

THE EQUITY LENS

"In a time of destruction, create something." - Maxine Hong Kingston



Ramadan begins today (4/13)! Ends 5/13*

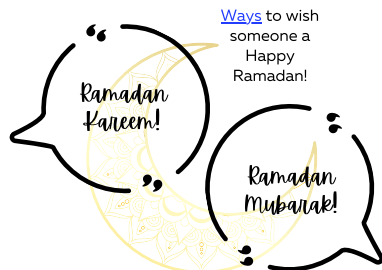
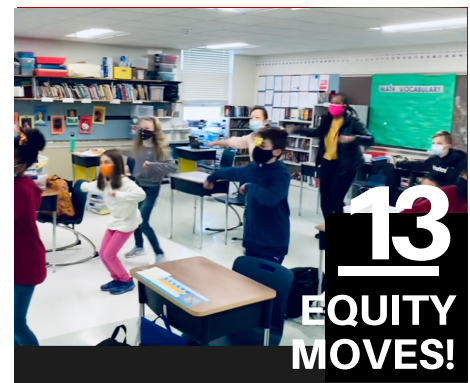
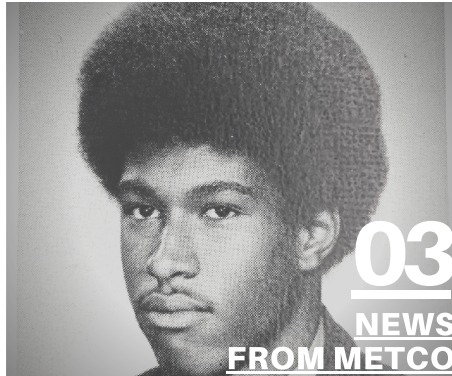
REMINDERS:

- Ramadan is the holiest month for Muslims, and fasting (sawm) from dawn to dusk for 30 days is one of [the Five Pillars of Islam](#).
- 80% of U.S. Muslims fast for for the month of Ramadan.
- Do you know whether any of your students are Muslim? Ask them whether they are fasting. Please read [this excellent blog](#) for teachers about Ramadan from [Teaching While Muslim](#).
- Elementary students may fast for Ramadan. A lower K-5 student told me that she will be fasting 1/2-days.
- Muslim students attend K-5, MS, & HS at WPS.
- Ramadan is a celebratory month. Acknowledging it in class is a great way to support your Muslim students and also makes non-Muslims aware of this important religious holiday.

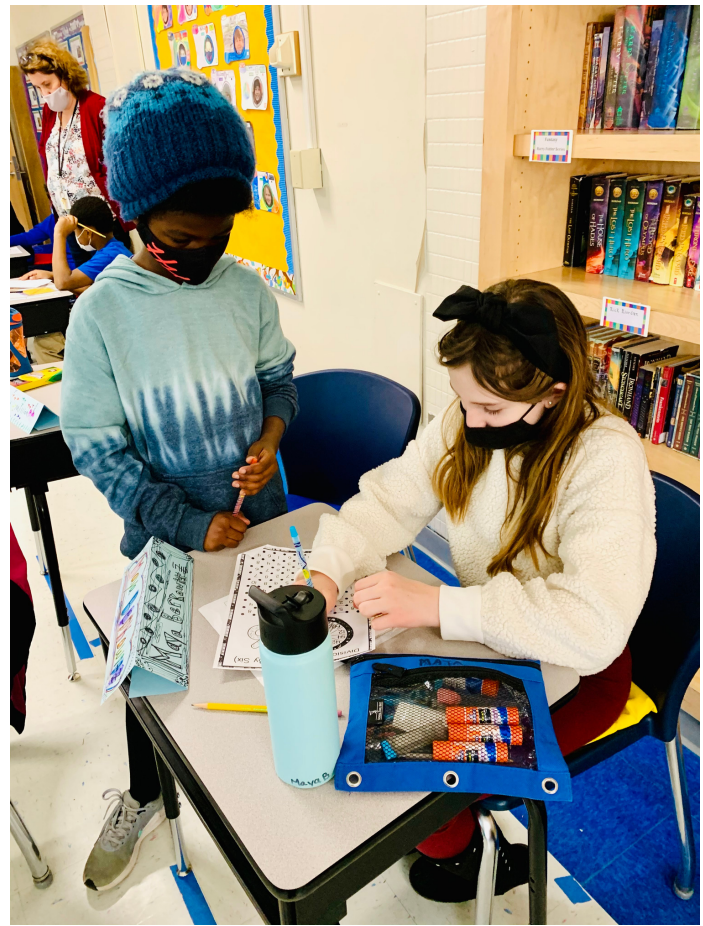
* Source for start/end dates: Islamic Center of Boston, Wayland. Learn more [here](#).

