

FIRST SEMESTER HIGHLIGHTS

MULTI-CULTURAL EDUCATION IS BROUGHT TO THE CENTER STAGE AT WOODLYN CAMPUS

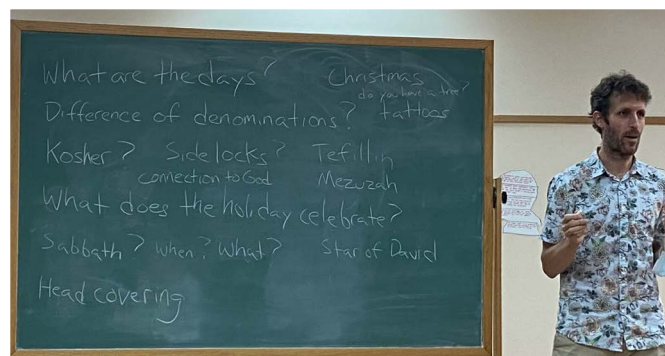
Dean of Students, Lisa Cofield, came into the 22--23 school year with a goal of focusing on cultural education to bring awareness to ways of life that her students may not have previously known much about. With that goal in mind, she engaged the community in and around her school to visit, present, and converse with students and staff to talk about beliefs, practices, and the history of several different cultures.

Multicultural education is vital for students as it provides them with a better understanding and appreciation of different ways of life. By learning about other cultures, students are exposed to diverse perspectives, values, and beliefs, which can broaden their worldview and help them become more empathetic, open-minded, and respectful individuals. This can help students develop the important social skills that are needed in a globalized world.



In September (before the holidays of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur), Special Education Teacher Jeanne Herestofa invited Rabbi Michael Ramberg to the school to teach students about his religion and cultural practices. In November, Buxmont Academy's Registrar, Claudia Rendon, was invited to present cultural practices in Colombia, her home country. During these visits, staff and students prepared and enjoyed traditional foods from each culture. Claudia thought highly of the intentional multi-cultural initiative started at Woodlyn this year. "Students really seemed interested," Claudia

described. "I think this is great because a lot of kids in Colombia don't have the privileges we have here like education, housing, and government help. It felt good to share some beautiful things about my country."



In January there was a discussion about Martin Luther King Jr. and his work during the civil rights movement which helped lead into student projects during Black History Month. Students presented on a notable person of their choice with ensuing class-wide discussion. "I wanted the students to be engaged participants in the educational activities made available to them," mentioned Lisa. "We are planning to focus on the Irish culture in March and are working on planning other events as the school year continues."

Woodlyn staff and students have also engaged in several team-building activities centered on common values. "We have more in common than not," Lisa described. During the holiday season, students and staff participated in symbolic gift giving to help raise cultural awareness around the different holidays that are celebrated during the season.

Research shows that incorporating diverse perspectives and experiences in the classroom can enhance student engagement and motivation, leading to better academic performance. Lisa summed up the multi-cultural focus by saying "there are so many ways of life that our students aren't always aware of. It is important for them to understand this to help them navigate the post-secondary world."

SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT PLACES A RESTORATIVE FOCUS ON IEP MEETINGS

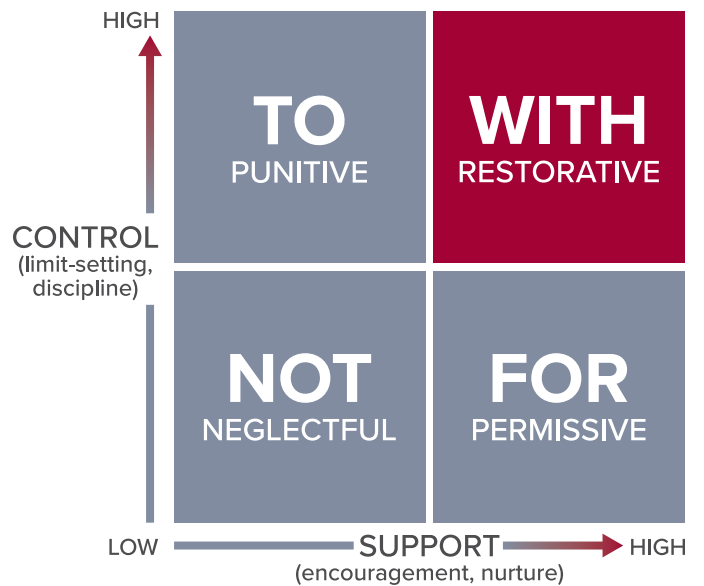
The fundamental hypotheses of restorative practices is that human beings are happier, more cooperative and productive, and more likely to make positive changes in their behavior when those in positions of authority do things with them, rather than to them or for them. With this hypothesis anchoring practices in our schools, Buxmont Academy's Special Education Department, headed by Special Education Supervisor Terri Trotter, engage students and families early in the process and encourage them to participate in the meetings as much or as little as is comfortable.

Special Education Teacher Stephen Yambor describes his process, "I believe the most effective thing that I do with students is review the IEP with them throughout its creation. I remind them that what I am typing is meant to reflect their voice. With few exceptions, we rehearse the IEP as if they were going to present it to the team themselves always reminding them that that is not a requirement. I focus strongly on the thought that this is an opportunity for them to advocate for themselves and their exceptionality."

"It is important for others to hear the students' voices and for the students to advocate their needs and wants, but their comfort is most important."

Students participating in their IEP meetings can help them feel more empowered and invested in their education, which enhances their motivation and self-esteem while also building self-advocacy and communication skills. Students can also provide valuable insight into their learning experiences, preferences, and strengths that may not be apparent to others. The result of this is an IEP that is tailored to the student's unique needs- improving their chances of academic and behavioral success. Special Education Teacher Coleena Cichocki explains, "it is important for others to hear the students' voices and for the students

SOCIAL DISCIPLINE WINDOW



to advocate their needs and wants, but their comfort is most important."

