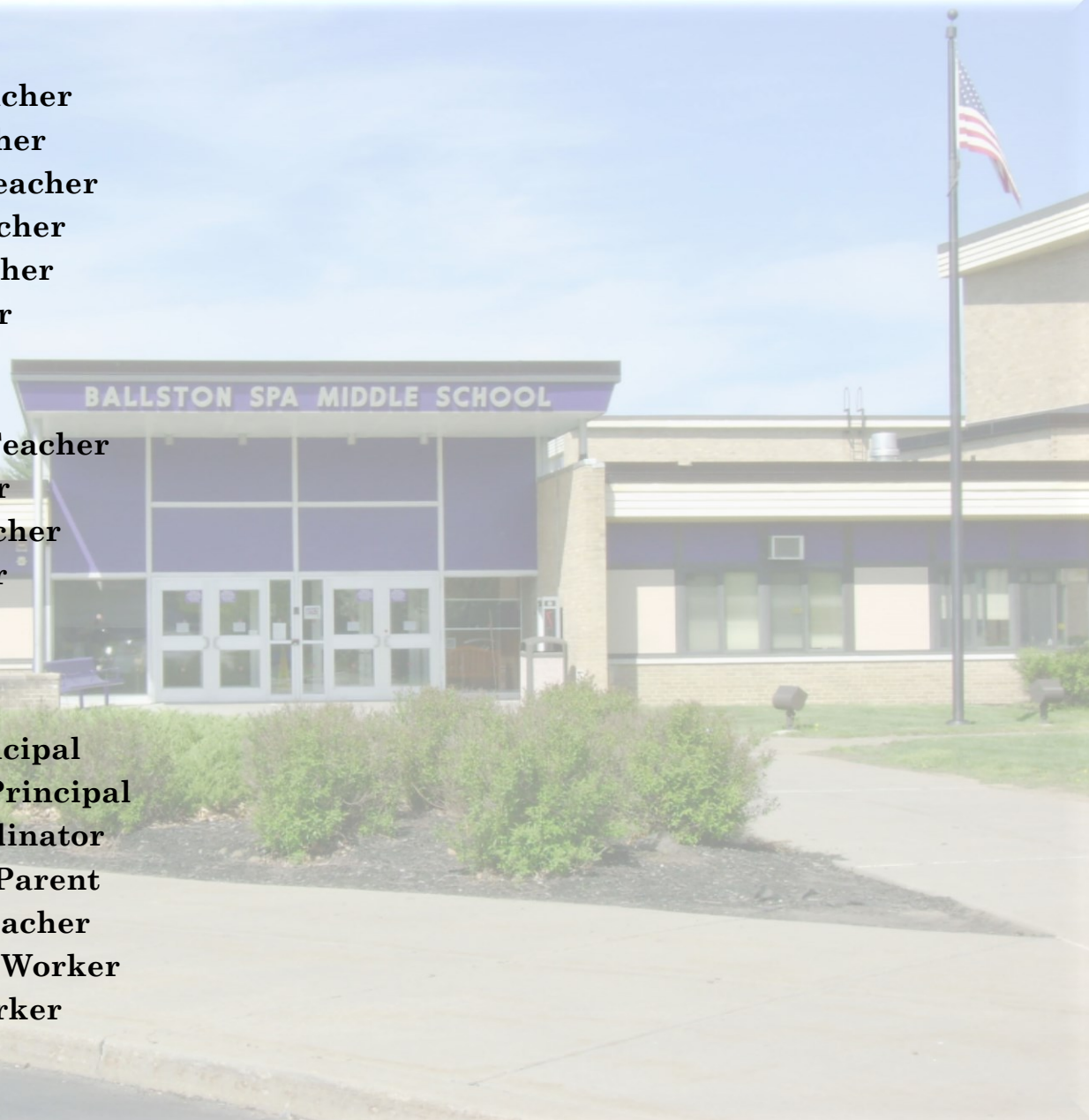


# BALLSTON SPA MIDDLE SCHOOL BUILDING LEADERSHIP



# THE TEAM

- Rebecca Farrell, LOTE Teacher
- Mary Barrette, LOTE Teacher
- Angela Johanning, Math Teacher
- Michelle Brandt, Math Teacher
- Valerie Valla, Science Teacher
- Jason Belknap, Art Teacher
- Kim Pusatere, SS Teacher
- Alison Paley, ELA ITL 6-8
- Jennifer Callender, Math Teacher
- Michelle Palmer, Counselor
- Sarah Albrycht, LOTE Teacher
- Kathy Cline, SPED Teacher
- Erin Pezzulo, School RN
- Chris Perrone, SS Teacher
- Pam Motler, Principal
- Kim Bolster, Assistant Principal
- Andrew Muller, Assistant Principal
- Diane Irwin, Science Coordinator
- Rhonda Mascardi, TA and Parent
- Stacey Gouvitsas, LOTE Teacher
- Gaylen Wichrowski, Social Worker
- Christine Jones, Social Worker
- Grace Paster, Parent
- Ayumi Kasai, Parent



