



# Millwood School

February 2021

## Headlines



### First Week of School

It was exciting to see all those smiling faces on the first day of school this past fall! The students adjusted very quickly to the changes put in place around campus. The teachers were thrilled to have children back in the classroom for face-to-face teaching and learning.

Mr. Ryan promised he would kiss a pig if we met our "Fund-A-Cause" goal this past spring. Thanks to our generous supporters, we surpassed the goal and Mr. Ryan kept his promise and students watched it live! (pictured below)

We appreciate all the continued support and kind comments from our families! Won't it be great when our community can come together as one? **One School, One Team!**



Dear Millwood Community,

This year has been like no other in Millwood School's history but despite the unfamiliar conditions, we have been able to offer a stable and caring learning environment for our children. In August, the Board of Trustees and I finalized the goals for our strategic plan. We are excited to share these plans with you. One key goal is the optimization of our college prep curriculum. With this goal in mind, Millwood School will be applying to become an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School and a member of the Round Square Network of Schools. The implementation of the IB Program will offer Millwood School the opportunity to not only align our JK-12 curricular offerings but also adopt an externally moderated curriculum that is recognized as the best in the world. The Round Square Program offers us the ability to align our character education program nationally and internationally with other Round Square schools, giving our students a host of opportunities for leadership and service. Both the Round Square and IB programs align perfectly with Millwood's mission and vision and will enable our students to further distinguish themselves from their peers. I look forward to working with the community and the Board of Trustees as Millwood embarks on this exciting new chapter for our school and more details about the strategic plan will be shared with our community in the coming weeks.

The Athletics and extracurricular programs at Millwood have been the main casualties of the pandemic. We hope that conditions will soon allow us to open up our offerings and continue to provide opportunities for students to develop their skills within an environment of fair play, mutual respect, and fun. We strive to develop programs that are safe and lead our students to value commitment, to work for academic success, and to learn about health and wellness. Students are able to participate in a variety of sports, musical activities, and clubs which help them develop leadership, resilience, and cooperation that are essential for success once they graduate Millwood.



Mr. Ryan, Head of School

I would like to thank the Milwood community for their many messages and gestures of support to our faculty and administration. We have been touched by your overwhelming generosity and very much enjoyed your lunches, snacks, and gifts! The pandemic continues to dampen the events that were planned to bring our community together but we will not let it dampen our spirits! Unfortunately, our annual gala will once again be held virtually but we plan to still make this event memorable and enjoyable for our entire community. I hope that you enjoy reading the extraordinary stories from around the school in this edition of Headlines and hope that soon, we can welcome visitors back to our wonderful campus.

Warm regards,  
*Christopher T. Ryan*  
Christopher T. Ryan

### What is the Annual Fund?

The Annual Fund is a fundraising campaign that raises unrestricted gifts to support Millwood School. This year, the funds raised will support three areas:

School Curriculum

Campus Improvements

Financial Aid

Why should I support the Annual Fund? High participation rates from families, staff and the Board of Trustees help Millwood to demonstrate success as an institution and have become a standard in school evaluation. Our goal is to have 100% participation. No gift is too small.

Scan the QR code or visit our website today.  
Donate to the 2020-2021 Annual Fund!  
[www.millwoodschool.org](http://www.millwoodschool.org) | 804.639.3200

**MILLWOOD SCHOOL**  
 15100 Millwood School Lane  
 Middleham, VA 23112

## 2020-21 Annual Fund

### Donate Today!

Be Seen. Be Heard. Be Inspired.

**Questions?** Contact Kelly Elias  
[k Elias@millwoodschool.org](mailto:k Elias@millwoodschool.org) OR 804.639.3200 for further details!



# Millwood Community Updates

These first few months of school have been very busy. As I look back, the three main areas we have been focusing on are our K-12 curriculum, our student life, and our preparation for college.

Firstly, let me share an update on our curriculum. We have been reviewing the math curriculum K-12 and have recently purchased an upgraded curriculum that seamlessly links our Lower, Middle, and Upper School. Next on our list is the review of our K-12 language curriculum. Our goal for all of our curricula is to have a more cohesive program that runs seamlessly throughout the entire school whereby the students are able to smoothly transition from one division to the next.

