A Safe Student. A Safe School.

**The North Street School community is committed to making our school a warm, safe and inviting place to learn for all of our students, staff and families.  To make this commitment a reality, the school consistently provides opportunities for students to learn how to conduct themselves, and relate to others, in kind, positive and purposeful ways. Students are empowered to use their gifts to be confident and competent learners who can work together to solve problems and respond to life’s challenges in thoughtful and constructive ways.**

**Our school has instituted a number of awareness programs that are focused on the safety and health of our students.**

School Safety and Positive School Climate Programs

**Our school complies with the state of Connecticut’s bullying law (See, Summary on Public Act 11-232), which outlines expectations for all public schools in the prevention, reporting and response to bullying claims.**

**Each year, ongoing instruction is provided to all students that include: introduction/review of the definition of bullying, how to stand up to a bully and how to report bullying (both publicly and anonymously).**

**A Safe School Climate Committee, composed of NSS teachers, administrators and parents meets at least three times each year to discuss ways to promote positive school spirit and behavior and how best to positively reinforce the overwhelming majority of students who demonstrate the school norms each day. (See, District Commitment to Creating a Safe School Climate.)**

**The programs and projects set forth below took place during the 2014-15 school year to help support our efforts in this area. We will continue with most, if not all, of these programs for the 2015-16 school year.**

**Norms Refresher** - Teachers in grades K-5 teach, discuss, model and reinforce the school/district norms of conduct: “Be Here, Be Safe, Be Honest, Care for Self and Others and Let Go and Move On.”  The district has scheduled social emotional learning events for the 2015-16 school year that focus on the district norms of conduct. (See, **Social Emotional Learning Calendar Events 2015-16**.)

**Assemblies/Activities** - The North Street student body and staff came together for assemblies/activities throughout the year to celebrate the talents and accomplishments of NSS students and staff.  These events included: the Halloween Parade, our Veteran’s Day Assembly, Winter and Spring Orchestra Concerts, Winter and Spring Chorus and Band Concerts, Field Days for grades K-2 and Grades 3-5, two “Good News” Assemblies in which each class/grade presented a snapshot of their current curriculum learning with their peers, a Holiday Sing Along and an assembly to celebrate the career and retirement of Mrs. Carolyn Reifers, the NSS music and chorus teacher who was retiring after working at NSS for 32 years!

**District Celebrations** - North Street School students participated in all of the district’s yearlong celebrations to promote and reinforce the school norms: I Care For Myself Day (October), Care For Others -Names Can Hurt Us Day and Anti Bullying Walk (November), Be Safe Day (December), Be Honest Day - Be True Blue (January), Embrace Diversity Day (February), Spring Into Friendship Day (March), Be Here Day (April), Let Go and Move On Day (May).

**School Spirit Days** - On the first Friday of each month the school community wears the school’s colors (blue and white) to celebrate school spirit!

**Bullying Presentations/Refreshers** - Developmentally appropriate Bullying Presentations and Bullying Refreshers were provided to all classrooms by district psychologists, Alina and Fabian Agiurgioaeiboie in September and January. Through discussion, videos and role-play, students learned what bullying is (and is not) and how to respond if he/she or a friend is being bullied.

**Julia’s Star Program** - This program for fifth grade students, helps to create a safe space for positive dialogue about identity, prejudice and stereotypes. Through the book, [*Julia‘s Star*](http://juliasstar.org/), and subsequent discussion, students began to understand the impact of stereotypes. They learned how to share their identities and how to ask one another questions carefully and thoughtfully.

**Digital Citizenship** - As part of the district’s digital learning initiative, each student in Preschool through Grade 5, will be receiving his/her own iPad this year. As such, all students will be required to participate in an eight-session course on Digital Citizenship, taught by our school’s media specialist, Mrs. Terese Case. The goal of this course is to give our students the necessary tools they will need to use their iPads safely and responsibly. The course will cover topics such as: “Responsible and Ethical Use”, Getting to Know Your iPad”, “Online Safety”, “Collaborating, Communicating and Creating”, and an “Introduction to Core Applications for Learning”. Students in grades 2-5 will be able to take their iPads home only after they have completed this course.