## SCHOOLS TO WATCH DOMAINS

- ❑ Academic Excellence
- ❑ Developmental Responsiveness
- ❑ Organizational Structure
- ❑ Social Equity



## TARGETED WORK 2015-16

1. Grading Consistency
2. Math 8-9 Work
3. Transdisciplinary Work
4. Alternatives to Suspension
5. We'll end with a 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Update



# ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE GRADING CONSISTENCY



## Identify

- Inconsistent Systems, Structures, (i.e. Grading, homework, classroom expectations)

## Study

- Best practice Middle Level Systems

## Revise

- Systems to create a more cohesive organization

# GRADING CONSISTENCY

- ❑ “F” Grade
- ❑ Report Card Grading Categories
- ❑ Category Percentages
- ❑ Homework
- ❑ Teacher Professional Development:  
“The Math Behind the Grade Book”



## ACADEMICS: 8-9 MATH

- Developed a 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Unit on Graphing Calculators to prepare the students for Algebra I
- Addressed areas of student weakness identified in 6 – 12 Math Meetings
- Developed two sections (20 students each) of a Pre Algebra 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Math Course for students identified at risk of not passing the Algebra I Exam



# ACADEMICS: EXPLORING TRANSDISCIPLINARY WORK

## Transdisciplinary

Begins with a PROBLEM or an ESSENTIAL QUESTION, then content area teachers approach the problem and pull their content in to help answer the question/solve the problem





# 6<sup>TH</sup> GRADE TRANSDISCIPLINARY TEAM NAME PROJECT

- **Problem** – Schools to Watch Review identified the issue that naming teams A, B, and C may be misinterpreted as conveying the quality of the teams rather than generic labels
- **Goal** – Name teams reflective of the local history of our community and remove any unintended connotations associated with team names
- Throughout this activity, students worked in collaborative groups. With scheduling, we have all students in common and classes are scheduled at the same time. We are able to combine classes to regroup students and co-teach.



# 6<sup>TH</sup> GRADE TRANSDISCIPLINARY TEAM NAME PROJECT



## Steps:

- Develop understanding of the task
- Define research path
- Research and note taking
- Generate and evaluate ideas
- Refocus research
- Test against criteria
- Produce



## ALTERNATIVES TO SUSPENSION



- This goal comes directly from the Schools to Watch site reviewers' report that we received at the end of June last year after our site visit and designation.
- The report included both strengths and concerns. Suspension rate was a concern, so we decided to aggressively address it this year.



# SUSPENSION PREVENTION AND ALTERNATIVES TO SUSPENSION



## Suspension Alternatives:

- Teacher Mentor Program
- Community Service
- Academic After Hour
- Restorative Practices
- Mediation



# TEACHER-STUDENT MENTOR PROGRAM: SUPER MENTORS

The *Super Mentor Program* was created to build and foster positive student/teacher relationships. We crafted the program to connect students to the school community and become an integral part of their own school.

2015-16 emerging pilot program wherein we have randomly chosen students to participate (if they were willing).

If the initial pilot is a success, we will slowly expand the program to include all students who wish to have a teacher mentor.



# TEACHER-STUDENT MENTOR PROGRAM

- Throughout the course of the year, mentors may have lunch with their student, help the student with homework or other school projects as well as check-in regularly.
- In addition, monthly scheduled after school events have been planned to bring all mentor teachers and their students together to participate in fun, community-building activities.



## COMMUNITY/SCHOOL SERVICE

- Scotties Closet
- Dean Assistants
- Classroom clean up
- Shredding
- Box Tops Organization
- Lost and Found Laundry



# RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

- “Restorative Justice is a global social movement focused on meeting the needs of harmed parties, building community, and holding offenders accountable by identifying the harm caused by crime or misconduct and helping them take responsibility through meaningful dialogue with harmed parties, rebuilding trust, and repairing harm. In schools, RJ has been shown to improve school climate and academic success while lowering suspension and expulsion rates.”