In our World Language classes, students have been studying "The Day of the Dead" and exploring the regions of France. The Upper School students will also have a special guest speaker for our first "Star of the Day" interview. There will be more to come on this later. Art has been celebrating famous artists, and students are able to take part in some art competitions such as "Scholastic Art" for grades 7 and up and "Southern Teachers Agency" for grades 8 and up. Our music department has been working very hard preparing for our winter concert. We look forward to seeing and hearing our students and guest performers sharing their talents with our community.

Secondly, there are ongoing activities focusing on student life. We are re-suming our SCA (Student Council Association) and welcome new and interested applicants from grades 6-12 to help drive our school to the next level. We have also been reviewing our advisory program so that the students are able to find a balance between practicing our Big 10 Code for Self-Discipline and taking time to take care of themselves using mindful moments from Mrs. Yakim. Lower School students, along with guidance from their classroom teacher, practice the Big 10 daily through discussion and role modeling.

Monday Morning Meetings have been shared virtually as we have heard from our Middle School science class, our Lower School students, and our seniors. Field trip preparations for 8th - 12th grade to go to Spain in February, 2022 are well underway. We are looking forward to taking our students on an unforgettable experience. Lower and Middle School students have also had a surprise for their recess and break time as Mr. Gomez has upgraded our Gaga pit.

Thirdly, there has been much work on college preparations. Seniors have been working extensively with OptimumEd since the beginning of the semester and are well placed to go to the college of their choice next year. The Juniors are now preparing for their college of choice as they had a second meeting on December 16 to continue the college application process. This addition has helped build our current program and, with OptimumEd's help, has enabled us to meet the need of each student precisely.

Finally, although we have been practicing social distancing in this first semester, we have been tirelessly working together with your sons and daughters to ensure that we are not isolated during these challenging times. I hope you have a peaceful and restful midwinter break

Sincerely,

*John Horsington*  
Assistant Head of School



## From the Admissions Office

Millwood School has rolling admissions and is still accepting applications for certain grade levels. To view our Virtual Open House, please visit our website.

Enrollment for 2020-21 has almost doubled since last year. Some of that increase is due to county schools remaining virtual, however when families share stories about their child's successes at Millwood, it also leads to more inquiries, tours and an increase in enrollment. The new family testimonies have also initiated interest in Millwood. We would like to thank all of our families for sharing your positive comments on social media and telling your friends about your experiences at Millwood.

***We are currently accepting applications for the 2021-22 school year at all levels.***

Be Seen. Be Heard.  
*Be Inspired.*

At Millwood School, we don't simply provide knowledge. We inspire it. We are a Junior Kindergarten - Grade 12, college preparatory, co-ed independent day school.

Please enjoy a virtual tour by visiting: [millwoodschool.org/admissions](http://millwoodschool.org/admissions)

www.millwoodschool.org | 15100 Millwood School Lane, Midlothian, VA 23112 | 804.639.3200

## Fall 2020 Events Recap

Despite COVID restrictions, the fall was full of exciting events and school engagement activities. Although they may have looked a little different, Millwood School spirit and community support were in full swing! School spirit events such as Fall Spirit Week, food truck and restaurant spirit nights, spirit wear sales, dress-up days, and more, were all well received and well attended.

On October 19, **the 2020 Annual Golf Classic** was a great day at the Brandermill Country Club for all participants! It was a beautiful fall day in which everyone enjoyed golf, contests, raffle prizes, tasty food, and more. Thanks to our sponsors, teams, and volunteers, we were able to raise over **\$22,000** to support the Annual Fund.

This year, our **#GivingTuesday** on December 1, was also a great success! Thanks to our amazing Millwood Community, we had 100% board participation, 100% staff participation, as well as 100% participation in Mrs. Taillon's and Mrs. Harry's kindergarten classes, Mrs. Petrilli's and Mrs. Phiri's second grade classes, Ms. Epps' fifth grade class, Mr. Fox's sixth grade class, Mrs. Legacy's seventh grade class, and Mrs. Hardwick-Ivey's senior class. All of this phenomenal participation resulted in over **\$31,000** raised to support our Annual Fund. How fantastic!

"We love Millwood!  
Our daughter now enjoys  
coming to school, which  
used to be a struggle before  
attending here."





# Around Campus

## Down on the Farm

Kindergarten students studied farms during the month of October. They explored how farms were different long ago from today's farms. The unit involved learning about plants grown on a farm, such as beans and corn.

They even shucked corn and enjoyed popcorn. Learning about farm animals and their characteristics was also informative. As a culmination to their farm unit, Freckles and Friends Animal-Sanctuary brought animals to our campus for the students to see first-hand. They even enjoyed pony rides!