**Safety Patrol Program** - Fifth grade students are invited to become a member of the school’s student safety patrol. In this capacity, students help to monitor the hallways during arrival and dismissal times, helping to supervise younger students, directing students where they need to go and making sure students are walking and conducting themselves safely during these busy times of the school day. This role fosters a sense of responsibility and leadership in our fifth grade students, while they serve as positive role models for our younger students.

**Creative Connections Art Celebration** - This program for fifth grade students is spearheaded by our school’s Art teacher, Dr. Cheryl Iozzo. The program is dedicated to building our students’ awareness, understanding, and appreciation of other cultures, as well as their own. It teaches cultural literacy and fosters the desire to learn about other cultures, customs and traditions. This year our fifth grade students created artwork depicting typical American life.  A group of students in rural Guatemala did the same, with each class mailing their artwork to the other for study.  The project culminated in a skyping session, wherein each NSS fifth grade student was able to utilize their Spanish speaking skills to ask and answer questions of their Guatemalan peers.

**Volunteer Activism** - North Street School students volunteered their time and energies to show their care and support of others by participating in numerous project and fund raising events.  These included:

1. Raising awareness for Williams Syndrome (WS), a genetic condition that impacts a member of the North Street School student body. Student’s sold/bought green wristbands to raise money for WS.
2. Students organized a clothing drive for Mothers for Others.
3. Students organized a Canned Food Drive to benefit Neighbor to Neighbor.
4. Several times during the school year, students came to school early to create holiday cards for US Servicemen and women.
5. Student’s sold/bought athletic wristbands to support Childhood Glaucoma, a condition that impacts a NSS student.
6. “Make Someone Smile” - During a two-week period in May, students focused on doing good deeds for each other.
7. Students raised money for the victims of the earthquake in Nepal.

School Health Programs

[Information forthcoming]

PTA Sponsored Safety Programs

**Stranger/Danger Presentation** - The Greenwich police department presents this program to all kindergarten students. The students are educated about the possible danger associated with adults a child does not know and how to protect themselves from such strangers.

**Bike Rodeo** -It’s a day for beginner and advanced riders to develop and practice safe riding skills before the start of summer. Participants will have their bicycles inspected and will then learn about and practice bicycle-handling skills that will increase their enjoyment of bicycling and help keep them safe.

Reports of Suspected Bullying

The state’s bullying law requires every school to have a mechanism in place for students, staff and parents to report suspected acts of bullying, both in person and anonymously.

First and foremost, we believe it is very important that all students know what to do if they think they are being bullied. We teach the children to stand up to the perceived bully by using a strong voice and telling them to stop what they are saying or doing. We then ask students to promptly report their concern to their teacher or to another staff member at school.

If students are being bullied or are witnessing bullying and feel uncomfortable reporting it to a staff member, we encourage our students to write down their concern, and the parties involved, and to submit their note to the “Bullying Box” which is on the table outside of the main office. All students have been introduced to the box, and understand how it is to be used.

At Open House, parents were also introduced to the “Bullying Box.” We do encourage parents to report any suspected acts of bullying to the school’s administrators, but recognize the importance of there being a process in which they can also anonymously voice their concerns.

All reports of bullying are fully investigated and documented, as per the state requirements.

Additional Resources

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention website is a great resource for parents and students on keeping children safe in and away from school. (See, http://www.cdc.gov/features/safeschools/.)

Contacts

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the school safety and positive climate programs, please do not hesitate to contact Mary Grandville at mary\_grandville@greenwich.k12.ct.us.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the school health programs, please do not hesitate to contact Marilyn Furtak at marilyn\_furtak@greenwich.k12.ct.us.