Resources:

- [Guide for Teachers & Administrators](#)
- [Considerations for Teachers](#)
- [Teaching About Ramadan and Eid](#) (Learning for Justice)
- [Assuring Muslim Students that COVID-19 Won't Dim the Ramadan Lights](#)
- [Advice for Educators & Resources from 2 Muslim Parents](#)



they're baaack!



MAYA BERKOWITZ AND AYEHU MILLION PLAY A FUN MATH GAME IN MS. ROGERS' 4TH GRADE CLASS (HAPPY HOLLOW).



MS. COHEN'S 4TH GRADE CLASS SETTLES INTO DAY 2 OF "ALL IN"! (HAPPY HOLLOW)



MS. ROGERS' 4TH GRADE CLASS IS HARD AT WORK AND HAVING FUN! (HAPPY HOLLOW)



NEWS FROM TONY LAING, PH.D.

Greetings, everyone! I am so excited to share some excellent news regarding Wayland METCO. Our students have continued to excel and have taken on leadership roles despite an unusual year of disruption due to covid-19. I am also giving an important announcement regarding a room dedication at the high school in honor of the first Wayland METCO high school graduate, Mr. Elliott Francis.

CLAYPIT, HAPPY HOLLOW, LOKER SCHOOLS

I received news from METCO coordinators, Ms. Downes and Mr. Cooper regarding their affinity groups. These groups convene weekly and provide an opportunity for students of color to meet in small groups. The students in these programs also participate in leadership and socio-cultural programs, including read-a-loud activities. Congratulations to these students who have consistently attended and have earned the honor of best affinity group attendees! They are listed below:

Faith Anglin, Micah Anglin, Eberечи Anyanwu, Samuela Anyanwu, Uchechukwu Anyanwu, Redwan Gulet Cali, Maxamed Gulet Cali, Naomi Cameron, Ta'leah Dixon Deborah Ejims, Ayehu Million, Melkam Million, Kaleb Nigus, Akram Olatonji, Ja'von Sanford, Ja'vonah Sanford, Ethan Texeira, Tierry "Trey" Thezine III, and Freedom Yashaun-Davis.

I'd like to give Ta'leah Dixon double recognition for best affinity group attendance and for delivering the morning announcements at Happy Hollow. Congratulations, Ta'Leah!

I close this section with additional amazing news! Eldridge "EJ" Taylor (pictured) won a bronze medal for the 200-meter dash and took 2nd place for the long jump at the Junior Olympics at Virginia Beach.

Eldridge "EJ" Taylor



Jayden Taylor



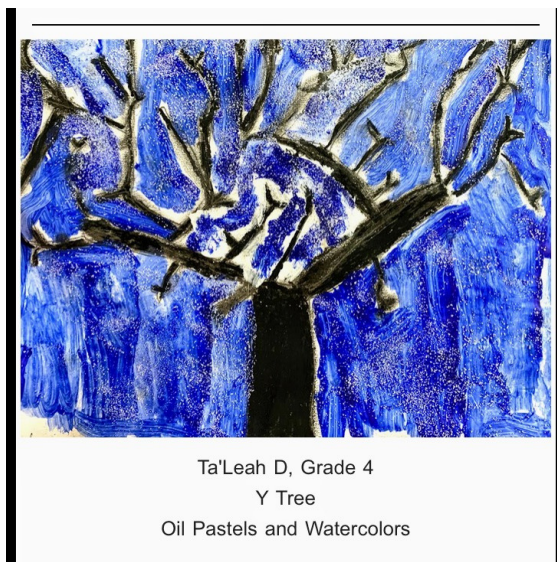
Photo credit: Keisha Taylor

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Ms. Hood and I are pleased to recognize the following students who performed well academically in the first semester (Quarter 1 and 2). It's exciting to identify so many students who have been diligent in their studies. These students are as follows:

Jewel Abalaka (most improved for academic progress), Joah Bigord, Joel Cabral, Alyssa Durant, Rejoice Ejims, Nyla Hamilton, Anna Huynh, Braylen Jenkins, Sophia Nguyen, Jayda Ortega, Karinah Syllien, and Kyliah Syllien.

