

# SCHOOL COUNSELING BOARD REPORT - FEBRUARY 2014

## Elementary Counseling News

The elementary counseling curriculum consists of 18 lessons per grade delivered to all students K-4. PK students receive 36 lessons. The curriculum consists of lessons on a variety of topics including empathy training, conflict resolution, personal safety, academic planning and goal setting and career awareness. The curriculum meets all DPI School Counseling standards.

Anti-bullying lessons were delivered to all students K-4 including the DPI curriculum and Second Step lessons, a research-based anti-violence curriculum that focuses on empathy, problem solving, dealing with strong emotions, and respecting others. A capstone to these lessons was the play **Bystander** presented by CLIMB Theater which reinforced concepts taught during the lessons. A pre-post test was used with 3rd and 4th graders. Results showed an increased understanding and a change in attitude in most areas.

PBIS lessons have been integrated into the guidance curriculum allowing students to understand and discuss the changes that have taken place in their school this year. Students are encouraged to share ideas to improve their school.

The Elementary Student Council is advised by the school counselor. There are 32 students on the Elementary Student Council elected by their peers, including 5 minority students (15%). Their food drive, food backpack packing field trip and other projects that they're working on promote organization, public speaking, and leadership. Students generate ideas for projects and plan and see them through in small committees.

Small counseling groups are in place to help students with social and behavioral issues. Results of these groups have shown a decrease in severe behavior frequency and an increase in positive behavior and social skills.

## Middle School Counseling Program

One major goal of the middle school guidance department during the 2013-14 school year is to address Bullying through different instructional practices.

The Climb Theatre from St. Paul Minnesota presented to the student body(5-8 grade) two plays on bullying prevention.

Grades 5th and 6th watched the play **Bystander** which addressed the three types of students (the perpetrator, the target and the bystander) involved in bullying situation. The play and follow up activities explored the reasons why bystanders choose frequently not to take action when they see

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*another student being harassed and how to model positive bystander behavior to combat bullying.*

Grades 7th and 8th watched the play **One Kind Thing** which addressed cyberbullying as well as verbal, physical and social bullying. This play explored why bystanders frequently choose not to take action and the consequences that follow. The goal of this play was to inspire kindness and how practicing leads to a healthier school environment.

Unity Middle School has been awarded a grant from the Children's Hospital of Wisconsin to participate in an e-learning program with the basic idea that kids that are safe and healthy learn more. The e-learning program is called ACT Now which is research based program using online and classroom activities, **Act Now!** addresses all types of bullying, including cyber bullying and sexual harassment, at the middle school level. Pre- and post-tests allow schools to track students' knowledge and comprehension as they move through the course. The following items listed below will be covered through e-learning.

- Differentiate between conflict and bullying.
- Build effective interpersonal communication skills and conflict resolution techniques.
- Use assertive comebacks and develop empathetic attitudes that help foster healthy classrooms skills.
- Help a victim of bullying, including asking an adult for help.
- Apply these skills in their online social interactions in the 5th through 8th grade courses.

In March and April, the 8th grade class will be starting their Job Shadowing unit which allows every student the chance to job shadow an adult in the community for an entire day to learn the ins and outs of an occupation of their choosing. Explorations starts with **WISCareers**, which is a career development website designed to help youth with career awareness, exploration and planning. This program follows the 8th grade students through high school.

## **High School Counseling Program**

Students 8<sup>th</sup>- 11<sup>th</sup> grade had the opportunity to gain knowledge about 11 different content areas offered at the high school, recently. This opportunity was called Exploration Day. It allowed students to receive a brief breakdown of classes that will be offered to them. For 8<sup>th</sup> graders, this was their first introduction to the structure of the high school and the options they will have. During this time, seniors were given the chance to receive some extra study time and even meet with Mr. Johnson about college acceptance, scholarship information, credit checks, and other various questions.

## **SCHOOL COUNSELING BOARD REPORT - FEBRUARY 2014**

Currently, registration for next year is in full swing. Present freshman-junior students will be given a presentation in their history classrooms. At this time, information about available classes and future planning will be available. Eighth grade students will also receive a similar presentation, but Mr. Johnson will go more in-depth about the importance of achievement in high school and many of the new concepts that will be important for them to understand.

High school sophomores will be given the opportunity to go through basic Question, Persuade, and Refer (QPR) training. This training covers the importance of being aware of the warning signs of suicidal behaviors and thoughts. Through this training, these students will be given the tools and information that they need to report this behavior. This training is coupled with the 10<sup>th</sup> grade English curriculum and gives students an opportunity to process the information that is covered in the book, *Thirteen Reasons Why*.

Looking towards the end of the year, 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> grade students will be taking some valuable assessments. In the past, freshman and sophomore students have taken either the Explore or Plan test. With the recent introduction of ACT ASPIRE, the high school is exploring the possibility of students