEARBOOK

2:45-3:30 PM

Mrs. Krishna

WEDNESDAYS:

ART CLUB

2:45-3:30 PM

Mrs. Saglibene

GUITAR CLUB

2:45-3:30 PM

Mr. Donoghue

STUDENT GOVERNMENT

2:45 - 3:30 PM

Mr. & Mrs. Castelli

YOUTH to YOUTH

2:45-3:30 PM

Mrs. Mileo / Mrs. Tricarico

THURSDAYS:

DEBATE TEAM

2:45-3:30 PM

Mr. Lewis

DRAMA CLUB

2:45-3:45 PM

Mrs. Dakers

FILM CLUB

2:45-3:30 PM

Mr. Soto

GREEN CLUB

2:45-3:30 PM

Mrs. Harrington / Mrs. Barrett

NEWSPAPER

2:45-3:30 PM

Mr. Donoghue

SELECT BAND

7:10-7:40 AM

Mr. Whitman

STOCK MARKET CLUB

2:45-3:30 PM

Mr. Tamucci

TBD:

DESTINATION IMAGINATION



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
**GUIDANCE
COUNSELOR**
Regarding:

- Academic guidance
 - Standardized testing
 - Summer programs
 - Tutors
 - Interpersonal and family concerns
 - Scheduling
- Counselors are assigned for the three years of middle school by last name.
- A-K: A. Arzt, x 3210
L-Z E. Sosnow, x3132

Contact the
**DEPARTMENT
COORDINATOR**
Regarding:

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

Dept. Coordinators

Science – M. Sugantino x3190
English – J. Ambrosio x3412
SS – M. Markolovic x3159
Math – M. McCarvill x3165
World Language - M. Castelli x3241
Spec. Ed – P. Weistrop x3222

Other concerns or concerns after communicating with the above :

School Psychologist

C. Merlo x3155

School Social Worker

R. Mileo x3211

Athletics

D. Goldman x3118

Special Education

H. Burg x3033

J. Herlihy x3097

Attendance

D. Smithies x3145

Medical

G. Park x3139

Administration

P. Lambert

Principal x3208

S. Horowitz

Asst. Principal x3126

L. Paisley

MS Principal's Secretary x3119