



A NOTE FROM DEAN KRISTI

WCS CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Dear Friends,

We are now nearly 10 weeks into our school year, a year that has looked far different from any other!

Yes, there are challenges. We start our days with daily health screeners and temperature checks, wear our masks diligently, and greet each other with elbow bumps

instead of our usual hugs and high fives. We are constantly vigilant about the safety measures that keep our community as healthy as possible.

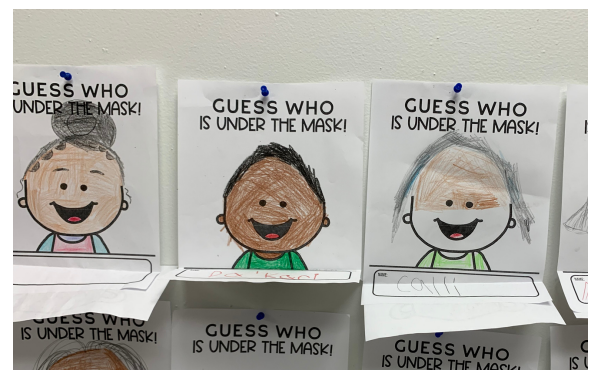
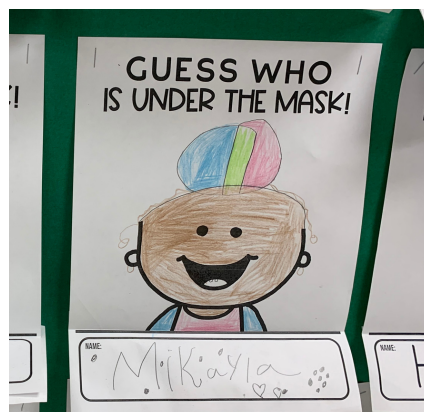
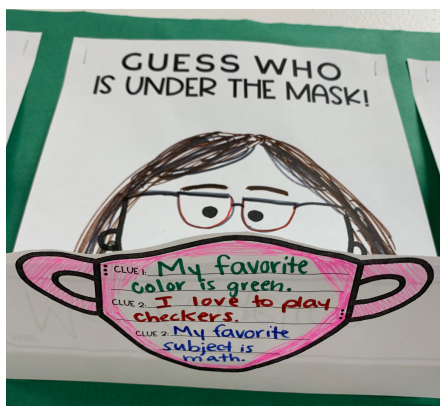
But while normal looks different now, we are THRILLED to be back together in person. Even with smiles covered by masks, you can see the absolute joy on students' faces as they investigate a new plant in Discovery class, dig into some clay during Art, or just play together at recess. I am proud of the work we did during remote learning, but our holistic model of education is really meant to be experienced in-person, where students can play and interact with one another and with the natural environment.

I hope that some of the moments we're sharing in this newsletter will bring you that same joy: after all, it's supporters like you who help make them possible. As always, if you have any questions or want to learn more about what is happening at Wissahickon, please don't hesitate to reach out to me. I love hearing from you!

Warmly,

Dean Kristi

GUESS WHO? Kudos to our teachers, like Ms Angelica in Room 301, for finding fun and creative ways to make our Covid safety measures a little more entertaining!



DID YOU KNOW?

Wissahickon's school mascot is The Red Fox. Our original logo included a tree. Hence, our newsletter name!



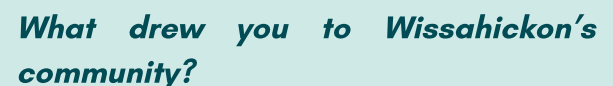


Our staffers are some of the smartest folks we know, so we asked them, "What word do you think of when you think of our community here at WCS?"



This fall, WCS is particularly honored to highlight our partnership with Michele Kreisler Rubenstein, co-founder of OurVillage Tutoring and longtime Wissahickon supporter! Michele's commitment to Wissahickon's holistic model is evident in the many ways she makes our community stronger: her business, OurVillage Tutoring, supports our students who need a little extra academic support in a hands-on way, while her leadership giving simultaneously makes their entire educational experience stronger. We're proud to call Michele and her entire family our partners! In her own words, here's a bit more about Michele's connection to WCS:

Even though there are many things different about this year, we're remaining true to our mission by spending lots of time outdoors visiting our neighboring parks and arboretums and partnering with Outward Bound for fun educational field trips.



I have always had a love of learning thanks to parents who valued education, teachers who supported me, and peers who encouraged me. [A friend at Teach for America] introduced me to Wissahickon Charter School as an example of what a successful charter school in Philadelphia could accomplish. I am grateful to have been introduced to this community many years ago and to know many WCS students personally through tutoring.

