

WINTER
2017

HERON NEWS



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Health and Wellness at Riverside

I accepted the position of head of school last February for many reasons. I knew the school. I taught many young Riverside graduates in high school and found them to be intellectually well-prepared. Socially, each graduate was solid in a well-understood and articulated belief of who he/she was as an individual. More importantly however, I hoped that the position of head of school at Riverside would provide me with an opportunity to grow professionally and to rejuvenate my career. The position has done both of these things! Growth and rejuvenation have made me healthy again. This edition of The Heron News is about health and wellness.

What is a healthy school? Years ago, schools treated health as a program in physical education and an occasional unit on nutrition in science class. We now recognize the importance of the physical, emotional, and social well-being of our students. Research proves that "healthy" students are more likely to attend school, able to focus in class, and ultimately experience academic success. Today, schools must involve themselves in assisting students in making healthy choices, understanding their individual needs for movement and exercise, and engaging students in discussions and coping skills necessary to understand and to manage

relational issues. We must help them to find the tools to identify, to understand, and to cope. I doubt that anyone would argue that health and wellness must be integrated into school if it is to be defined as a successful school.

At Riverside, we understand that students need more than academic rigor to grow. Our advisory program assists middle schoolers in making healthy decisions. It allows us multiple opportunities to get to know and to acknowledge the individual. Our leadership program works with 8th graders and assists them in becoming viable mentors to our younger students. Their work throughout the school is evident as they encourage our younger students to develop collaboration skills and to succeed through teamwork. Building relationships is just part of life, and kids helping kids is one of the most effective ways to do that in schools.

Our physical program not only promotes movement, but collaboration. Students swim, skate and ski with each other and at different levels. Our "PE" program in grades K-3 has transformed this year and now includes team-building, mindfulness, and self-advocacy skills. We have incorporated a program for 4th and 5th graders about empathy, emotional literacy, and friendships. Slowly, these undertakings add up to an evaluation of our "PE" program. Hopefully that evaluation will result in an extension of "PE" to include physical knowledge, nutrition, stress management, healthy relationships, and communication skills.

I look forward to our continued work to transform "PE" into a Wellness program for grades PreK through eight. We will look to parents who have an interest and background in these kinds of programs, LSC enrollees in the Exercise Science Program, and other outside resources to support us in this journey.

Sincerely,

Michelle Ralston
Head of School



4th graders Emily Counter, Amelie Whittaker, and Anika Giese relished the sweet taste of some cherry tomatoes in the garden at Copper Cannon Camp on our Fall Field Trip.

Adventures in P

Riverside has long taken advantage of local resources in order to expand its physical education curriculum. The Lyndon State College and St. Johnsbury Academy pools, Burke Mountain, Kingdom Trails, Fenton-Chester Arena, and Kingdom Gymnastics provide opportunities for our students to venture beyond our campus and challenge themselves in new ways.

SKIING

Rilan Cobb '11 and Aren Tulp '11



2011



1991

Erin (Wheeler) Zimbler '94, Mark Gessner '94, and Mike McHugh '94



2010

Olivia Fortin '14, Dylan Maghini '10 and Angela Kubicke '14



2001



SWIMMING



1984

Jesse Thompson '85, Josh Gagliardi '86, Meggan Dwyer '85, and Cath Kane '85

1992

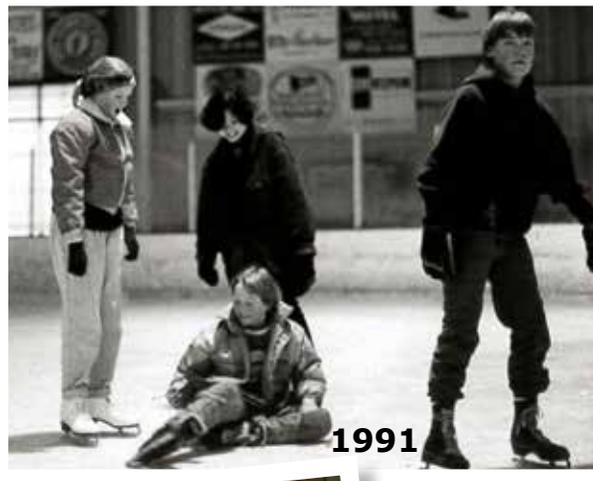


Topher Waring instructs Wrix McIlvaine, Nathaniel Gleicher '95 and Beige Berryman '94

Physical Education



1991



1991

Ethan Gilson '93,
Ethan Coppentrath
'93, Caleb Raynor
'93 and Beige
Berryman '94



2008

Evan Tirey '09 and
Grady Nixon '09



2015

Erin (Wheeler)
Zimbler '94,
Yoshiko (visiting
teacher from
Japan,) Lauren
Newell '94 and
Caleb Raynor '93.

Meredith Nicol
'16, Sarah
Barrett '16, and
Piper Rolfe '16



2008

Ethan Henderson and Chase Dwyer '12



2010

8th grader Dylan Maghini '10 helped faculty
member Nelia (Dwyer) Rath teach swimming
skills in small groups.

