

The background is decorated with various school supplies: a blue notebook with a pink ribbon bookmark in the top left; a yellow pencil with a pink eraser and a blue band in the top center; a pink and yellow striped notepad in the top right; a green and pink backpack in the middle left; a pink and yellow striped notepad in the bottom left; a pink eraser with a blue and red band in the bottom center; a blue ruler in the bottom center; a pink and yellow striped notepad in the bottom right; and a pink desk lamp with a yellow light bulb in the bottom right.

# Barry Buddies

Rachel Harvey M.A. CCC-SLP

Friday June 16, 2023

# Theory of Action



- **Goal:** to increase the climate throughout the school and improve student relationships across grades while increasing their motivation towards school and their willingness to attend, be present and succeed
  - Allow older students to gain independence and lead by example while becoming buddies with a student of a younger grade
  - Six students participated in weekly Social Emotional Learning activities
  - Once per week in the morning during Friday Social Emotional Learning Block
  - Focused on students who were chronically absent with the goal being for these students to be removed from the chronically absent list
- Chose to focus on this topic because the importance to me of students feeling a sense of belonging
  - When you feel welcomed somewhere, the likelihood you will return increases

# Theory of Action



- Provided parents/guardians with a permission form for their child to participate within Barry Buddies and inform them what would take place
- Chose to work with a small group of students to create an intimate environment
- Provided incentives at the end of each Social Emotional Learning Unit rather than every meet-up to encourage students to attend each session to earn the reward
- Utilized the district wide SEL units to lead our activities in order to tie into discussions happening within the classrooms schoolwide
- Allowed for open discussion of the various SEL traits discussed throughout the year and supported the emotional behavioral interventions used district wide
- Culture and Climate, Vision Statement: *The Meriden Public Schools will continue to develop and ensure a safe, orderly and healthy social-emotional environment for all students and staff*



## JOHN BARRY Elementary School

Kimberly Goldbach, Principal  
Laura Dixon, Assistant Principal

124 Columbia Street Meriden, CT 06451  
Phone (203) 237-8831 Fax (203) 630-4212

Hello parents! My name is Rachel Harvey and I am a Speech Therapist here at John Barry. This year, I am participating in **Meriden's Leadership Academy**. The Leadership Academy is *"aimed at teachers who seek a professional development experience specifically targeted at leadership development."* My leadership project is geared towards increasing the climate throughout the school and improving student relationships across grades.

Your child has been selected to participate within this small group leadership project. This will take place one time per week, on Fridays during the district Social Emotional Learning block. During these meetings, students will engage with their partner on a year long getting to know you activity as well as completing SEL activities. The purpose of this group is to strengthen their peer relationships, continuing developing their understanding of SEL traits, and overall motivation surrounding school. I look forward to this year-long experience and the relationships that will be built amongst staff, students and peers!

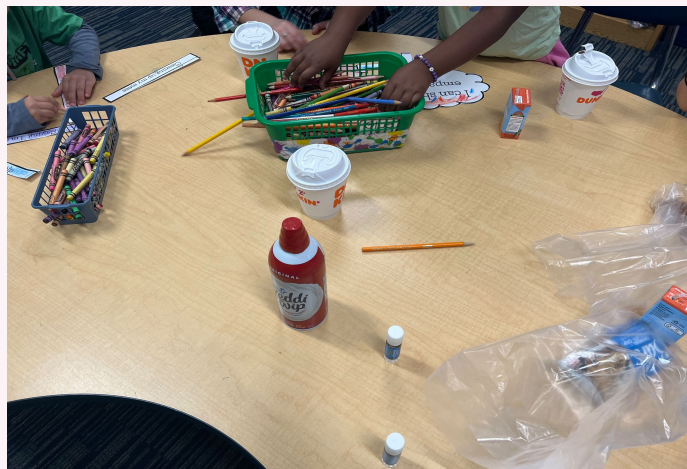


Students Name: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I agree for my child to participate