I am equally excited to share that Jayden Taylor (pictured) won 1st place gold medal at the Junior Olympics for the 60-meter hurdles at Virginia Beach. And a special acknowledgment to students who participated in the inaugural METCO Directors' Association Virtual Youth Conference. There were over 100 middle and high school students from 15 participating METCO districts. I thank you, Joel Cabral, Kai Drayton, Nyla Hamilton, and Isaiah Peters for your attendance!



Ta'Leah D, Grade 4
Y Tree
Oil Pastels and Watercolors

HIGH SCHOOL

Mr. Liddell shared additional updates on students' excellence that should be highlighted.

Congrats to Michael Davis-Francis and Favour Ejims who have been nominated for the Unity Award. This award is given to 15 juniors in MetroWest who exemplify the goals of the Alliance for MetroWest Unity. The students who have been nominated have met the following criteria:

1. Fostered inclusiveness through individual or organizational actions.
2. Promoted cooperation and participation in their school and/or community.
3. Worked to eliminate hate crimes through individual or group initiatives.
4. Otherwise acted as a leader to promote unity or diversity in school or in the wider community.

MORE NEWS FROM METCO

HIGH SCHOOL CONT.

I am very proud of the following students who made the Honor Roll for Quarter 2:

High Honors - 3.5 GPA or higher AND no grades of C- or lower

- Tatiana Almeida
- Dahlak Amanuel
- Donovan Edwards
- Cassandra Silva Cardoso

Honors 3.0 GPA or higher AND no grades of C- or lower

- Victor Abalaka
- Favour Ejims
- Quincy Leary
- Miolany Martinez
- Odyssey Reyes
- Jayden Saint-Felix

The following students showed improvement from Q1 to Q2. This improvement is reflected in overall GPA not individual courses.

- Tatiana Almeida
- Michael Davis-Francis
- Donovan Edwards
- Jade Gabriel
- Sambert Guerrero
- Quincy Leary
- Cassandra Silva Cardoso
- Jaison Tucker



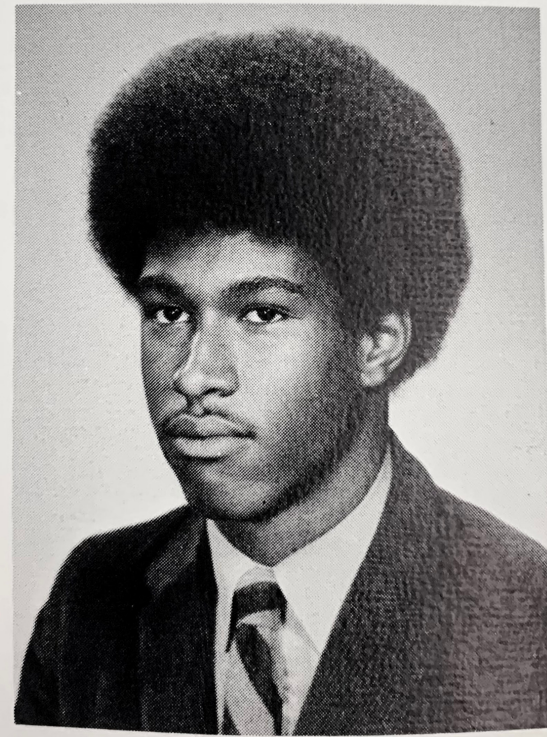
ANNOUNCEMENT

I will conclude the news from the high school by making a special announcement that has been a year in the making with planning with high school students and staff members. I am pleased to share that the hard work has come to fruition. The former Diversity Room where our Boston resident high school students and Wayland residents gathered for meetings, social activities, and classes has been renamed in honor of Wayland METCO's first graduate, Mr. Elliott Francis, Class of 1971.

ELLIOTT S. FRANCIS

17 Wales Street

Brothers and Sisters, we shall have our freedom. We shall have it or the earth will be leveled by our attempts to gain it. Free your mind and the rest will follow. Pax. L.D.S.



The following statement has been placed on a plaque to be mailed to Mr. Francis. The plaque will be hung in front of the Trailblazer Room as well.

Trailblazer Room

This space of affinity and friendship is named after MR. ELLIOT FRANCIS, WHS Class of 1971, the first graduate of the Wayland METCO Program.

A lifelong trailblazer, Mr. Francis pioneered the complex and courageous experience of a student in the Wayland METCO program. He is a native of Dorchester, MA, a graduate of American International College, and now an award-winning television, radio and digital journalist who has worked in Boston, Los Angeles, and Washington, D.C. He is a celebrated and trusted journalist who has spent his career reporting the news and making sense of the world using his unique perspective that in many ways took shape here in Wayland.