The relationship strengthening that occurs during this restorative process has helped improve parent and student participation levels alike. There has been evidence of students facilitating the IEP meeting themselves and we have also seen an increase in parent participation to 91%, also thanks partially to the increase in technological resources in our schools.

"That was the best IEP meeting we have ever had," states a parent of a student after a recent IEP meeting. "Hearing that he now participates in class, asks questions, and is focused on doing his work has made me feel optimistic about him graduating this year. Being at Buxmont has brought out an even better version of him than even I knew."

BETHLEHEM STUDENTS AND STAFF GIVE BACK TO THEIR SCHOOL'S COMMUNITY

Prior to the holiday season, students and staff at the Bethlehem campus decided that they wanted to lend a helping hand to those in need. After discussion and careful planning, the Holiday Clothing Drive was launched in which those in the school were asked, if possible, to bring any new and gently used clothing items to be donated to the Northampton Food Bank. Connections were made through a family member of a student who volunteers at the food bank. Students and staff brought in items such as coats, hats, scarves, gloves, sweaters, and socks and they were delivered just before school let out for winter break.

Participating in local clothing drives is a meaningful way for school children to give back to their communities and help those in need. By doing so, students can make a real difference in the lives of others who may not have access to warm, clean clothes while simultaneously developing empathy and a sense of social responsibility- skills that are beneficial in school and post-secondary life.

The positive impact of this drive motivated students and staff to conduct another drive, but this time to benefit the Cay Galgon Life House, a center for women and babies located in Bethlehem, PA. Counselor Jean Scott, who along with a student were the



point people for the drives, said of the experiences, "we think that it's important to remember those who are less fortunate."

The motivation to help others has been present for quite some time in this school. Last year, students and staff held a bake sale on campus in which money was raised for people in Ukraine. Students and staff came up with that idea as well and, in all, they raised more than \$130.

BUXMONT ACADEMY ADDS SIXTH CAMPUS — THE TATAMY CREEK CAMPUS IN EASTON, PA

With the addition of the Tatamy Creek campus in April 2022, Buxmont Academy now operates six private academic schools throughout Southeastern PA and the Lehigh Valley. For campus locations and contact information, please view the map and contact information below.

Bethlehem Campus

544 Main St.
Bethlehem, PA 18018
610-807-0210

Feasterville Campus

52 East Street Rd.
Feasterville, PA 19053
215-953-0895

Pottstown Campus

1460 North Charlotte St.
Pottstown, PA 19464
610-718-9500

Sellersville Campus

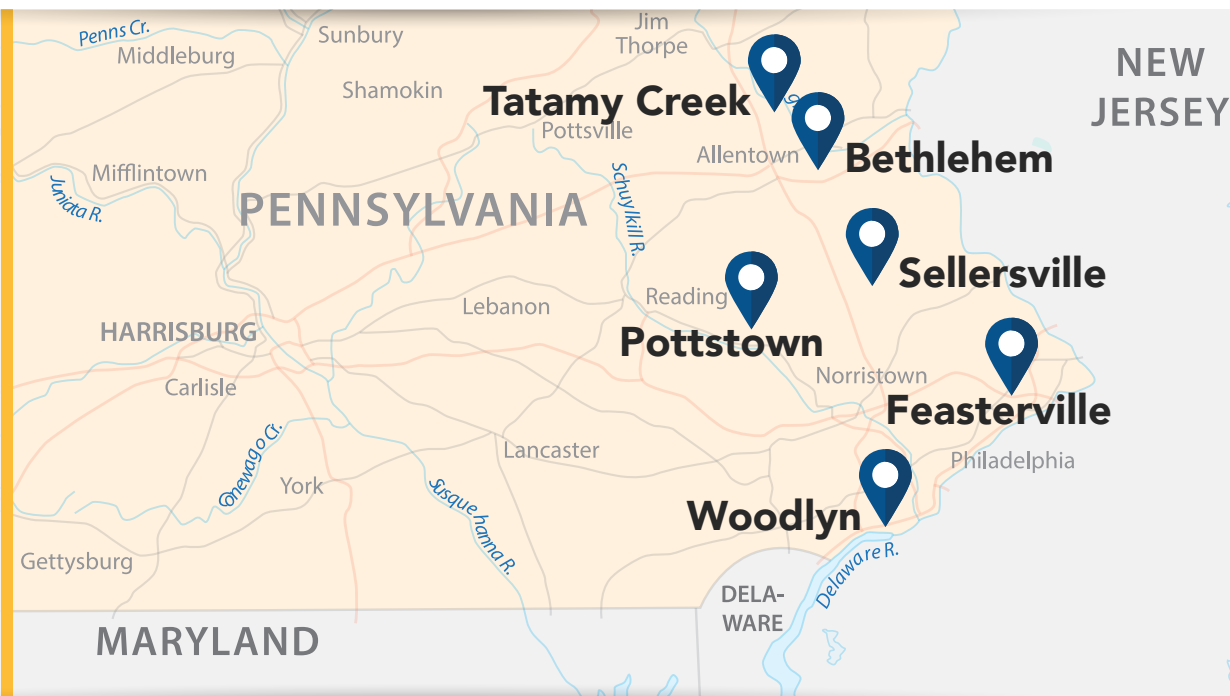
253 North Main St.
Sellersville, PA 18960
215-257-4131

Woodlyn Campus

1307 West MacDade Blvd.
Woodlyn, PA 19094
610-833-1722

Tatamy Creek Campus

2035 Edgewood Ave.
Easton, PA 18045
610-871-7220



YEAR IN PHOTOS