\_\_\_\_\_ I do not agree for my child to participate

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



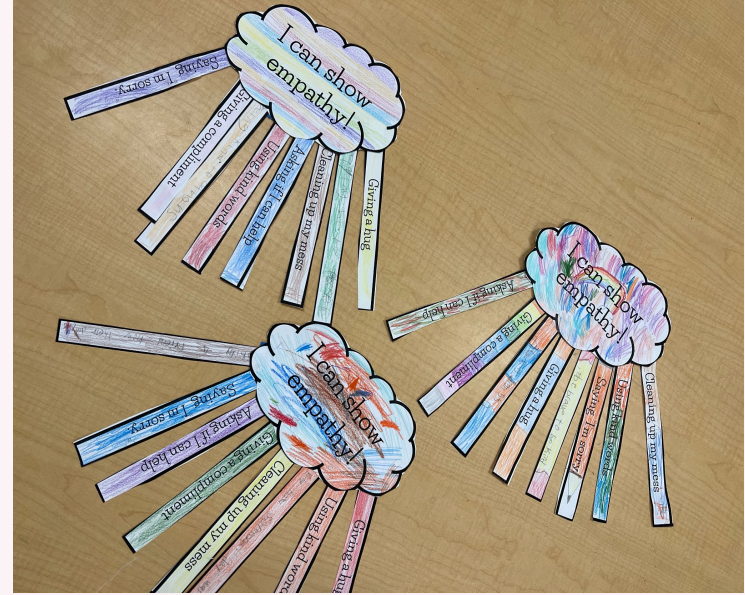


# Leadership Actions

- Provided a place for students to engage in Social Emotional Learning activities with peers and to complete activities that assisted them in getting to know their buddies
- Session Outline:
  - Review Barry Buddies expectations
  - Complete SEL unit activity with buddies
  - Read page from “It’s Brave To Be Kind” book & open discussion about the lessons from within the book
  - Completed exit slips & reviewing the focus of the session

# OUR BARRY BUDDIES RULES

- Stay in your seat/area
- Don't interrupt your buddies when talking
- Be kind & respectful
- Listen!
- Participate
- Have fun!

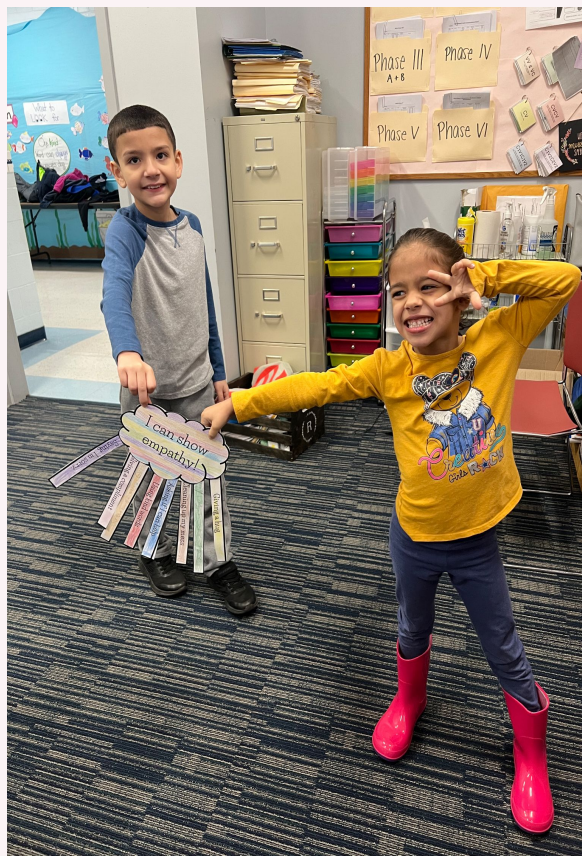


## GETTING TO KNOW YOUR BUDDIES!

- ✓ Interview Worksheet
- ✓ Ice Cream activity
- ✓ It's Brave To Be Kind









## BARRY BUDDIES EXIT SLIP

Name: Hester Date: 3/24/2023

Todays character trait: Honesty

Something that made me feel happy today: someone

gave me a hug.

How I'm feeling



## BARRY BUDDIES EXIT SLIP

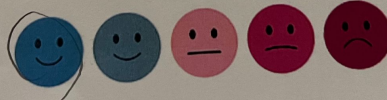
Name: Genesis Date: 3/24/2023

Todays character trait: Honesty

Something that made me feel happy today: the

popcorn!

How I'm feeling



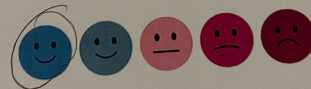
## BARRY BUDDIES EXIT SLIP

Name: Nathan Scott Date: 3/24/2023

Todays character trait: Honesty

Something that made me feel happy today: the drawing

How I'm feeling



## BARRY BUDDIES EXIT SLIP

Name: Lilianna Date: 3/24/2023

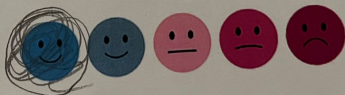
Todays character trait: Honesty

Something that made me feel happy today: going home

and seeing my family and f

love seeing my teachers

How I'm feeling



## BARRY BUDDIES EXIT SLIP

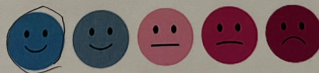
Name: Jaycob Date: 3/24/2023

Todays character trait: Honesty

Something that made me feel happy today: my Grandma

is here!

How I'm feeling



## BARRY BUDDIES EXIT SLIP

Name: GABBY Date: 3/24/2023

Todays character trait: Honesty

Something that made me feel happy today: going to the

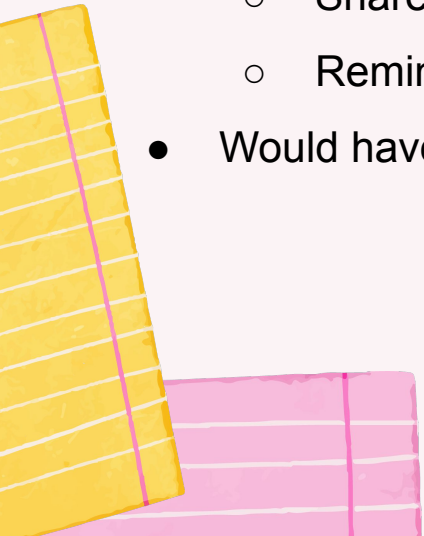
playground for recess.