We give thanks to Mr. Francis for leading the way for us all and pay tribute to his determination and inspiration.

Dedicated on January 18, 2021

— Dr. Laing



an advice column

Dear Han-esty Box,

Today I had a conversation with an elementary student, who is Black and resides in Wayland. She was voicing her dismay at being asked if she is a "Boston kid" by a peer. To quote, she said, "Why do kids in our school refer to all kids of color as 'Boston Kids'? It's so offensive. Kids have names you know!" Another student in the group commented that she thinks it's the older kids that say these things. My question is how can we as educators, help white students learn about **microaggressions**?

Sincerely,

Black ≠ Boston

Please note: My response focuses on [microaggressions](#) (link to definition) based on race, but they can happen to anyone with membership in a marginalized community (e.g., sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, religious/faith tradition, socio-economic status, ability/disability, etc.).

Dear Black ≠ Boston,

Thank you for your question. All students benefit from [learning about microaggressions](#), including those on the receiving end. Offering to process the impact, as you did with your student, communicates care and concern. If a student is willing, you could offer to help them practice what they might say or do if there is a next time. This brainstorming process helps to develop a student of color's sense of agency and control in response to an unexpected insult, hurtful comment or offense.

The root of microaggressions. It's hard for children to unlearn racial messages and stereotypes when racial inequities and disparities are ubiquitous. Today, 75% have no non-White friends ([source](#)). Think about your childhood neighborhood. Did most of the people look like you? In the absence of meaningful cross-racial contact, White children have no firsthand experiences to counteract stereotypes and negative value judgements about people of color. [Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum](#) draws an analogy between racism and smog: "Sometimes it is so thick it is visible, other times it less apparent, but always, day in and day out, we are breathing it in."

Our racial equity work involves looking at our own racial biases, reflecting upon the diversity of our social networks, and providing regular opportunities for our children and us to be in multicultural environments.

Maya Angelou encouraged us to, "**Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better.**" Too often, I have said nothing because I listened to an inner voice: "Maybe you're overreacting." "What if they get angry?" "You will embarrass someone." What I "know better" now is that my silence is a choice to prioritize my comfort (and the offender's) over the emotional well-being and full humanity of the targeted student. This awareness motivates me to speak up. Someone else may have a different call to action.

Black ≠ Boston cont.

Turn the lens inward. We all have biases; it's impossible not to. Though it's painful to acknowledge, sometimes we act on unconscious racial biases. However, Jennifer Eberhardt, a MacArthur genius grant winner, psychology professor at Stanford, and author of [Biased...](#), [reminds](#) us that: "you don't have to have a moral failing to act on an implicit bias." My point: The ongoing process of turning the lens inward makes us much better equipped to help students acknowledge and take responsibility for their behavior.

Being called out. What if we are the ones [called out](#)? Breathe. Breathe again. I say to myself, "They are telling me that what I just said/did is something offensive that they, and other people who look like them, have endured for a long time." Depending on the student and situation, I may ask if they are willing to tell me more. I always attempt to repair: "Thank you. It's hard to hear. And I appreciate that you were honest with me. I am truly sorry for what I said and that it upset you. I will do better."

Understand the harm of microaggressions. Derald Wing Sue, professor of counseling psychology at Columbia University, states: "These incidents may appear small, banal and trivial, but we're beginning to find they assail the mental health of recipients" ([link](#)). He calls them, "[death by a thousand cuts.](#)"

Though one insensitive remark may seem like the equivalent of a minor cut, the accumulation of these injuries over a person's lifetime can inflict deep wounds that take a long time to heal. There's really nothing "micro" about microaggressions.

Recommended Resources:

For examples of common microaggressions: [teacher microaggressions](#) and [student microaggressions](#).

For suggestions on how to intervene: [a great list of classroom interventions](#) and [suggested responses](#). The "[DEAR](#)" method

On harm of racial microaggressions: "[Teachers, please learn our names!](#)"

On racial socialization of White youth: [Report](#) from [The Samuel Dubois Cook Center on Social Equity at Duke University](#).

Yours truly,
The Han-esty Box



Each microaggression is a toxic raindrop that falls corrosively over time on its victim's well-being and into learning environments.

