



WINTER 2022 | VOL. 1

# Fox & Tree

A Newsletter for Friends of Wissahickon Charter School

## A Note from Dean Kristi WCS Chief Executive Officer

Happy New Year! As we enter a new calendar year, Wissahickon continues to successfully navigate an unusual and unpredictable time. Like many schools, soaring Covid cases in January made it necessary for us to begin 2022 with two weeks of virtual learning to keep our community safe. Today, we are **THRILLED** to be back in our school buildings with happy and healthy staff and students!

We're still overcoming challenges each day, but recent feedback from families shows how grateful they are for our safety procedures, resources, and clear and regular communication during this moment. I'm honored to be able to share some of those messages in this season's Fox & Tree: I hope you will enjoy reading them as much as I did.

Thank you, as always, for your incredible support!

*Dean Kristi*



*Exchanging hellos with some students at recess*

## Meet Our New Covid Coordinator!

WCS is happy to announce the arrival of Bethann DiGiovanni, our Covid Coordinator. In this newly created position, Bethann is managing the many essential tasks that keep our community safe, from daily health screenings to contact tracing/testing to communication with staff and families. By keeping our daily safety measures running smoothly, Bethann helps ensure that our students' academic and social needs remain top priority!



“

She got in the car at pick up and said: 'Mommy, I didn't have a great day. It was better than great. It was super great. It was awesome.'

Moments like that make it all worth it. Keep up the amazing job. We are beyond grateful.

- WCS Fernhill Parent



**Wissahickon**  
CHARTER SCHOOL

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**"We Take Care of the  
Earth That Takes  
Care of Us"**



## Fierce Foxes

In response to our older students' expressed desire to feel more confident and safe while riding SEPTA and being out in the city, we've held self-defense workshops with 7th & 8th graders. Organized by Director of Culture Niema Golphin and led by Lawrence Whitaker of Urban Defense, these hands-on, practical workshops took place in P.E. class and offered students a chance to build knowledge of their bodies and surroundings and practice basic self-defense.



Visit [www.wissahickoncharter.org/updates](http://www.wissahickoncharter.org/updates) to watch this video!

## Acts of Service for MLK Day

On Martin Luther King Jr. Day, WCS had the day off from school, but that doesn't mean that we weren't keeping busy. Students and staff alike were encouraged to find safe, socially-distanced ways to show their CARES values and give back to their communities with small and simple acts of service, like calling a grandparent, planting a tree, or donating items to a shelter.



## Fernhill's Big Little Friendships

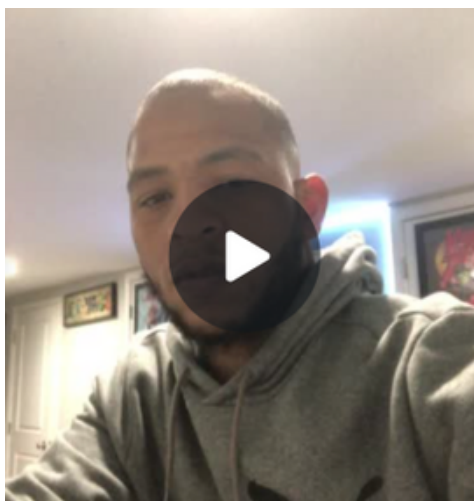
Peer Mentoring has been a Fernhill Campus tradition for years: Select Middle school students are recommended by their teachers and paired with lower schoolers in need of tutoring, a buddy, or a role model. One of our mentors this year was even a mentee herself a few years ago! This is a great opportunity for both big and little kids to practice important CARES values.



### What are CARES?

CARES are WCS's shared community values!  
"CARES" stands for:

- C** Collaboration
- A** Academic Excellence/Assertion
- R** Responsibility
- E** Empathy
- S** Self-Control/Stewardship



### Up and at 'Em!

Check out this fun Morning Announcement video from Dean of Culture Thomas Randall! In addition to providing a soft-landing to the day, Mr Randall reminds us about the correct way to wear a mask in a funny, engaging way. Sharing morning announcements via video was a necessity during remote learning, but it led to the serendipitous discovery that some of our students who are visual learners PREFER video announcements to loudspeakers; it's also a great way to keep students connected with administrative and support staff. Even in person, we're continuing to share video announcements every day.

“

I am SO GRATEFUL  
that my littles are at WCS!  
Thank you for all you do  
to protect our treasures.  
I cannot imagine being in your position.  
Please know our family appreciates you!

- Judi W., WCS Awbury Parent

“

Thank you so much.  
I appreciate the WCS staff  
for taking every precaution  
to keep our children safe.  
I'm sure [my daughter] will be happy  
to be back at the building tomorrow.

- WCS Awbury Parent



To view videos featured in our newsletter or see  
past editions of Fox & Tree, please visit  
[www.wissahickoncharter.org/updates](http://www.wissahickoncharter.org/updates)



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