



BLUE MOUNTAIN UNION SCHOOL

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*“What’s best for the community is a good school, one that has a good reputation.
What is best for the kids is a good school.” – Dr. Rowe*



Scott Blood, ME.D
PreK-6 Principal

John L. Barone, Sr., Ed.D
7-12 Principal
Director of Curriculum

Parrish Eiskamp
Dean of Students

BMU School Counseling Department School Board Report Fall 2021

Hello from the BMU School Counseling Department. We have been busy planning and implementing this fall. Here is a snapshot of what we have been up to:

PreK-6:

- Samantha Page, student at the University of the Southwest, will be completing her 600 hour internship under the guidance of Dawn Blanchard and Julie Gandin.
- Daily announcements for elementary grades are pre-recorded, using Google Slides and Loom, and are accessed through teacher email. Besides keeping everyone informed of daily happenings, morning announcements allow extra opportunities for incorporating social and emotional learning, featuring student work and talents, and adding a bit of humor and conversation related to Mr. Blood’s “Would You Rather” feature! I feel this has become a way to keep the whole elementary school connected.
- This year we are fortunate to have acquired “The Positivity Project (P2).” P2 is a character education curriculum focused on teaching and developing character strengths that empower individuals to recognize their own strengths as well as the strengths of others, which in turn helps to build more positive relationships. I have been using the program as the foundation for my weekly classroom lessons in grades K-6 and find it very beneficial in developing a more cohesive, caring and positive classroom/school environment.
- I continue to help facilitate social and emotional learning on a daily basis in the 4th grade Morning Meeting.
- In spite of COVID, we have been able to maintain our PBiS program. Students continue to be recognized for their positive behaviors and we celebrate as an entire school. Our assembly format has changed dramatically as a result of the pandemic. Where once we were able to gather and celebrate as a large group we have been forced to seek alternatives. Although difficult, we successfully held virtual assemblies last year. This year we are trying yet another avenue. We are recording the assembly much like the morning announcements and presenting it on the first Friday of the month. Those assemblies can be found on the BMU website.

Julie Gandin
PreK-6 School Counselor

Kate Dunn
School Nurse

Dawn Blanchard
7-12 School Counselor

Todd Powers
Technology & Athletic Director

- An average of 15 students per week is seen individually for short-term counseling needs. We work closely with Little Rivers Health Center and Clara Martin Center to make referrals for more intense counseling needs.
- Sgt. Rachel Harness from the Grafton County Department of Corrections is presenting “Operation Impact” lessons on bullying, cyber-bullying, stranger danger, and kindness in all K-6 classrooms throughout various times of the year.
- We collaborated with the local fire departments to present virtual Fire Safety Week lessons in October.
- We participated in Red Ribbon Week, a national campaign against drugs, in October.
- Assisting the Lion’s Club and Ryegate Santa Christmas Projects in identifying families in need.
- As part of the area Crisis Team, Mrs. Gandin and Mrs. Blanchard continue to offer support to students and staff when needed. This is a task we hope we never have to do; however, we are always ready. Julie recently spent the day at Bradford Elementary after the loss of a staff member.
- Dawn Blanchard, Julie Gandin, and Samantha Page continue to attend monthly counseling cohort meetings (currently via Zoom), under the supervision of Sylvia Bedor.
- The Backpack Program, sponsored by The Vermont Foodbank, supplies nourishing food for students whose families find it difficult to provide enough food options for their family over the weekend. Each Friday morning, I discretely slip a bag of food into approximately 30 students’ cubbies or lockers for them to take home.
- We’re just all hanging in there, doing the best we can, however we can, with what we have! It is truly a pleasure to serve this community, especially our students!

Middle School:

BMU has made a purchase through APEX Learning to provide subject (English Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies) based tutorials. This will assist in providing remedial support for gaps in learning. The middle school will also be starting to use the Positivity Project – P2 during advisory in quarter 2. P2 focuses on providing opportunities for students to learn more about the 24 character strengths. If you would like more information on P2 check out: <https://posproject.org/character-strengths/>.