~ CAROLA SUÁREZ-DROZCO



Dear Han-esty Box,

The other day students suggested that their classmate could be President one day. One student stated "yes - he'd be a good President, not like Trump." I responded saying I thought he'd make a great president since he is so kind and creative. She repeated, "not like Trump" and kept repeating it. I was aware that our conversation was being broadcast into every one of their households. It felt like I needed to make some grand statement, but I didn't know what to say. **How do you handle political conversations with young children**, especially when their main political reference is someone who is so fiercely fought for or against? **How do I make students feel validated that the hateful words and actions of a leader are not okay, and also validate those students who support such a leader?**

Sincerely,
Red and Blue

Dear Red and Blue,

I want to acknowledge the dilemma that you expressed in your letter. Balancing competing goals is like walking a tightrope. Of course, all students' views and opinions should be welcomed and heard, and a teacher should intercede when students express words that target groups of people or violate community and school values (see below) ...yes, even when they are made by the President, red or blue! It's important to help children understand (in a developmentally appropriate way) events in the news that may be confusing or scary for them.

Caregivers can help by monitoring younger children's exposure to political advertisements and unreliable news sources. See Common Sense Media's list of reputable news sources [here](#). With older students, engaging them in conversations about current events and asking about their opinions and perspectives on topics that matter to them are worthwhile endeavors. Sadly, too many politicians, social media influencers, and the general public are recorded behaving in ways that would not be tolerated on a school playground!

Mission Statement & Core Values:

[The Children's Way](#) • [Claypit Hill](#) • [Happy Hollow](#) • [Loker](#) • [Middle School](#) • [High School](#)

It is critical that today's students learn how to participate and engage in civic discourse across the political divide. The viral spread of false information through social media and the discrediting of traditional journalism bring even greater urgency to the development of students' academic and civic skills. These include, though are not limited to, critical listening and thinking, detecting bias, separating fact from fiction, evaluating credibility of sources, and formulating opinions based on sound reasoning and factual evidence.

According to [the Pew Research Center](#), currently, "we find no toehold or common cause or collective national identity." The share of Democrats and Republicans with a highly negative view

of the opposing party has more than doubled since 1994" ([source](#)). And [trust in public institutions](#), including schools, has eroded. As you mentioned, teaching is literally on display in students' homes. Unlike TV news correspondents, actors and politicians, who chose careers in front of a camera or microphone, teachers did not, nor do we have packaged scripts, makeup artists or a director, who can yell, "CUT! Take 6."

Expect messiness and lack of closure. No one is beating up on teachers more than teachers themselves. In addition to the many challenges brought on by COVID, teachers have also had to figure out how to talk to classes about Black Lives Matters protests following George Floyd's murder, Election 2020, the unprecedented historic challenge to the election results by the sitting President, an attempt to overtake the Capitol, and the rise in anti-Asian hate. It's messy. A few specific suggestions:

Ask for clarification. What do you imagine is the worst thing that could have happened if you said to your "not like Trump" student, "I'm not sure I know what you mean. Can you explain?" You can validate a factual statement: "I can understand why you're upset that the President called COVID-19, 'kung flu.'" You can correct a factually incorrect statement: "Hmm..do you remember where you heard that? I'll check to be sure, but I'm pretty sure that the President did not say..."

Refer back to the core values of your classroom, school or country. Examples: **Re. classroom:** "In our class, it's okay to disagree. Remember that it's okay if a classmate has a different opinion. We can still be friends and good classmates." **Re. school:** "One of our school's values is that everyone feels safe and belongs. That means that we respect that people can have really strong opinions that are different. When we respect that some families support the President, and some do not, that helps everyone to feel like they belong."

Re. country: "Did you know that the first words in the U.S. Constitution are, 'we the people'?" [based on grade: to whom does the "we" refer?] "In the U.S., every person is guaranteed equal rights. So when you are 18 years old, you will have a chance to vote for the candidates that you think will be the best leaders."

Use the conversation to reinforce critical thinking skills. Invite students to decide whether a comment is a fact or opinion: "When *Student* said, 'not like Trump', is that a fact or opinion?" Then, "Can there be more than one opinion?"

Words matter. Protect students with marginalized identities. Children learn from a very young age that when they say certain words, adults express disapproval. In the classroom, when a student's political opinion unintentionally targets students in a marginalized group, our priority in that moment is to protect those students. Please remember that a teacher's non-response or correction to a comment that blames, shames or attacks a student or group of people, is likely to be interpreted as assent.

Please keep the doors of political discourse open. Students need spaces where they can learn how to productively discuss political topics that matter to them. I have confidence that you have created space in your class for the red and the blue!

