



# OSSINING UFSD NEWS

For Immediate Release

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## Service and Scholarship Personalize Grade 5 Learning

(OSSINING, N.Y.) – “Welcome College Class of 2021!” When Grade 5 students arrived at their new school, Roosevelt, in the fall, a banner with these words welcomed them, as it has every day since. The idea is to put into their minds goals beyond their time at Roosevelt.

“Grade 5 is the last stop on many levels,” said Roosevelt School Principal Liz Wallinger. “Our vision is to get students ready for the deeper, independent learning of the middle school, as well as the world beyond it.”

To do so, she and her faculty decided to form a school focused on both service and scholarship.

Two initiatives resulted. The first introduces students to the concept of college as well as an actual college campus. Over the course of a week in October, each class spent part of the day at Pace University, learning how to select a college, what colleges look for in students and experiencing aspects of college life. They played basketball with members of the men’s and women’s basketball teams and toured The Environmental Center, where they saw birds of prey and border collies. On the bus ride back to school, said Wallinger, the kids were “abuzz about college.”

The second program introduces students to the idea of service. Every month, one class visits a nearby nursery school to read to its three- and four-year-olds and help serve snacks. One class each month also organizes a food drive, and student representatives deliver the collections to a local food pantry, where they take a tour to see the work of the charity.

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The service-scholarship connection at Roosevelt doesn't stop at the buildings' doors, however. In school, students have the opportunity to shelve books in the school library, plant in the school garden and help create a school mural.

“We hope that these initiatives will make a difference in the lives of our students,” said Wallinger. “We view fifth grade as an extremely formative year upon which we can have a huge impact. We want our students to feel connected not only to their school community but to the Ossining community as well. Kids who feel connected to their schools and communities have less of a tendency to go down the wrong path.”

At Roosevelt, Wallinger said, “We've created a place where it's personal.”

Something, she said, students in Grade 5 really need.

The Ossining Union Free School District, nationally recognized for its mission to further the success of all children, serves approximately 4,300 pupils in six schools: Park Early Childhood Center for PreKindergarten and Kindergarten, Brookside School for Grades 1 and 2, Claremont School for Grades 3 and 4, Roosevelt School for Grade 5, Anne M. Dorner Middle School for Grades 6 through 8, and Ossining High School for Grades 9 through 12. **1/2010**

**Photo caption:** Members of Roosevelt's College Class of 2021, including fifth grader Brittney Jeselson, are spending the year focused on service and scholarship.