High School:

BMU has welcomed many colleges to campus this fall. Students have had the opportunity to meet with admissions counselors to learn more about their post-secondary options. The following colleges have visited: Castleton State University, Community College of Vermont, Keene State College, Lincoln Technical School, Northern Vermont University, Saint Michael’s College, University of New Hampshire, University of Southern Maine, and White Mountain Community College.

We have also had a strong representation from the military visiting BMU this fall. The Army, Marines, and Air Force have been available to meet with students.

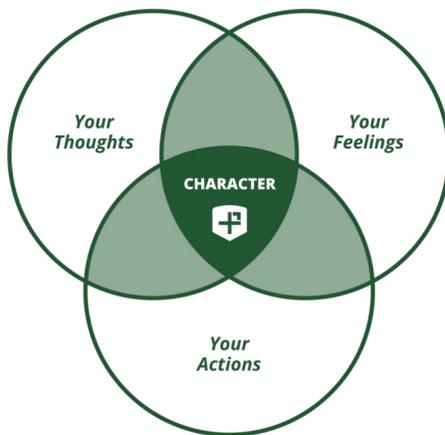
Mrs. Blanchard has visited the Waterford School to present to the 8th Grade class regarding School Choice in October. Plans to visit the Barnet School and Waits River Valley School are scheduled for November.

The Class of 2022 receives notifications regarding scholarships as soon as they came in. Students received copies of the Vermont Scholarship Booklet as soon as it arrived to BMU. Parents and students had the opportunity to attend the VSAC sponsored College Forms Night event in October. Seniors are busy filling out college/university applications, asking for letter of recommendations, and planning for next year.

BMU high school students were given the opportunity to take the PSAT's (Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test) in October and the ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery) will be administered in early November. Results will be reported to students in December. In addition, BMU will be administering the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) in early spring. These tests are provided to BMU students at no charge to the students and come from the School Counseling Department budget.

This year BMU offers two online learning platforms to assist in students meeting graduation requirements. BMU has partnered with River Bend Career and Technical Center to offer coursework through Edmentum – a self pace online program supporting student learning. BMU has also purchased 30 licenses for a program called APEX Learning – a self paced online program for credit recovery. BMU students continue to access the Vermont Virtual Learning Cooperative (VTVLC) as well.

The Positivity Project is also being used for Advisory at the high school. The format includes a weekly topic (character trait) with a video, and discussion. Character is made up of: your thoughts, your feelings, and your actions. Please see the attached schedule.



2021-2022 P2 Character Strengths Calendar

September 5-11	Intro Week - Other People Mindset (OPM)
September 12-18	Curiosity
September 19-25	Teamwork
September 26 - October 2	Open-Mindedness
October 3-9	OPM - Being present and giving others my attention
October 10-16	Integrity
October 17-23	Forgiveness
October 24-30	Creativity
October 31 - November 6	Perspective
November 7-13	Bravery
November 14-20	Gratitude
November 21-27	Gratitude
November 28 - December 4	Kindness
December 5-11	OPM - Knowing my words and actions affect others
December 12-18	Self-Control
January 2-8	Optimism
January 9-15	Prudence
January 16-22	Perseverance
January 23-29	OPM - Supporting others when they struggle
January 30 - February 5	Wildcard/Make-Up
February 6-12	Humility
February 13-19	Love
February 20-26	OPM - Cheering others' success
February 27 - March 5	Enthusiasm
March 6-12	Social Intelligence
March 13-19	Love of Learning
March 20-26	Wildcard/Make-Up
March 27 - April 2	Humor
April 3-9	OPM - Identifying & appreciating the good in others
April 10-16	Fairness
April 17-23	Appreciation of Beauty & Excellence
April 24-30	Purpose
May 1-7	Leadership
May 8-14	Outro Week - Other People Mindset