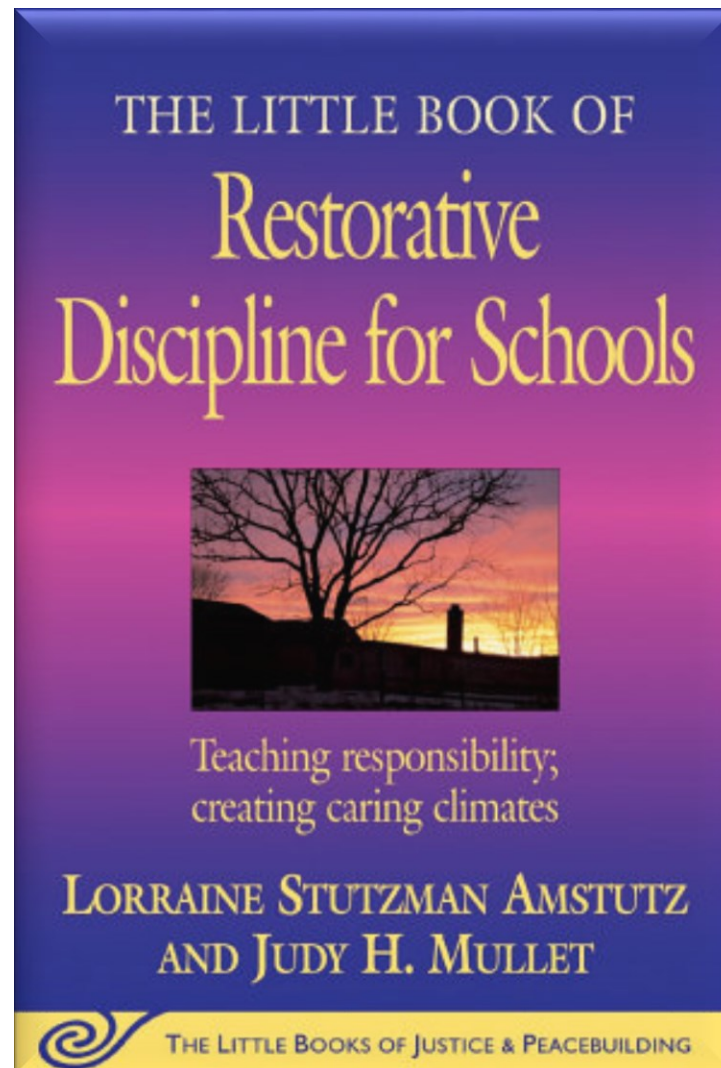


# ACADEMIC AFTER HOUR

- Wednesdays/Thursdays
- Students are placed by Administration to assist teaching teams



# SCHOOL-WIDE COMMUNITY READ



# MEDIATION MATTERS

## SARATOGA

- Handling conflict in a constructive way
- Preserve relationships that need to continue beyond a conflict
- Summer 2016 training with 20 Administrators and staff
- Add mediation to our preventive action 2016-17



# PERCENT DECREASE FROM 2014/15 TO 2015/16

Alternative Learning Area Infractions:

**34.6% Decrease**

Total Days Students Assigned:

**36.5% Decrease**

Out of School Suspension Infractions

**47.7% Decrease**

Total Days Students Assigned:

**30.3% Decrease**



# NO PLACE FOR HATE GOLD STAR SCHOOL!



# SCHOOL WIDE LESSONS

## Social Studies – Tolerance Lesson

Modeled after the “Imagine a World without Hate” ADL resource

## Math – Unity Lesson


Modeled after the “It Gets Better” Campaign

## English – No Labels Lesson

Modeled after the “Coca Cola” Campaign  
&

Incorporated into our student theater production of  
Disney’s High School Musical





Stand Up  
Sit Down  
NCBI Leaders

# PEER LEADER PROGRAM AND 6<sup>TH</sup> GRADE TRANSITION UPDATE

- ❑ 65 Peer Leaders for 2016-17
- ❑ Post Cards to 5<sup>th</sup> graders June
- ❑ School Visit June 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>
- ❑ Peer Leader Kick Off August 30