Sincerely,

The Han-esty Box



responses to atlanta & anti-asian racism

Hi Mr. Delaney!

I just wanted to say a quick thank you for taking class time today to address the recent shootings in Atlanta as well as the alarming spike in anti-Asian hate crimes. I've been having a hard time processing everything that our Asian community is facing— racial slurs, getting called 'chinese virus', being told to 'go back to china', the vandalization of stores, physical attacks on elders, the shootings— and after seeing hate crime after hate crime in my social media feeds, I noticed that I've been feeling more and more paranoid and on edge as time goes on. It's also frustrating for me that many big news companies just aren't covering the majority of violent hate crimes against Asian Americans, and it makes me feel as if the hurt of the Asian community isn't worth people's attention. I hope that the tragedy in Atlanta is a catalyst that can open more people's eyes to the reality of our country right now and can call more people to action to stand up for each other and for the Asian American community who isn't always willing to speak out for themselves. Discussing the tragic event in class today was a little difficult for me to sit through because I've been so exhausted from being on edge and didn't fully realize how much I've been impacted by the increase in anti-Asian hate crimes, but today's class meant a lot to me, and I'm really grateful we were able to have the conversation as a class. I think it's so important to shed light on this second virus of racism that is really showing itself throughout our country. Thank you for leading the discussion and for acknowledging the need for help and support from white allies! I really appreciate it.

Sincerely,
Nina Lei



Nina is a junior at Wayland High School.

A letter home from Happy Hollow teacher, Lisa Weig



Letter has been edited for length.

Hi Room 2 Families,

I hope you've had a chance to read Dr. O'Reilly's message respectfully requesting that you speak with your child or children about the rise of Asian American hate and violence in our country.

Last week I read 2 books, [A Kids Book About Racism](#), by Jelani Memory and [Speak Up](#) by Miranda Paul. We explored ways that we can use our voices to stand up for people when we see or hear something that is racist, unkind, untrue, and/or unfair. Though they can be difficult conversations with first graders, kids had some deep and thoughtful ideas to share. I told them that so many people could learn from their ideas and that others could follow their examples of inclusion, kindness, and empathy. One first grader asked, "Do you think that first graders are sometimes smarter than adults Ms. Weig?" I shared that they have such warmth, kindness, strength, and bravery to share with the world and can see things so clearly, determining what is fair, just and right, and they often have very thoughtful, concrete ideas about standing up for fellow human beings. We all can certainly learn from their ideas.

Our Diversity and Equity Coordinator, Caroline Han, gave some helpful suggestions to teachers in beginning conversations with K-5 students. [We had] conversations about Asians and Asian Americans who have been targeted because of their race; we did not talk about the specific events in Atlanta. We did talk about ways that we can speak up and stand up for people when people are excluded or treated badly because of their race.

I also wanted to read several books that celebrated differences. I shared [Drawn Together](#), [read aloud](#) by author Minh Le and [Eyes That Kiss In the Corners](#), [read aloud](#) by author Joanna Ho. After the story was over, one student shared, "I think that book is teaching us to be who we are even if we are different." She was spot on. We focused on celebrating and sharing our differences with our classmates, our schoolmates, and the world around us. We spoke about self love, self appreciation, and helping others to feel safe, heard, understood and supported.

I'm so appreciative that so many adults are available to support our community.

Lise Weig is in her 27th year in Wayland. She teaches 1st grade at Happy Hollow.



Kevin Delaney has taught Social Studies in Wayland for 29 years and has served as Department Head for 21 years.



I think that book is teaching us to be who we are even if we are different.

~1st grader



Click on the photo to listen to Happy Hollow principal Dr. Tricia O'Reilly read *Eyes that Kiss in the Corners*.

more responses to atlanta

letters from district leadership

Letters have been edited for length.

From Dr. Tricia O'Reilly, Happy Hollow Principal

If you haven't yet spoken to your child(ren) about the rise in Asian and Asian American hate and violence in our country, I am respectfully asking that you do. We know that very young children have awareness of the similarities and differences in race and culture and that beginning these important conversations when children are young helps create an environment where they are comfortable asking questions and voicing concerns.

As with most complex topics, approaching the discussion of race and culture in developmentally appropriate ways is essential. I am not suggesting that the shootings in Atlanta are appropriate conversations for young children; but targeting someone because of how they look or act is something every school age child understands.

