



## **Barnstable United Elementary School**

### **Principal's Comments**

The BUES School Counseling Department serves an invaluable role for our school community. Our school counselors, school psychologist, school adjustment counselor, school social worker and SEAD Coach operate with every student's academic, social and emotional wellbeing at the forefront each and every day. With an office run efficiently under the management of our Administrative Assistant, I am confident that the needs of BUES students will continue to be well served!

### **School Counseling Program**

The BUES counseling program provides service to grades 4-5 to aid in the personal/social, academic and emotional development. Currently there are three school counselors with a total school population of 706 students. There are 341 students in 4<sup>th</sup> grade and 364 students in 5<sup>th</sup> grade. The department also includes a school psychologist, a school adjustment counselor, a school social worker, a social emotional academic coach and an administrative assistant.

- Amy Beth Veara, Counselor
- Jen Delaney, Counselor
- Laureen Cardoza, Counselor
- Eric Canty, School Adjustment Counselor
- Joan Hogan, School Social Worker
- Jen Wolf, School Psychologist
- Dylan Bissonnette, SEAD Coach

The team collaborates and meets weekly with other staff including the administration team, school nurses and special education department. The Counseling Department also meets weekly in order to collaborate and communicate with each other about student and department needs as well as to develop curriculum and SEL resources. This school year we adopted a model of counselors being paired with 4th and 5th grade teacher pods in order to foster a strong relationship among staff and students.

Counselors work one on one with students daily and weekly, as well as facilitate small groups based on skill development for students who may have lagging skills in a specific area. In accordance with the district wide initiative to educate the whole child, members of our counseling staff have attended training on the use of the Collaborative Problem Solving Model (CPS) and Responsive Classroom. These staff members facilitated a staff wide training on a Professional Development day. The purpose of using CPS is to assist teams in identifying lagging social emotional skills and develop interventions to address these difficult behaviors. The goal of the Responsive Classroom approach is to enable optimal student learning and is based on the premise that children learn best when they have both academic and social-emotional skills.

This school year was challenging for our school community due to the national pandemic. Our counseling office assisted in creating a virtual counseling office to provide resources to families outside of school and students who were accessing the school environment remotely. Our participation and partnership with Cape Kids Meals increased from 18 food bags to 52 bags that students were bringing home on the weekends. We have utilized Care Solace, which is a virtual launching pad to assist families in connecting with mental health professionals.

The Barnstable School District continues to utilize the Second Step Curriculum across school settings. The Counseling team has assisted in incorporating this curriculum and assisted in implementation. For the third school

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year, we taught the Child Protection Unit (CPU) component of the Second Step Curriculum to all of our students whether they were in person or attending remotely. The students in 4th and 5th grade have learned important safety skills that will help them stay safe during dangerous and abusive situations especially with the increase of social media and technology use. Finally, staff aid in the transition, placement and orientation of incoming 4<sup>th</sup> graders and outgoing 5<sup>th</sup> graders.

### **Tiers of Student Support**

- Tier 1 - All students received instruction in the classroom through the use of the Second Step Curriculum and Responsive Classroom. Students were explicitly taught behavioral expectations through the use of the Kindness Rocks Behavior Matrix. As an opportunity to process their behavior at a Tier 1 level, students' problems are solved in the Reflection Room. This provided an opportunity for students to develop a variety of skills around behavior management.
- Tier 2 - Small group instruction provided by school counselors reinforcing skills practice in the classroom.
- Tier 3- One to one or small group targeted explicit instruction to address recurring challenging behaviors. Creation of a student support plan to support the student across all settings.

### **Program Results**

In October, classroom teachers assessed students' Social Emotional Skills through the Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA). The DESSA is a strengths-based behavior rating scale that measures the social emotional skills that help students do well in school, at home, and in the community. The department used the initial results to identify students who need further skill instruction through intervention groups. Counselors used Second Step and DESSA curriculum during these groups to target identified lagging skills.

The School Counselor's also developed lesson plans on three of the lagging skills: Optimistic Thinking, Personal Responsibility and Self Management for small groups and Morning Meeting full class participation. Google Classroom was used to provide teachers with information on the social emotional curriculum, Second Step, and small group interventions. Teachers were surveyed again in the spring to assess the progress. Looking at the population that participated in the lessons provided by the counselors, there was a 30% increase in development and positive use of lagging skills. The department looks forward to using a similar method in the fall to target social emotional reports.

### **Focus for Improvement**

In the 2021–2022 school year, the department would like to continue to support the district initiatives around educating the whole child. This includes the implementation of the Collaborative Problem Solving Model, Responsive Classroom model as well as developing lesson plans for the other lagging skills areas denoted by the DESSA. (Self/Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, Decision Making and Goal Directed Behavior). These areas will be critical for students returning to school from remote learning. The Team will continue to assist in Second Step, Collaborative Problem Solving and Responsive classroom to support the students and staff at BUES. The school counseling department looks forward to meeting student needs through programs that recognize student successes, as well as, assisting with developing skills.

We would like to continue to develop upon the use of the Second Step Curriculum and further align with small group interventions. This may include providing resources for classroom teachers around morning meetings and assisting with the use of Collaborative Problem Solving throughout the school. The Department also looks forward to supporting the further implementation of Responsive Classroom. The school counseling department looks forward to

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meeting student needs through programs that recognize student successes, as well as, assisting with developing skills.

The following data is from DESSA intervention throughout the 2020-2021 school year:

**Self Management**

	Has Ever Used Coping Skills	Knew All of the Active Listening Skills
Pre-Assessment	36/100	31/100
Post-Assessment	72/100	84/100
	Increased by 36%	Increased by 53%

**Personal Responsibility**

	Knew What Responsibility Was	Said Easy to Take Responsibility for Actions	Admitted to Blaming Others for Actions
Pre-Assessment	36/89 (40%)	41/89 (46%)	44/89 (50%)
Post-Assessment	65/89 (73%)	72/89 (81%)	27/89 (30%)
	Increase d by 33%	Increase d by 35%	Decrease d by 20%

**Optimistic Thinking**

	Admitted to Having Negative Thoughts About Self	Said it was Easy to Change Negative Thought to Positive Thought
Pre-Assessment	37/95 (39%)	65/95 (68%)
Post-Assessment	19/95 (20%)	81/95 (85%)
	Decreased by (19%)	Increased by (17%)