## 3rd Grade Students Map It Outside!

Mrs. Reynolds' third grade class took the opportunity to work outdoors in the covered pavilion while completing their map project, *Mapping Our World*. After studying map features such as the legend and compass rose, students created a map of their own island.

Even as the rain fell, this outdoor space gave the students time outside of the classroom to spread out and be creative. Many teachers are using the outdoor spaces for instruction.



## Middle School Digital Skills & Tech

Our sixth graders in Technology Innovations have now worked through the select, prototype, test, and iterate steps of the engineering design process. Two groups emerged with different ideas on how to make trick-or-treating safer during the pandemic. One group decided to use a tube system and the other used a launch approach.



Each group created miniature prototypes, received feedback, and then created larger, working prototypes. The groups experienced some setbacks, but we reviewed how even the greatest inventors learned from trial and error. The groups are now putting their finishing touches on communicating their solutions by using iMovie to create short videos about their products. I look forward to sharing those videos as part of the next newsletter.

## Board Game Mania

Recently the students in Mr. Fox's 6th grade math class were given the choice to complete one of four projects to show their mastery of fractions and decimals. Jonathan Terrell designed an elaborate fantasy game called Monster Hunters that showcased his creativity and engaged his classmates in reviewing these important skills.



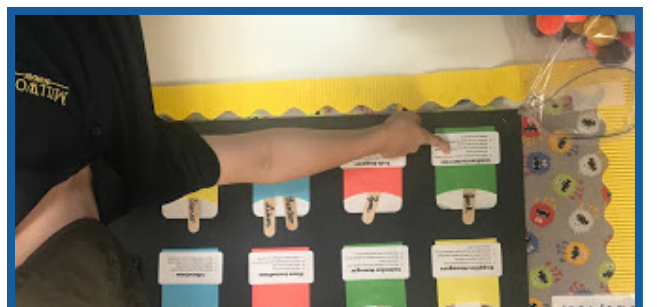
It's readily apparent that he spent countless hours thinking through the structure of the game, creating a plot that was detailed and thorough, and expertly hand-drawing all the artwork. Great work, Jonathan!

## Students Experiment with Capillaries in 7th Grade

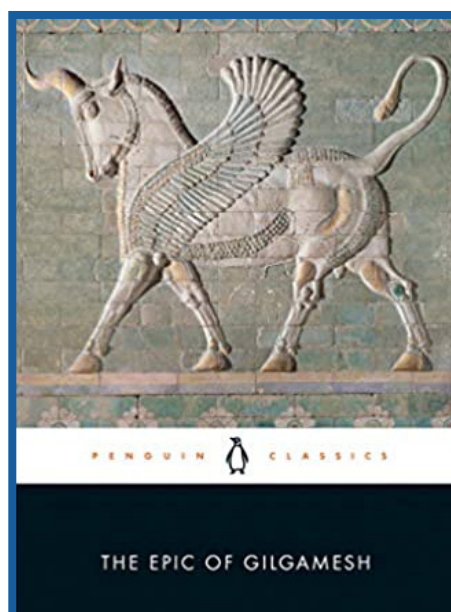
In science, Mrs. Lowe's 7th graders have been working through their Introduction to Life Science and Scientific Inquiry. Science labs are always an interactive part of instruction and learning.



Even with social distancing, our students have had the opportunity to explore several different experiments. One specific experiment demonstrated the work of our capillaries.



## 10th Grade Remembers "Gilgamesh"



Mrs. Hardwick-Ivey's Eastern Literature class studies a variety of texts each year. The current sophomores read Gilgamesh in their freshman year and were given the option of taking a test to show understanding or to create something that could be shared with the class demonstrating their understanding. Only a small number of students chose the test option.

The opportunity to encourage students to think outside the box is evident at all levels and across the curriculum. This is a way for our students to demonstrate how they strive for excellence in scholarship.

## Middle & Upper School French

Madame Wertz's 6th grade class is working in groups on a project that will include information on 4 different Regions of France, one of them being an overseas region. The students are learning more about France and its history. After break, each group will present their slideshow to the class. Here they are working on Chromebooks to fill in their research page.



Upper School world language classes celebrate National French Week. La Semaine du Français (National French Week) is an annual celebration of French language and francophone cultures. The purpose of this celebration is to increase our understanding and appreciation of the francophone world by exploring how French touches our lives. In our French I classroom, we discovered La Bretagne and La province de Québec.