At Happy Hollow, we will also be having these conversations in our classrooms. We do so because we know that it is our responsibility to tell our students who identify as Asian and Asian-American that we see them, we care about them and that they are safe here. Children only learn when they feel safe. We also have these difficult conversations because ALL our students, no matter how they identify racially or culturally, deserve to know that everyone at Happy Hollow is valued. They deserve to see what it looks like, sounds like and feels like to speak up against injustice.



From Brian Jones, Loker School Principal

This hate towards Asian-Americans became incredibly personal for my family last spring. My wife's family is of Chinese descent though she has only lived in the United States during her life. This past May, it was a beautiful sunny day, and my wife and 5-year old son decided to walk to his school. On their way to school, a car pulled up alongside them and a man from inside the car, yelled, "Go back to your country", and sped away. My wife had to explain to my 5 year-old son that there are a lot of people who don't like people who look like us because they think we caused the virus while reinforcing that the United States is our country. If this incident can happen in Needham, it can certainly happen in Wayland.

At Loker School, we will continue to be vigilant and proactive in preventing the discrimination against Asian Americans and all other ethnicities and races. Conversations have and will continue to occur in the classroom on this topic as our children need to be made aware that there is hate going on in this country

I am urging families to speak with their children about this hate towards Asian-Americans....Our hope is that children will speak up when they see something that is disrespectful and discriminatory towards Asian-American children and they will remove themselves and not be part of "jokes" intended to demean or humiliate Asian-Americans.

From Dr. Christie Harvey, Claypit Hill Principal

Since the start of the pandemic, the Asian and Asian-American community have become increasingly vulnerable to mistruths and prejudices that have sometimes made them the target of violent words or actions. Hateful phrases, such as "Go back to your country," make me feel worried for our young Cubs, and I want to help protect them from any harm.

Please talk to your children about anti-Asian racism and prejudice during the pandemic and the importance of not making assumptions about people based on their appearance. Young children are very interested in fairness, and they want to make sure that others are not mistreated. Our teachers are having these conversations in classrooms, and I urge you to take opportunities to engage in conversations about race and culture at home. Let's help our Cubs learn how to stand up against all forms of discrimination.

more responses

From Betsy Gavron, Wayland Middle School Principal

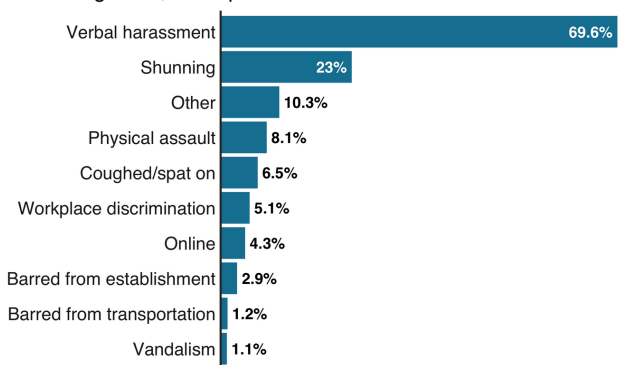
Another set of deeply disturbing headlines hit the newsfeed this morning, alerting us to the tragic mass shootings at three massage parlors in Atlanta. Alongside my sadness, the killing of a group of Asian Americans leads me to worry about the fear this assault may generate or exacerbate for the Asian and Asian American students and families in our school community. We have seen an upsetting pattern of racist attacks throughout the United States towards Asian American and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) and within a larger global context. Many families grow more and more worried about the potential of their children encountering xenophobic verbal or physical attacks at school, especially with the return to all in-person learning in April.

To support our middle school students who identify as Asian or Asian American, Caroline Han, Wayland’s Diversity and Equity Coordinator, will offer two optional drop-in affinity group* sessions. The purpose of the drop-in sessions is to allow students of Asian ancestry, including those with multiracial identities, a dedicated time and space to come together.

Working to help students feel safe and navigate the identity work of adolescence is an ongoing challenge staff at Wayland Middle School embrace. We do this in the context of health and racial pandemics. In doing so, we rely on your insights and knowledge of what your students need to navigate this complex work. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me or your child’s guidance counselor as well, if you feel your child needs additional support.