How I'm feeling



# Leadership Actions

- Worked with my principal and assistant principal to identify chronically absent students who would benefit from Barry Buddies
- Checked in with the classroom teachers
  - Shared exit slips
  - Reminded them to encourage students to come to school to participate
- Would have liked to included another staff member to co-teach a lesson











# Outcomes/Impact


- Fall 2022: 6/6 students on the chronically absent list
- Spring 2023: 3/6 students on the chronically absent list
- Student 1: Attended 94% of sessions -- no longer chronically absent
- Student 2: Attended 88% of sessions
- Student 3: Attended 63% of sessions
- Student 4: Attended 82% of sessions -- no longer chronically absent
- Student 5: Attended 94% of sessions
- Student 6: Attended 88% of sessions -- no longer chronically absent

# Outcomes/Impact

- Students frequently asked throughout the week if they could come to participate in Barry Buddies on days other than Friday
- Teachers provided feedback that their students enjoyed and often asked about coming
- Students completed get to know you activity with their buddies and shared out on things they learned at the end of the year
- Provided incentives six times throughout the year
  - Example: Hot chocolate; Cookies; Ice Cream Sandwiches; Popcorn; M&M's; Chips

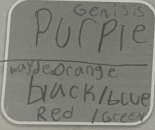
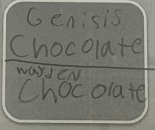
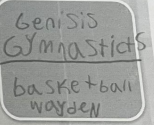
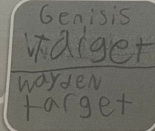
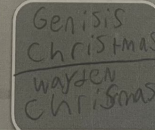
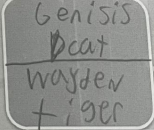
	4TH GRADE BUDDY	KINDERGARTEN BUDDY
	94100	GABBY
 For Every Yellow:	List one adjective to describe your buddy funny	silly
 For Every Orange:	List one thing your buddy enjoys about school my teacher	recess
 For Every Red:	List one of your buddies favorite foods pizza	pasta
 For Every Green:	List one thing your buddy likes to do for fun hang out with friends	playground
 For Every Blue:	List one thing your buddy can do to be a good friend show kindness	make her friends laugh
 For Every Brown:	List one thing your buddy enjoyed about Barry Buddies working together	getting snacks

## ALL ABOUT MY BUDDY



NAME:	Wayden / Genesis
AGE:	6/9 <sup>Genesis</sup> / <sup>Wayden</sup>
GRADE:	K/4 <sup>Genesis</sup> / <sup>Wayden</sup>
BIRTHDAY:	1/Dec, 12, 13 <sup>Wayden</sup>
WORDS TO DESCRIBE YOU:	cool / Gamer <sup>Genesis</sup> / <sup>Wayden</sup>
BUDDIES NAME:	Genesis

## | FUN FACTS |

<b>FAVORITE COLOR</b> 	<b>FAVORITE CANDY</b> 	<b>FAVORITE SPORT</b> 
<b>FAVORITE STORE</b> 	<b>FAVORITE HOLIDAY</b> 	<b>FAVORITE ANIMAL</b> 

# Reflection

- **Areas of Strength**

- Organization and time management to plan, prepare and implement activities within the SEL block
- Working with students from multiple classrooms and grades and scaffolding the lesson to involve each student
- Incorporating personal connections into the sessions
  - Exit cards asking what made them feel happy today



# Reflection

- **Stepped out of Comfort Zone**

- Facilitating communication with parents and providing them information so they would agree to allow their child to participate
- Engaging in meetings about absenteeism and ways to improve attendance

- **Challenges**

- Encouraging students to come to school throughout the week, not just important on days of Barry Buddies
- Planning lessons that would be engaging yet beneficial for all students involved while still tying it back to the SEL initiative



# Reflection

- **Successes**

- Increased attendance for 50% of participants!
- Increased communication with teachers of students
- Positive feedback from students and wanting to participate again next year
- Co-workers showing interest and sharing that they would like to be a part of Barry Buddies next year

- **Growth**

- I hope to continue Barry Buddies into the 2023-2024 school year. I would like to increase the number of students involved, include more staff members and create more structure to replicate year after year

The background features several pieces of paper with horizontal stripes. In the top-left and bottom-left corners, there are pink papers with white stripes. In the top-right and bottom-right corners, there are yellow papers with white stripes. A central pink rectangle with rounded corners and a small notch at the top center contains the text.

**THANK YOU!**