## 6<sup>TH</sup> GRADE: YEAR-LONG TRANSITION

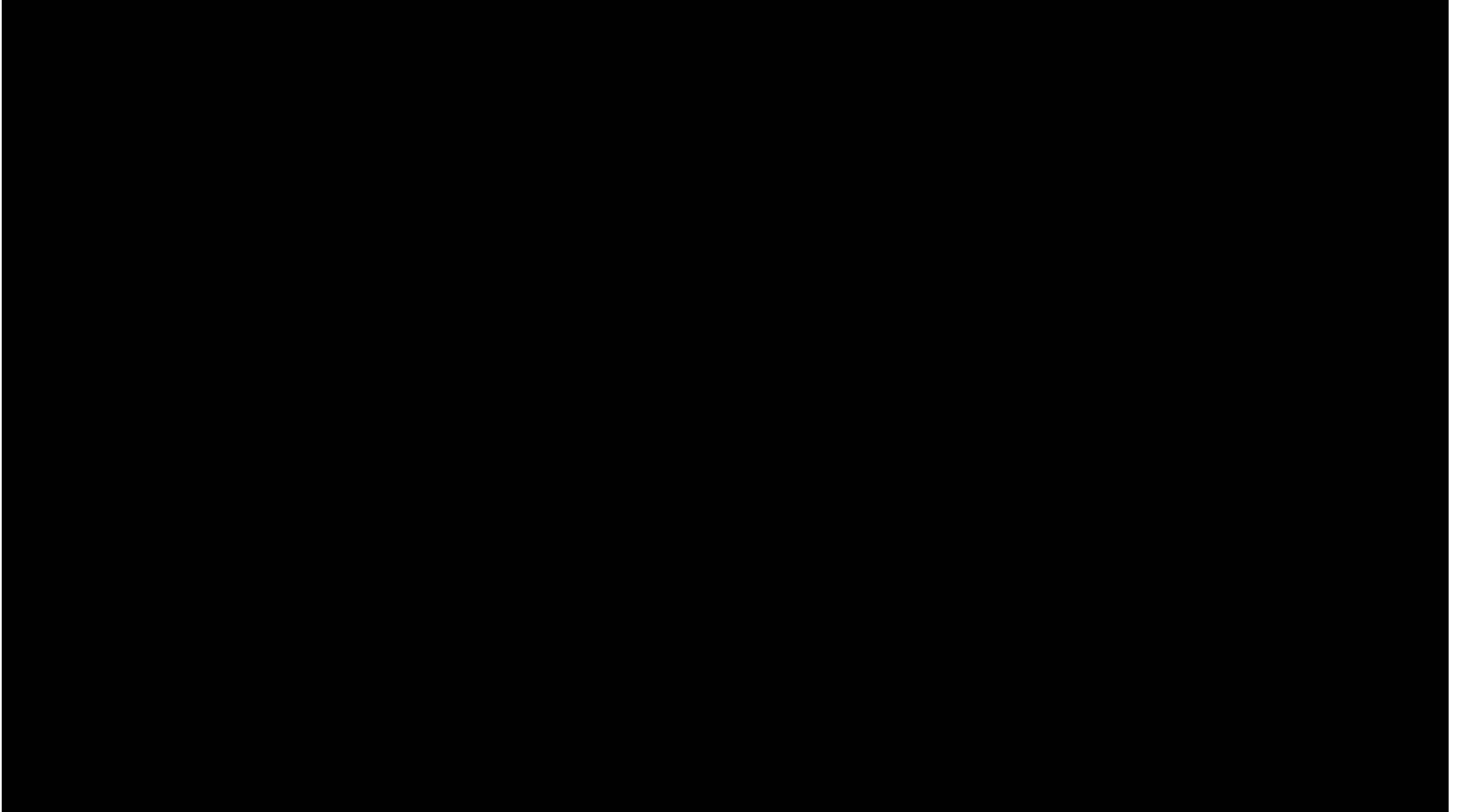
- Acclimation to the building's structures, procedures and expectations
- Steven Covey's *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*



# 6<sup>TH</sup> GRADE MINDFULNESS PILOT

- One class of 25 students will be lead in a 10 minute mindfulness lesson using the MindUP Curriculum by the school psychologist and social worker once per week
- Other days of the week, the teacher will facilitate the students in leading a 3 minute core breathing exercise at the start of class
- A pre and post assessment will measure if the group is effective in improving focus, executive functioning skills, social interactions, affect, and hopefully even academic performance.





# BEING A SCHOOL TO WATCH... MEANS BEING WATCHED!

## **Presentations 2015-16:**

NYSSBA Conference NYC October

NYSMA Conference Rochester October

Middle Level Liaisons Conference Albany March

## **Visits to Our School/Shared Programs 2015-16:**

Bethlehem Central School District

Broadalbin-Perth Central School District

Saratoga Springs City School District

Norwich Central School District

Greece Central School District

Delaware Academy CSD at Delhi

Clinton Central School District

Chappaqua Central School District

Christian Brothers Academy