What do you like best about working with Wissahickon and our students?

When WCS welcomed me and my daughter Claire to work one on one with students, we jumped on the opportunity. The community at WCS of teachers,



administrators, parents, and students is fertile ground for a child to develop a love of learning that will open a lifetime of opportunities. There is a unique mix of mutual respect, trust, and supported independent responsibility.

What are you most excited about this year and looking into the future?

The COVID-19 pandemic brought sadness and loss, but I believe that like most struggles it also brought a silver lining. People are now open to using virtual meeting technology, e.g. zoom, for learning. Zoom (and other virtual technology) is not a perfect tool for tutoring, but it is getting better and better and the online teaching tools are racing to keep up. There are a lot of rigorous studies that show that one-to-one tutoring support can significantly improve academic outcomes and anecdotally we see that in our work at OurVillageTutoring. We are thrilled that so many Wissahickon families have chosen to get the extra, free-of-charge tutoring support we offer for their children.

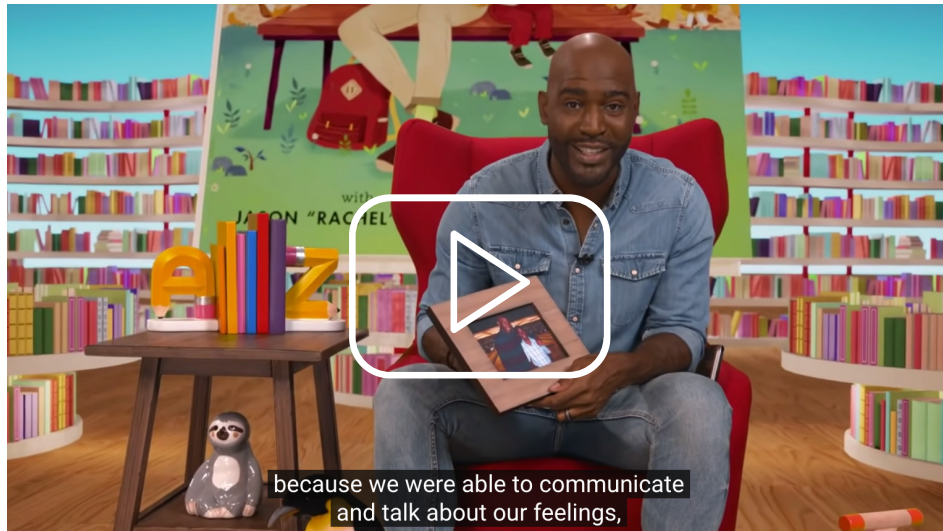


Trips like this one to the Outward Bound Discovery Center in Fairmount Park are made possible by support from generous foundations like **The Hamilton Family Charitable Trust**, who has funded our Outdoor Program and more for over ten years! Additional support to WCS this school year comes from longtime friends at **The Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation**, which sponsors the 8th grade Outward Bound hiking expedition; the **van Ameringen Foundation**, which funds our Behavioral Support Team Program; and the **Clarence Rowell Charitable Trust**, which funds art supplies for our dynamic school-wide art classes. We are so grateful for foundation support at WCS, which makes so much of our work possible!



MIRRORS & WINDOWS AT WCS

When it comes to social-emotional learning at Wissahickon, we work hard to provide our students with "mirrors" into their own identities, while also giving them "windows" to look out and learn about other cultures and experiences. To aid these efforts, Director of Culture Niema Golphin has created "Our Culture is Beautiful," a monthly initiative to learn about and celebrate different cultures. So far this fall, we have honored Hispanic Heritage Month in September and Black is Beautiful in October. In November, we are celebrating both National American Indian Heritage Month and National Hip Hop Month. Students learn in an age-appropriate way, from watching the movie *Coco* in Kindergarten for Hispanic Heritage Month to writing their very own rap in middle school for Hip Hop Month. Below is one way we celebrated Black is Beautiful Month, with a reading of Karamo Brown's picture book "I Am Perfectly Designed."



WELCOME TO OUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS!

The Wissahickon Charter School Board of Trustees is proud to announce the addition of three new members to our board. We are so grateful for their expertise and service!



John Wylie
Realtor, Compass Real Estate



Sylvester Mobley
Founder & CEO, Coded by Kids



Samantha Mathews
Clinical Mental Health Counselor



Thank you, friends, for making this work possible!
- Franklin the Fox