# New Hires Bring New Flare to Millwood



**Mrs. Brandy Harry**

*"When I first came to Millwood I was excited to be in class with my students to give them a true kindergarten experience. Now that I have been here at Millwood for a semester I have grown to love the support, community, and relationships I have built with my students and their families."*



**Mrs. Lynn Johnson**

*"When I first came to Millwood, I found it to be a friendly and welcoming environment from all the staff, students, and families. Now that I have been here at Millwood for a semester, I am in awe of the heartfelt appreciation I feel from this community and how my students continue to amaze me each day with their growth."*



**Mrs. Jill Petrilli**

*"When I first came to Millwood, I was grateful for the opportunity to work with new colleagues. I was eager to teach "in-person". My parents and students have been so supportive and understanding. Now that I have been here at Millwood for a semester my students have grown socially, emotionally, and academically. I am thrilled to have each and every one of them as a Millwood Bobcat!"*



**Mrs. Kristen Reynolds**

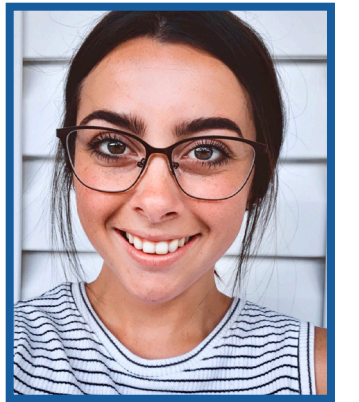
*"When I first came to Millwood, I was excited about a new challenge and encouraged by a welcoming staff and school community. Now that I have been here a semester, I am grateful for that continued kindness and support, as well as the opportunity to be a part of an incredible third-grade class family and learn together in person each day!"*



**Mrs. Trish Bowen**

*"When I first came to Millwood as a parent, I was impressed with the family atmosphere and love of learning that I observed with my own children. Now that I have been here, as a teacher, I am overjoyed to see the students making friends, enjoying school, and supported by such loving parents."*

*"When I first came to Millwood, I was awestruck by the abundance of support and welcoming wishes I received from the administration, faculty, parents, and students. I was impressed by the level of engagement and determination of the students in reaching their academic character-growth goals. Now that I have been here at Millwood for a semester, the sincerity and dedication my students had still remains. I am continuously moved by the commitment and enthusiasm the students have for attaining their personal, academic, and character-growth goals. Likewise, the support and dedication the parents have for their student's learning experience are incredible and limitless! This is a true testament to the principles, morals, and values of the Millwood Community!"*



**Ms. Taylor Epps**



**Mr. John Horsington**

*"When I first came to Millwood I was impressed by the students' enthusiasm and the warmth of the community. Now that I have been here at Millwood for a semester, the students continue to amaze me with their love of school, and the parents are still very caring about their sons and daughters learning."*



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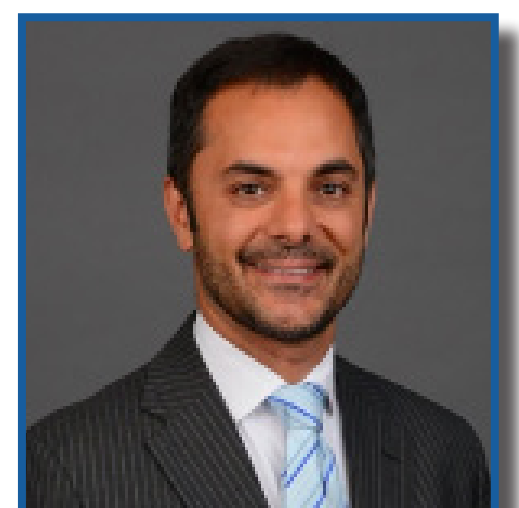
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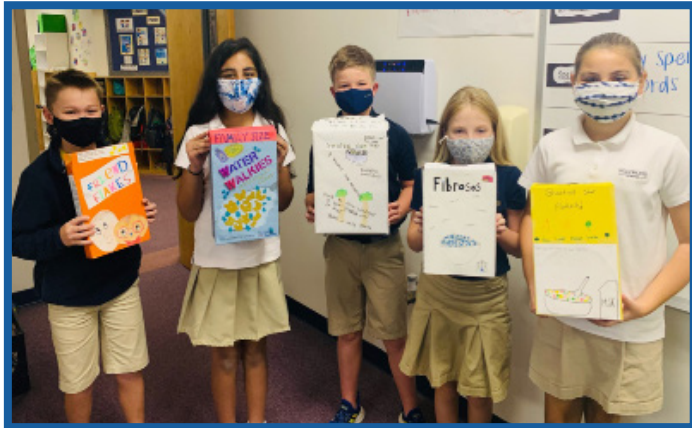
**Mr. Kamran Raika**



