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Babylon Highlights

Union Free School District

Guidance, Support for Students FROM START TO FINISH

Guiding our students and supporting their social-emotional needs throughout their academic careers in Babylon and beyond is one of the district's primary goals. This year, the guidance department rolled out many new initiatives that help to support students at every level.

The guidance department at Babylon Schools provides counseling and support services to all students from kindergarten through senior year. Students require a wider range of support services as they continue to grow and develop. The guidance team works to meet the needs of students and families as they move on and progress through school.

"We make sure that each student is exposed to age- and grade level-appropriate activities that will support their academic and social-emotional development," said Director of Guidance Dennis Murphy. "Our comprehensive K-12 guidance plan is designed to promote, support and enhance the overall student experience. It is designed to help all students develop their educational, social, career and personal potential to become responsible and productive citizens. Our team currently provides support throughout the student's entire educational journey. The families within the Babylon community can rely on our team to serve as a valuable resource and partner."

The district's K-6 counselor,

Ms. Scheriff, works with students academically, socially and emotionally and to establish college and career readiness. She provides counseling services through in-class lessons, small-group instruction and individualized counseling sessions. Ms. Scheriff collaborates with students, parents/guardians, teachers, administrators and other staff members to guide students in becoming lifelong learners. She also assists with crisis intervention when necessary. Ms. Scheriff is housed at the Babylon Memorial Grade School and Babylon Elementary School on alternating days.

At the grade school, students can participate in the Babylon Buddies club, a friendship club for students in grades 3-6 that fosters social experiences and friendships for students with all abilities throughout the school. The club introduces opportunities for peers with and without disabilities to learn, play and grow together.

The junior/senior high school guidance plan supports the overall mission of the school district by promoting student achievement, college and career planning, and personal and social development for every student. Babylon school counselors, using their leadership, advocacy, teamwork and collaboration, and data-driven decision-making skills, ensure that every student will have access to a quality and equitable education.



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NEW INITIATIVES

This school year, the district rolled out several new initiatives to offer added support to its students. Some examples include:

- Seventh and eighth grade students meet in small groups with counselor.
- Senior meetings to discuss post-high school plans. Juniors and their families also have planning meetings.
- Counselors work with seniors on early college application deadlines.
- The kindergarten, first and second grade students learn about the school counselor and how counselors can help them.
- Third through sixth grade students learn the roles of the support staff in their building.
- Weekly Response to Intervention/instructional support team meetings are held.
- Counselors are conducting small-group meetings with ninth and tenth graders.
- Monthly guidance advisory meetings are held for BOCES students.
- Counselor/staff are reintroduced to students during physical education classes.
- Counselors work with students in third through sixth grade on organizational skills.
- Counselors do quarterly, midyear and end-of-year reviews of course failures.
- Individual meetings were set up with students in grade 7-11 and their counselors.
- All 10th grade students had a presentation from Wilson Tech. There's also a field trip and visit to Wilson Tech in March for interested students.
- Students in K-6 receive push-in lessons from support staff on coping strategies and self-esteem.
- A ninth grade orientation was held in April.
- A college decision/signing day was held in May.
- Along with members of the community, a K-6 Career Day was held in May.
- In June, incoming third graders and seventh graders had orientation days to get acquainted with their new schools.

CONTINUED SUPPORT

- Guidance maintains evening hours.
- A senior planning night was held in September.
- Fall and spring college fairs are held in October and April.
- Financial aid nights are held for seniors.
- A fall SAT/ACT prep class and a SAT/ACT information night were held.
- A planning night for juniors was held in December.
- In February, a course recommendation day was held.
- An NCAA student-athlete/parent workshop was held in May.

COUNSELING CENTER'S TOP PRIORITIES

- Increase counselor presence in the classroom to build and strengthen relationships.
- Increase and improve communication methods with the community.
- Cultivate a welcoming environment for all.
- Continue to recognize and celebrate student achievements.
- Encourage students to continually challenge themselves.
- Prepare students for graduation and beyond.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING IN ACTION

During the last week of January, students at Babylon Elementary School completed daily kindness challenges created by the school's social-emotional learning committee. In conjunction with the challenge, the school held a spirit week to encourage showing kindness in a special way each day. Students donned bright colors, sport jerseys, tie dye, Babylon colors and pajamas throughout the week. Each student designed their own "kindness lightbulb" and responded to the prompt "I can light Babylon up with kindness by..." The kindness lightbulbs now adorn the lobby and main wing, showing all the ways to be kind. Throughout February, the school celebrated Random Acts of Kindness Month by recognizing students doing random acts.



Babylon Memorial Grade School came together in a sea of orange as they celebrated Unity Day in October. Students took a kindness pledge and then created a donut with a message on how they would show kindness. The messages from the entire student body filled the donut wall in the school's hallway, each grade in a different color. Working with the school's mental health team for push-in lessons, the students learned about how kindness looks in their school community, choosing to be kind and focusing on the positive. Even little gestures can make a big difference, they learned.



Babylon Memorial Grade School celebrated Kindness Day in January. The idea for the initiative came from two sixth grade students. With the assistance of the mental health team and assistant principal Ms. Fretto, each student in the school was given a colored heart to write one kind act they completed this school year. This was a follow-up to the school's Unity Day activity, where students were asked to think of one kind act they pledge to do this school year. Together, the hearts were displayed to form a rainbow. The sixth graders chose to create a rainbow with the hearts to symbolize everyone coming together to spread kindness. The staff and students were also asked to show their support by wearing their favorite color of the rainbow.



Babylon Memorial Grade School participated in a schoolwide social-emotional learning activity, "Rays to be Grateful." Organized by the school's student council, each grade level created a giant sun in their hallway, which consists of yellow ray sentences in which students expressed their gratitude. Student council representatives shared a PowerPoint presentation that they created to support this activity, and all students were encouraged to wear yellow.





BABYLON NAMES CLASS OF 2022

Valedictorian and Salutatorian

On March 11, Babylon School District announced the valedictorian and salutatorian for the Class of 2022. In a small ceremony in the school's library, district officials recognized the top two students of the class. Joined by their families, valedictorian Kenneth Graham and salutatorian Alexis Lewis were recognized for their exemplary achievements both in and out of the classroom.

Throughout his high school career, valedictorian Kenneth Graham has participated in numerous activities both at school and in the community. He is a member of the Class Cabinet, DECA, National Honor Society, science research and Student Council. He also plays on the lacrosse and

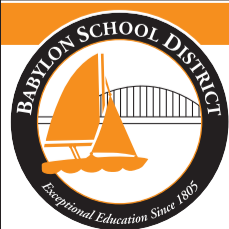
golf teams. Kenneth will be attending Northeastern University in the fall.

Salutatorian Alexis Lewis is the president of DECA and a member of the Business Honor Society, National Honor Society and Social Studies Honor Society. Outside of school, she is a volunteer at Stony Brook Hospital and a volunteer student teacher at Center Stage Dance. She is also the recipient of gold and silver awards from the Girl Scouts. Alexis will be attending CUNY Baruch this fall.

Babylon Union Free School District congratulates both students on their exceptional academic and extracurricular records and wishes them the utmost continued success as they become Babylon alumni.



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE DISTRICT



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