

# COPIAGUE *Connections*

A GREAT PLACE TO LEARN



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Resident  
Copiague School District

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## QuestBridge Scholars

Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School seniors – No. 4-ranked Anna Carvajal and No. 7-ranked Samantha Gonzalez – have been named QuestBridge Scholars.

QuestBridge's National College Match is a college scholarship application process that helps outstanding high school seniors gain admission and full four-year scholarships to the nation's most selective colleges. Anna has

matched with Princeton University and Samantha with Haverford College.

Out of more than 18,500 applicants, QuestBridge selected 6,885 finalists to be considered for the QuestBridge National College Match Scholarship. This year, QuestBridge's 42 college partners matched with a record number of 1,464 finalists, who are recognized as Match Scholarship Recipients. The Match Scholarship is offered as part of a financial aid package provided by the college that covers the full cost of attendance, including tuition, room and board, books and supplies, and travel expenses.

Anna has a weighed GPA of 103.17. She has been named an AP Scholar with Distinction, has received awards in the Covantage and LISEF programs and is part of the National and Tri-M Music honor societies. Anna is an active member of the Global Ambassadors, Key Club, One Mind Club and Treehuggerz Club. She plans to study chemical and biological engineering at Princeton.



Samantha is also an AP Scholar with Distinction and boasts a GPA of 101.98. She has been part of the mentorship science program at Farmingdale State College and was one of 10 students accepted into the summer marine studies enrichment program run by BOCES. Samantha received a STEP stipend award and was chosen to attend the STEP conference in Albany last year. She is a member of the Student Council and has been part of the National and Tri-M Music honor societies, Key Club and Science Olympiad. Samantha plans to study chemistry at Haverford.

### Ivy League Bound

**Kiran Ahmad** (ranked No. 1): Yale University majoring in neuroscience and physics

**Edinelly Peguero** (ranked No. 3): Harvard University majoring in African American studies

**Aidan Murphy** (ranked No. 6): Cornell University majoring in zoology/animal science



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## COUNSELORS KEEP CONNECTIONS A *Top Priority*

While the pandemic has shifted how guidance counselors, support staff, social workers and psychologists interact with students, the need for their support has perhaps never been greater. To ensure the needs of the entire school community are met, our support staff have shifted the way they work.

Connections – with students and their parents – remain a top priority in every school setting for

both in-person and remote learners. At the elementary level, counselors and support staff are doing virtual visits and check-ins with students who are working remotely.

Many are streaming into classrooms and logging into Google Meets with students for counseling sessions. Thinking outside the box and outside the walls of the classroom is also a major shift. Counselors are teaching students how to deal with the stress of the pandemic with virtual calm-down rooms and outdoor social-emotional activities.

At the secondary level, counselors said remaining positive, solving problems and keeping a team mentality are of utmost importance. Working side by side with teachers to enable student participation is critical.

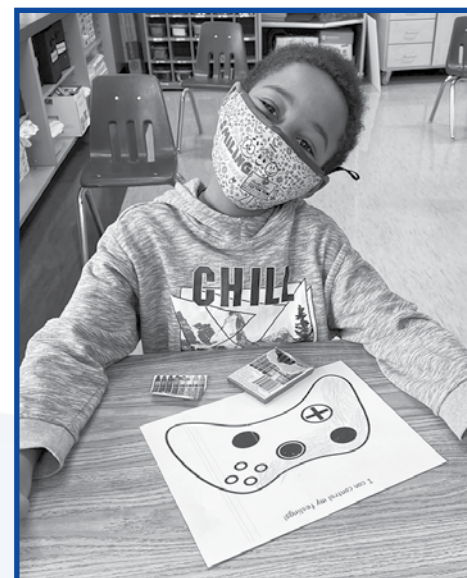
"It is so important that families know we are in this together and are here to support them," Copiague Middle School counselor



Shakira Lewis said. "Call, email, ParentSquare...whatever they are most comfortable with, we will respond."