# It's all about BOOKS with Lower School!

Students in first, fourth and fifth grade have been working on their first book report of the year. It is evident that the students were totally involved in demonstrating their understanding and showing the pleasure they received from reading and sharing their books.

First graders shared an oral presentation about their books. They dressed as one of the characters in the story. The students were able to demonstrate understanding while practicing their public speaking skills. Classmates were able to show good listening skills as the presentations were given. Fourth grade students in Mrs. Bowen's class were reading books from the Fantasy genre. One of the goals of this particular report was to present the information in a portfolio format. They designed the table of contents to guide them through the report. The report included chapter summaries, a character analysis, research on the author, exploring new vocabulary, and rating the book with an explanation on their opinion.

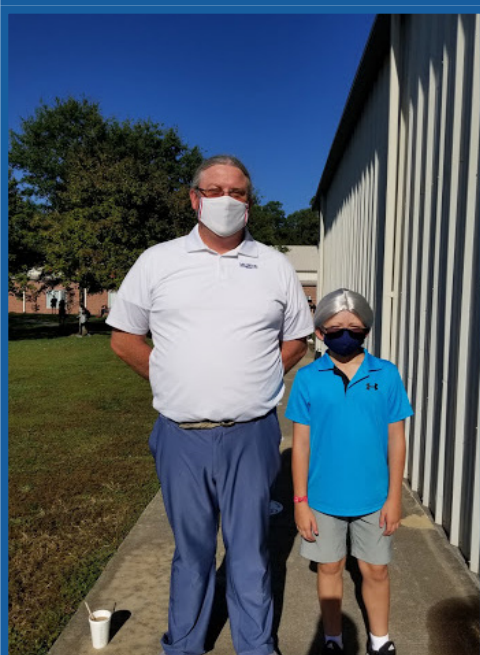


For the past six weeks, Ms. Epps' fifth grade class has worked diligently on expanding their knowledge of writing styles, book genres, and how those works and techniques are related to their academic and communal lives. Our students are proud to display their hard work, creativity, and passion for reading and writing, through their Cereal-Box style book report.

For their book report, students were provided with three must-haves; their book had to be fictional, they were to follow the guided-rubric that prompted them with information addressed on their cereal box, and they were to be as creative as possible in displaying their knowledge of their book. The overall joy, dedication, and sense of achievement the students received by completing this project is absolutely infectious. This project allowed students to display their knowledge in a creative, meaningful, and personal way.

## Fall 2020 Spirit Week Features "Teacher Appreciation"

To round out Spirit Week, students wrote and shared notes with their teachers to show their appreciation for all that they do. Some students even dressed the part, to honor those teachers and administrators who have made an impression on them. The students had a great time celebrating Spirit Week!



"Our teacher really knows our child. This makes such a difference in his excitement for learning."



# Millwood Goes Above and Beyond

## *Students Serve Our Community!*



All upper school students are required to perform 30 hours of community service each year from 9th-12th grade. We encourage our students to support activities within their communities. Millwood has been supporting the Chesterfield Food Bank for several months through this pandemic.

Recently, a group of our 9th graders visited the Chesterfield Food Bank and assisted nearly 200 families in their time of need. We appreciate the fact that these students took time out of their busy schedules to make a difference in their community.



