

School Counseling Overview

*The mission of the Township of Union Public Schools (TUPS)
is to empower and inspire **Every Student, Every Day** .*

Nicole Ahern, Supervisor of Counseling



Counseling Department

Who are we?

Certified School Counselors & Student Assistance Counselors

- UHS: 11 School Counselors, 2 SACs
- BMS: 3 School Counselors, 1 SAC
- KMS: 2 School Counselors, 1 SAC
- Elementary Schools: Each has a dedicated School Counselor (total = 7)

Additional Roles

- Anti-Bullying Specialists that oversee the HIB Investigations, district and state reporting
- 504 Chairperson
- I&RS Chairperson
- Member of various building based committees

Counseling Department

What is our WHY?

- Counselors deliver services through a **comprehensive school counseling program** designed to promote student success for all.
 - Counselors support the whole child—academically, socially, and emotionally.
 - Collaborate with educators, families, and the community to remove barriers to learning.
 - Provide equitable access to opportunities and resources for all students.

K-12 Continuum of Support

Elementary	Middle School	High School
Foundational Skills: Self-awareness, emotional regulation, friendship skills, decision-making.	Exploration: Academic habits, goal setting, identity development, peer relationships and social skills.	Transition: Postsecondary planning, career readiness, mental health support, and life skills.
This progression ensures that by the time students graduate, they are not only academically prepared but also emotionally resilient and future-ready.		

Counseling Department

Services Provided

- Individual Sessions
 - Academic, Social, Emotional focus depending on the student needs
- Small group facilitation with various topics
 - Commonalities of members
 - Substance Use, prevention, Intervention & follow up
 - Social Skills
 - Career Development & Interest Inventories
 - Post-Secondary Planning
 - Groups developed with trends counselors see

Counseling Department

Services Provided

- Crisis response and student support
- Classroom lessons based on targeted themes
 - SEL based
 - Trends in the building , referrals, school climate data
- Grade level meetings
- Parent Conferences
- School Wide Initiatives

Reaching our Students

- **Elementary**
 - Lessons in all classrooms monthly
 - Teacher availability and parent follow up
 - Individual sessions
 - Small Group facilitation
 - Schoolwide initiatives
- **Middle School**
 - Grade levels in homerooms, advisory lessons
 - Within classes for lessons
 - Individual sessions
 - Small Group facilitation
 - Schoolwide Initiatives

Reaching our Students

- **High School:**
 - Grade level small groups during the year
 - Academic, Transition, SEL, Career Exploration, Interest Inventories, Wellness
 - Individual Junior Conference and Senior Planning meetings
 - Within health classes for targeted lessons (SAC)
 - Grade level assemblies and meetings
 - Individual sessions
 - Small group facilitation
- **District Wide:**
 - Week of Respect, School Violence Awareness Week, Mental Health Awareness Month, National School Counseling Week, Unity Day, Suicide Prevention

Data and Response

Course Failures and Recovery 2024-2025

Grade Level 2024-2025	# of students that failed 1 course 24-25	Summer School Enrollment	Percentage passed
9th	125	158 UHS	148 = 93.7 %
10th	126	56 Educere/ NJVS	54 = 96.4%
11th	115		
12th	123	214 Total students	202 = 94.4%

Graduation Requirements

120 credits for Graduation:

[New Jersey State Minimum Graduation Requirements by Content Area 120 credits \(N.J.A.C. 6A:8-5.1\)](#)

UHS Students in the Classes of 2026, 2027, 2028 (current 12th, 11th, 10th)

Class of	Maximum credits to be possibly earned (40 cr per year)	Range of credit completion entering 2025-2026	% in range
2026 (current 12th)	120	100-120 credits	92%
2027 (current 11th)	80	65-80 credits	92%
2028 (current 10th)	40	30-40 credits	93%

State Assessment Status

Class of 2026 (Tested GPA)	ELA Requirement Completed	Math Requirement Completed
597 students	466*	339*

*From the Spring 2025 NJGPA Test Administration and alternate pathways.
Awaiting the Fall 2026 NJGPA results.

Counselor Response & Interventions

- **Advocate for students with teachers, communication and outreach**
- **Research and address additional contributing factors:**
 - Motivation and engagement
 - Family involvement
 - ACES (Adverse Childhood Experiences)
 - Socioeconomic status
 - Access to resources
- **Analyze available data:**
 - Monitor Marking Period Grades, Genesis Gradebook, Attendance, Conduct, Notes, Graduation Requirements, teacher/admin feedback, additional information
- **Develop Remediation/Intervention Plans**

Counselor Response & Interventions

- **Engaging families and offering options:**
 - Mental Health Supports
 - Referrals for appropriate outside services and/or community resources
 - Recovery credit to be back on track for graduation
 - Rescheduling courses as needed
 - Senior Letters: summary of final plans to successfully complete graduation requirements
- **Collaborate with stakeholders to address needs and offer resources**
 - CST, 504 Chairs, School Based Mental Health team, RTI, MTSS, I&RS, ML support, parents/families, administration
- **Formal and Informal Check Ins, Counselor visibility**
- **Targeted Lessons and Interventions**
- **Participation in small groups**

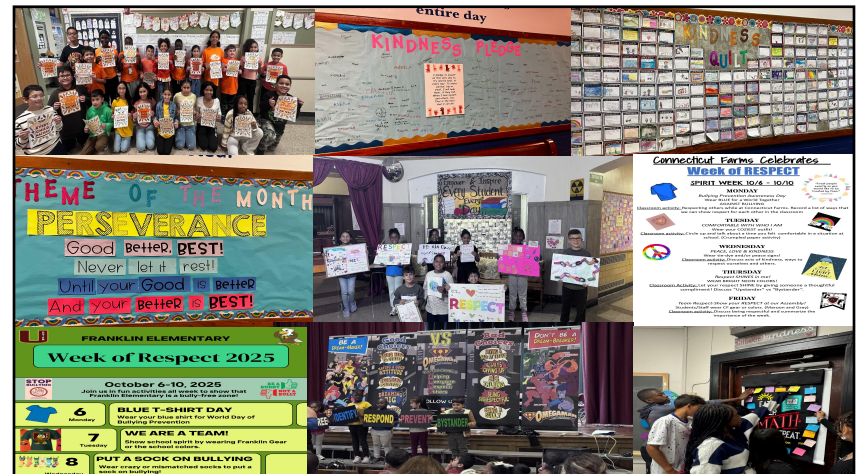
Outreach and Programming

Programs have included:

- **"Disconnected":** The love/hate relationship between you, your child, and their electronic devices
- **"Drug Trends":** What do parents need to know?
- **"Mental Health":** How to support our students' mental health
- **"The Teenage Brain":** Why do they do the things they do?
- Prevention Links Partnerships at both Middle Schools
- Safe Dates & Power Back Relationship Programming: UHS
- Various Assemblies held at all schools

Outreach and Programming

- **Senior Family Meeting**
 - Planning for post-secondary and supporting your student
- **9th/10th Grade Parent Meeting**
 - Transitioning to high school, what the future holds, HS Timeline
- **College and Career Fair**
 - Representatives from post-secondary institutions
 - 2 year and 4 years schools, Military, Civil Service, Trade and Vocational Schools, Business Schools
- **Instant Decision/Info Sessions**
 - Various visits, on site acceptance, information provided
- **Financial Aid Information Sessions and Workshops**
 - In conjunction with HEESA



Thank you!



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