The high school mentoring program has continued, shifting to Zoom this year.

"This mentoring program provides our students with leadership and development opportunities," Jim McCabe, director of guidance, said. "Students see this program as an opportunity to form a relationship with another trusted adult. Students work with their mentors on time management skills, organization skills, communicating effectively, navigation of the college process, balancing academic with personal responsibilities and expanding their resumé with networking experiences."



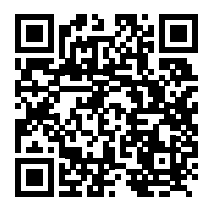
# Schools Step Up to Support Students, Families

## Susan E. Wiley Elementary School

Guidance counselor Chelsea Trotta is using weekly Google Forms to check in on her students. Many of the teachers in the building have added her as a co-teacher in the Google Classrooms so she can check in with students at any given time. Ms. Trotta does weekly read-alouds and does her regular push-in lessons remotely. She's also teaching students new skills, like how to make friends from afar. She is still facilitating her in-person counseling groups, just in smaller numbers.

"I'm incorporating the skills I want to teach them through fun nature walks, mindfulness and growth mindset," she said. In addition, she's created a social-emotional learning platform filled with resources for Susan E. Wiley parents.

Learn how our counselors, psychologists, social workers and other support staff are assisting our students and their families in this short video.



## Great Neck Road Elementary

The pupil personnel support team taught the students about the Start With Hello program and implemented a Start With Hello Google Classroom with resources for the students. The team is currently pushing into classrooms for the Dignity for All Students Act lessons. They are using ninjas to talk about how thoughts control actions. The bulletin boards are decorated with the ninjas expressing their thoughts. Volunteers created little origami ninja star messages of positivity for each student.

## Deauville Gardens East Elementary

Prior to the pandemic, the guidance counselors implemented a successful monthly character education program, recognizing and highlighting a different trait each month with a play. The counselors kept their successful program and also implemented the district's character education initiative within their schools. They use Google Slide choice boards for each month. YouTube videos replace the in-person plays, and teachers have access to additional videos, songs and poems to coincide with the monthly theme.



## Deauville Gardens West Elementary

School counselor Jill Faber is working to support students, teachers and families as everyone navigates this new virtual environment. The school is continuing programs like Start With Hello week, Red Ribbon Week and Make a Difference spirit days. Students in school and at home showed off their school pride and participated in activities to foster social-emotional learning. Ms. Faber is still facilitating her in-person counseling groups, just in smaller numbers and without sharing supplies; students in remote counseling groups interact while participating in similar activities, just on Google Meet. Students are practicing their coping skills during this unprecedented time. The support team visits remote classes via Google Meet to check in and make sure everyone still feels connected.

## Copliague Middle School

Counselors are working hard to keep everyone's spirits high. Mandated counseling and weekly check-ins are done either over the phone or through Google Meet with students who need extra support. Counselors also facilitate mixed counseling groups with both hybrid and virtual students. To keep students engaged in sessions, counselors are thinking outside of the box. Mrs. Walker uses the National Geographic website during her group sessions to either start or end the group with some fun. Mrs. Lewis begins her group sessions with a number check-in as a way to gauge what kind of week her students are having in school. Depending on how they rate their week (on a 1-10 scale), they are asked to think of ways they can improve their motivation, effort and overall happiness. Mrs. Solomon routinely calls to check in on students who are not in the building. All of the counselors walk the building, looking into classrooms so that students can see their presence and be reminded that they are resources for them. The middle school also continues to celebrate students through the student of the month recognition and ensure that both hybrid and virtual students are celebrated.



## Walter G. O'Connell Copliague High School

Counselors are ensuring that all of the events they have done in the past are now being done virtually. In terms of the night events, Director of Guidance Jim McCabe said the virtual evening presentations have had great attendance, and they may be something they consider running in the future. Some of the virtual events they hosted include Back to School Night, Financial Aid Night, Freshman and Sophomore Road to Success Evening and Senior Road to College Night.