## World Kindness Day Showcase

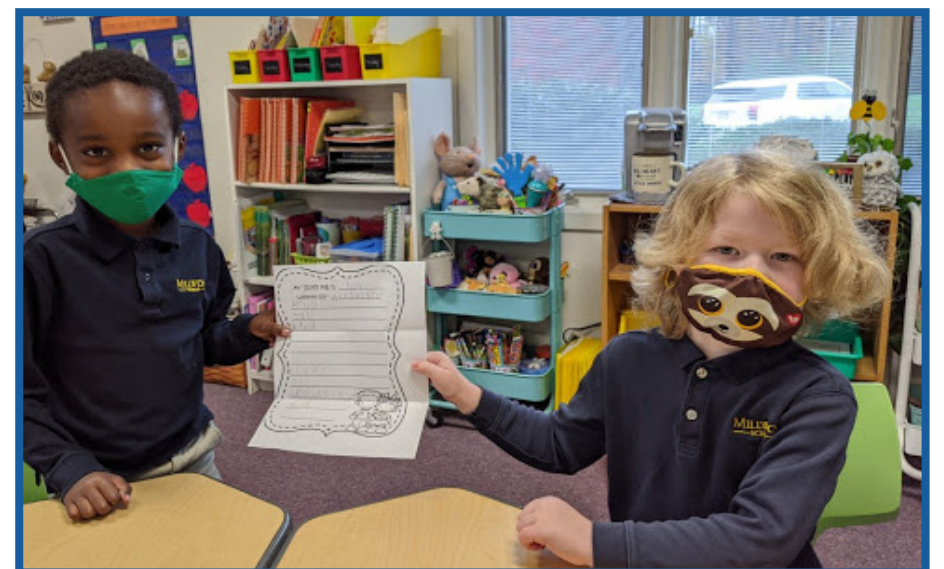
### *#MillwoodCares*



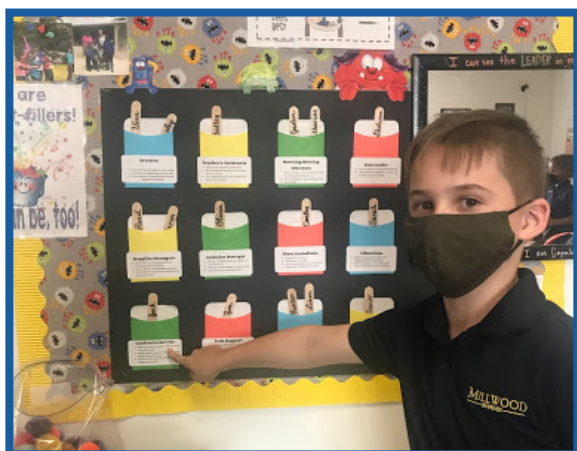
This year, World Kindness Day was celebrated on November 13. First graders are adopting a child for the holiday season. They are collecting clothes, shoes, toys, and books for a child similar in age who is less fortunate. The day before World Kindness Day they each made a special card for their 10th grade buddies. These cards were a drawing of themselves giving a virtual hug and a little something sweet was attached to the card.

The cards were delivered on Thursday. Earlier in the week, the first graders also were given a secret pal, someone in their class. They were asked to write 3 things they like about their secret buddy and then to give 3 clues about who wrote those compliments.

These secret pal letters were returned in a top secret envelope on World Kindness Day. Mrs. Zehrer read the compliments about each student as that student used the given clues to guess who their secret pal was. Mrs. Zehrer shared some of her special painted rocks with the students. Each child got to choose their favorite rock from the collection to keep at home or to hide again for someone else. These rocks are to remind the children to be kind and try to make others smile.



Third graders, with guidance from their class leader, Jack Hanrahan, have requested Coats for Kids and food for the Chesterfield Food Bank. Both initiatives have been ongoing for several weeks. This group of students are also painting rocks with positive words and they will be placed around campus for others to find.



Fifth grade students chose to write positive letters, notes, and acts of kindness on notecards for all lower school students (JK-4). Thursday morning, as a class, they made their way throughout lower school, passing out their kindness cards to the appropriate classrooms.

All students in the classroom participated in the presentation and deliverance of the cards. The students walked into the classroom, greeted the teacher accordingly, stood in front of the class (introduced their name(s), grade level, and reasoning for creating the cards), and then passed them out to each student, respectively. This was received well by all teachers and students of lower

school. The fifth graders were ELATED when they returned to their classroom. Kindergarteners in Mrs. Harry's class chose items from the Richmond Animal League's wishlist and brought them into school. They will be delivered this weekend!

Signs of positivity were found all over campus. These words and phrases were meant to encourage and support our students. Our ninth graders spread kindness by posting inspiring messages on cubbies and lockers. Seventh graders got a jump start on World Kindness Day by picking up trash around campus before the rain moved in. That was thinking ahead!



The sixth-grade class surprised their buddies with notes of kindness. The sixth graders wrote the notes and then put them on the wall outside the fourth-grade classroom.