Alumni News

Alfred Dedam '98 moved his family back to Peacham, to the house in which he grew up. He and his wife Rose have two sons, Amos and Safford; they will be 4 and 2 in January, respectively. Alfred owns a masonry business, Old Goat Masonry, and finds himself working mostly in and around Hanover.

Morgan McInville '01 graduated from Colorado College with a degree in physics and currently lives in New York City, where he is completing his master's degree at Pratt Institute and working in the field of industrial design.

Morgan's thesis is about ski boot design and the biomechanics of the lower leg. He works at a private space-suit company called Final Frontier Designs, where he helps to make one or two suits

per year for private clients, but mostly works on NASA research and design contracts, designing the hard components for the suit like the helmets, and pressure regulators. He also works in a high-end architectural metal shop called Ferra Designs, where he takes concepts from the architect and designs how they will be made. He says: "It's kind of like figuring how to build a lego just from the picture on the front of the box and writing the instructions too. I get inspired by spiral staircases the most. They are always very complex to design but I love the gentle curves and flow of the final designs."

Casey Calamaio (member of the class of 2004) moved from St. Johnsbury to Huntsville, Alabama to attend the University of Alabama, where he studied Earth System Science, and this spring will receive his Master's in Atmospheric Science. Casey is a full-time researcher at the university as a geospatial



Morgan and his girlfriend, Katie Downes-Angus

scientist. Before that, he worked with NASA and USAID to use satellite data to improve environmental decision making in developing countries. Much of Casey's research has been to augment satellite Earth observing systems with unmanned aerial vehicles (drones), particularly in the context of forest monitoring and natural disasters. More recently he has been involved with emergency management agencies in Alabama mapping tornado tracks with satellites and UAVs. Casey says "It's been very rewarding to work with first responders and those involved in emergency management to integrate UAVs with their efforts to respond to natural disasters."

Casey has done field work in the Mayan Biosphere Reserve in northern Guatemala, where he used drones in a campaign to monitor protected forests and map carbon storage with the Wildlife Conservation Society and the Guatemalan Council for National Protected Areas.



Sarah Fitzhugh

'06 is no longer working in the fashion industry, but instead is currently in a post baccalaureate pre med program at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia, working toward acceptance into a Doctorate of Physical Therapy program.



Emma Keeshin '07 is very excited about working for the American Civil Liberties Union in Cleveland, Ohio after graduating from Oberlin College in 2015. She is a Legal Assistant, where she manages and investigates requests for legal help and provides general support to the office's lawyers as they fight in court to protect people's rights. Emma also helps lead the Northeast Ohio chapter of Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ), a nationwide network of groups organizing White people for racial justice. She says, "These days it definitely feels good to be at a place that shares my values and is fighting fearlessly against the scary things coming our way." She sends a big hug back to the amazing educators at Riverside!

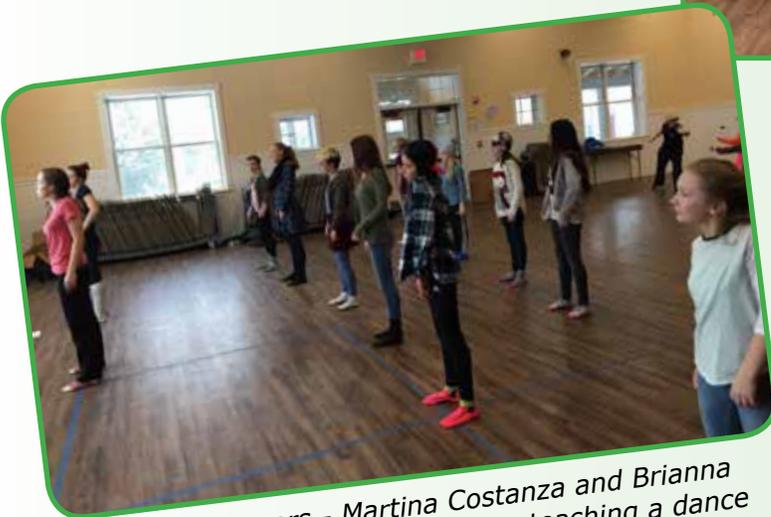
Rohan Racine '08 is working at Mylan Technologies in St. Albans right now, and planning to return to McGill University for a graduate degree.

Erin O'Farrell '12 earned recognition on the Dean's List in her first year at Bates College.

Elsa Eckhardt '14 is living in Norway this semester with a host family. She is spending her days learning basic Norwegian, exploring back roads while running, and experiencing downhill skiing in a new place. She has shared lots more of her feelings and experiences in a blog, which can be found at <https://elsaeckhardt.tumblr.com/>.

Active Riversiders

The 4-5th grade PE class has built a relationship with the local square dancing group, who have joined them many times this winter to teach square dancing to our students.



Two senior dancers - Martina Costanza and Brianna Gingue - from Lyndon Institute are teaching a dance elective at Riverside this winter. Their goals are to teach safe movement practices and choreography using modern and jazz terminology and the elements of dance (time, space, and energy).



In a fencing elective taught by Rebecca Owens, 7th grader Luke

McCormack fences against 6th grader Oak Clarke with electronic training gear, while 6th grader Caleb Harrison looks on.

New Curricular Programs



Sarah reads a story to the K-1st graders that engages the students in the issue she wants to discuss.

K-3rd grade Wellness with Sarah Broome

The youngest Riversiders engage in integrated wellness and physical education activities every single day of the week, thanks to the leadership and planning of assistant teacher and alumni parent Sarah Broome. Sarah has explained to the students that her classes with them "will focus on us adventuring into social, emotional, and physical health."

The program focuses on relationships and how to be a good friend by understanding yourself first. Students practice mindfulness, discuss how to handle frustrations, seek common ground in arguments, and have a toolbox of strategies for understanding oneself. Sarah has been using literature to engage the students in discussion of meditation, empathy, peer pressure, and other relevant topics. The classes have also created skits to share with their peers, which is effective because role-playing deepens understanding and empathy.

Sarah is pursuing her degree in Human Services with a concentration in Early Childhood Education and says that the experience of developing this curriculum "has furthered my interest in mindfulness and how to be fully engaged in the moment. It has brought to the forefront the realization that I would love to have more understanding and training in storytelling."

The physical education component is an extension of wellness, as students actively and cooperatively play together in order to begin developing the supportive community that Riverside values so deeply.



Clint, Gabe, and Micah role play laughing at someone vs laughing with someone while their classmates are an attentive audience.

Soccer 2016

Riverside fielded two full soccer teams this fall, one for 5-6th graders and one for 7-8th graders, which allowed for greater playing time for each participant. Both teams, coached by parent **Jamie Yerkes '85** and science teacher Joel Gilbert respectively, enjoyed impressive skill development and many wins. Riverside's reputation for positive and collegial play continued this season, as was



5th graders and alumni children Gus Yerkes and Yofta Larocque (son of Casey Doerner '90) played with great skill and determination this year.



Jamie Yerkes '85 returned to Riverside's field for the first time in decades to coach the 5-6th grade team.

in Health and Well Being

4-5th grade Relational Assertiveness with Madeleine Balcom



Volunteer teacher, professional counselor, and Riverside parent Madeleine Balcom leads a group discussion with 4-5th graders in her Relational Assertiveness program.

Preschool and 5th grade parent Madeleine Balcom is doing graduate work in youth counseling, and has volunteered to develop a program in Relational Assertiveness for our older elementary students. We believe it is important to recognize that we must meet not only the academic, artistic, and physical needs of our students, but also to foster their healthy social-emotional development. The group aims to address stress management, mindfulness, positive self perception, and leadership.

In order to

meet these goals, the group will engage in practicing yoga, collaborative group exercises, journaling, and relaxation and breathing techniques.

Crediting research by Elias et al, Balcom notes, "supporting the social emotional skills of students leads to greater academic achievement, problem behaviors go down and the quality of relationships goes up; this leads to more engaged students with increased responsibility and productivity. These qualities are related to increases in self awareness, impulse control, cooperation and better care for self and others. These are all skills that move beyond the classroom and have lifelong effects on students' contributions to their communities."



4th grader Emily Counter took notes for the group as they discussed "encouragement" and established norms for their time together.

witnessed by spectators of all kinds.

Mr. G says he sees "the soccer program as an opportunity to develop leadership skills, community building, communication skills in a different setting, perseverance, and the value of diversity in making the whole team stronger," and that he thrives in facilitating those lessons.



The 7-8th grade team was led by many 8th graders, including: in the front row, Darwin Smyth, Lucas Patoine, Katie Lyon; and in the back row, Waverly Griffin, co-captain Ruby Yerkes [daughter of Jamie and Polly (Walton)Yerkes '86], co-captain Nelson Eaton, and Sawyer Goodwin.



6th graders Maren Giese and Ruby Rolfe [daughter of Danica (Emery) Rolfe '90] were cheered on by the older team from the sidelines.



The Riverside School

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Upcoming Events - Please Join Us!

Trustee Forum	March 16, 5 PM
<i>Singin' in the Rain</i>	March 24-25, 7 PM
Poetry Fest.....	April 14
Coffee House Discussion on Transitions to Middle and High School	May 4, 5 PM
Spring Field Trip to Quebec City ...	May 8-10
Elementary Plays	May 16, 6:30 PM
Graduation	June 3, 10 AM



Ernie



Allee's 2nd-3rd grade classroom enjoys the company of her dog Ernie each day. Ernie is a miniature schnauzer and he definitely has

had a positive impact on the emotional health of her students. Allee says that when she is reading aloud to the class and Ernie is quietly lying among the listeners, the kids are more still and focused as well. He also provides love and attention to individuals who seek him out when they need a little extra.