The fourth graders were very surprised and excited to see the notes of kindness and encouragement. We are extremely proud of our students.





# From the Head of School *Our Children's Well-Being*

By: Mr. Christopher Ryan

In these uncertain times, the welfare of our children is of utmost importance. There may be some things beyond our control, but many things for which we can plan. Our children's social, emotional, and physical health need our attention. Children are being asked to learn in the toughest of situations. They may not be able to express what they are feeling, but their actions signal the need for guidance and support.

It's important for children to stay connected and socially active. With distance learning comes a certain amount of screen time that is necessary for success. Balancing screen time can be a challenge. Connecting with family and friends through FaceTime or engaging in creative game play such as Minecraft with classmates encourages children to stay socially active. If there is a close friend or family member in their social circle who they can spend time with while still remaining socially distanced, this could be beneficial to their social well-being.

Emotional health may involve relieving stress or feelings of anxiety. Mindfulness presents strategies that address dealing with strong feelings such

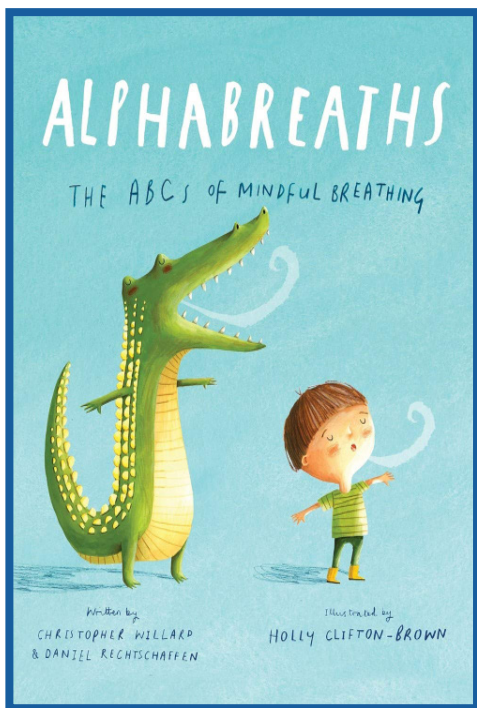
as anxiety. One such strategy is deep breathing. Deep breathing is a way to slow down the body and brain, and help the child to feel calm and clear. When children are facing strong emotions deep breathing techniques can be very beneficial. Alpha-breaths: The ABCs of Mindful Breathing by Christopher Willard, PsyD is a great resource. Journaling can also help to clear children's minds and deal with emotions.

Eating a balanced diet is one way to promote physical health, as is regular exercise and getting plenty of sleep. Keep children to a schedule with consistent routines.

Have them get up in the morning and go to bed each night at the same time. Getting

enough sleep helps keep children's mood in check and gives their body a chance to heal and replenish. Getting plenty of exercise is a huge benefit to maintaining a child's physical health. It is also advised during this pandemic that children spend as much time as possible outdoors. Colder temperatures should not deter children and families from participating in outdoor activities. Take a nature walk and use your senses to be mindful of your surroundings. Play games outside with your family.

The support of family is key to helping children achieve social, emotional, and physical well-being. Remember that there are resources in our schools and community to lend a helping hand to families in need. School counselors are a great resource for our children. They can also connect families with community organizations that are able to support the needs of children and their families.



# Meet Mrs. Betsy Yakim *Our School Counselor*

Welcome back, Millwood Families! I have missed you. For those who don't know me already, I'm Mrs. Yakim, your Millwood School Counselor. I am so excited to work with all of our new and returning families this year! I understand that this year presents its own unique challenges, but we are ready to face them and work through them together. I will continue to work with families and teachers to help meet the social and emotional needs of our students.



**Mrs. Yakim, School Counselor**

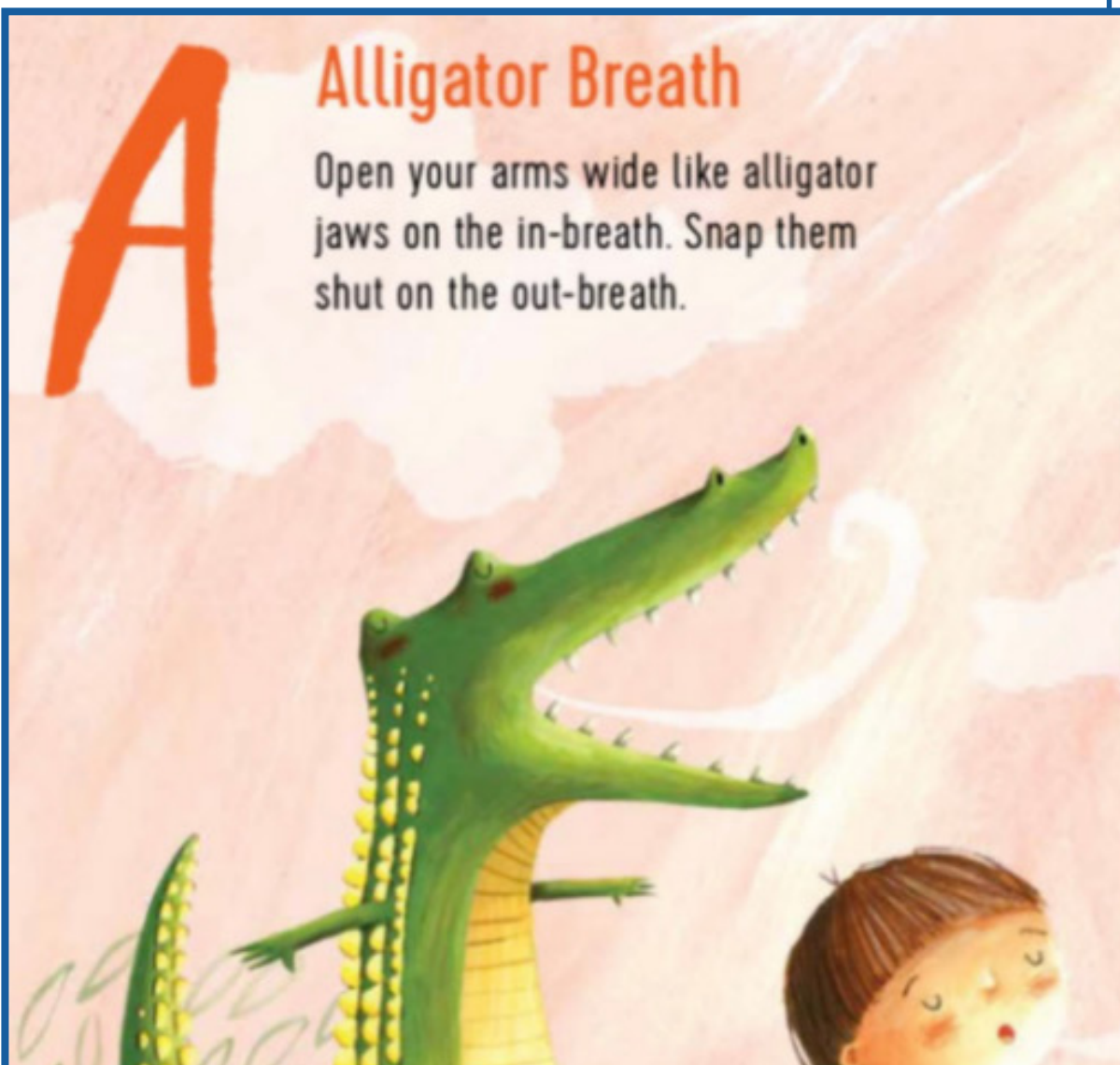
During the first few months of school, I will be available to families, students, and staff virtually. I will be checking in with our upper school students again this year during "minute meetings". These meetings allow me to spend a few moments making contact with students, letting them know I am here for them and checking in on how they are feeling. This will also help me assess the various needs of our students.

This year I am excited to provide an opportunity for all students to participate in a mindful moment each week. On Monday I will provide teachers and families with a video, activity, or story that encourages our students to incorporate mindfulness into their day.

Mindfulness has many health and educational benefits. Mindful practices can improve attention, reduce stress, improve relationships, and strengthen compassion. I enjoy getting to know each family and helping children feel comfortable & confident at school. If you need help getting connected to resources when a need arises, I am happy to assist.

Please do not hesitate to communicate with me through email or phone. I am also available to do meetings virtually. I will be available during my office hours on Monday & Wednesday-Friday 11:30 pm - 1:30 pm. Please Stay Safe, and Be Kind!

"We love the small class sizes and sense of community at Millwood School."







Millwood  
— School —



*February 2021*

*Headlines*

# 80S PROM

*Auction & Gala*

**FRIDAY, APRIL 23, 2021**



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