Verbal harassment the most common form of discrimination

Percentage of 1,710 reported coronavirus-related incidents



Source: Stop AAPI Hate Reporting Center (19 Mar-29 Apr)



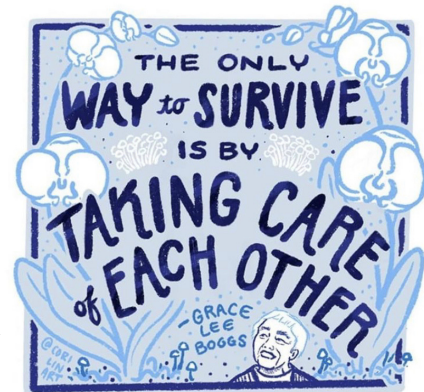
Anti-Asian Racism Resources

WPS Workshop for Families on Anti-Asian Racism, November 16, 2020

Grades K-5: 3 Parts: [1](#) [2](#) [3](#)

Grades 6-12 Workshop for WPS Families: [Part 1 of 1](#)

[WPS Anti-Asian Resources for Educators, Members of the AAPI Community & Allies](#) by Caroline Han



From Dr. Mizoguchi, Ms. Cole & Mr. Gass, Wayland High School

Dear WHS students:

In just over a month, we will come together for the first time in over a year as a whole school. We will be together again. In the midst of the “twin pandemics” of COVID-19 and racism -- both of which threaten the lives of individuals across the globe -- being together will require our fervent and visible commitment to anti-racism and anti-hate.

This week’s fatal shootings in Atlanta of eight people, six of whom were women of Asian descent, tragically reminds us of the rising prevalence of hate in our society. Anti-Asian racism in particular has increased in horrifying ways: according to the Stop AAPI Hate National Report, nearly 3,800 hate incidents targeting Asian Americans have been reported since last March, which is likely a fraction of the actual incidents.

As we turn our attention to returning to school full-time, we want to be very clear about where we stand: We are an anti-racist school. We do not tolerate words and acts of hate, and we honor every identity. With the recent tragedy in Atlanta, combined with the unprecedented acts of violence and hate towards people from marginalized communities, let us reaffirm our dedication to a WHS community where we respect all and rebuke hate.

Please feel free to reach out to any of us with your thoughts and questions. In the meantime, take good care of yourselves and each other.

From Dr. Arthur Unobskey, Superintendent and Caroline Han, D&E Coordinator

On behalf of the entire Wayland Public School staff, we want to convey our deep sorrow and support for our Asian American families and students in our school community in the wake of the tragic murders at three massage parlors in Atlanta last night. This mass shooting is the most recent incident in a pattern of increased verbal and physical attacks against Asian Americans in the past year.

On January 27, the Wayland School Committee voted unanimously to adopt a districtwide anti-racism resolution proposed by the Administrative Council: “This resolution affirms the district’s collective responsibility, across all human differences, to create a school community where the oppressed are heard and treated with the same care and respect as those who are not oppressed.” At this time, we are reminded of our individual and collective responsibility to name and condemn racist attacks and violence. Making the “invisible, visible” happens in our classrooms, homes, community organizations and social groups. It is essential that our Asian American students hear the adults in their lives condemn attacks against people who look like them, and it is important for all of our students to be made aware of these ongoing attacks.

Therefore, we ask you, as caregivers, to learn about and then discuss anti-Asian attacks during COVID-19 with our students with developmentally appropriate language. As a District, we have developed and provided additional resources (see left).

supporting asian american students

Affinity Group Sessions for AAPI Middle and High School Students

Voices of Asian American Students



The D&E Coordinator held two drop-in sessions for Middle School students on 3/18 and 3/23/21.

Note: These are not direct quotes. However, they capture the essence of individual comments as well as themes from the three sessions. Requests from students who did not want their names/photos published were honored.

Background. Race-based affinity groups provide an opportunity for students of color to talk about how their racial identity, and the ways that others ascribe meaning to it, affect their experiences in school. Abundant research has shown that students of color in predominantly White schools experience social isolation along with racial and social invisibility ([Thompson and Schultz](#)). During affinity group time, students can shed the burden of [code-switching](#) and feel a sense of belonging to a community with a common bond and similar experiences.

“One of my teachers said something about Atlanta in class. I really appreciated it.”

“I feel like I have to watch my surroundings more now.”

“I'm confused that most of my teachers haven't said anything about it.”

There were jokes [in school] about Asians and COVID last year. I ignored them. But now elders are getting beaten and killed. And now Atlanta. It's at a whole different level. Kind of frightening.

- Feeling...
- Afraid
 - Confused
 - Not surprised
 - Clueless
 - Frustrated
 - Anxious
 - Apprehensive
 - Upset
 - Annoyed
 - Scared

“It's been a hard couple of days.”

“I'm afraid to leave my house. I'm afraid for my grandparents.”

“Nobody seems to care about what's happening to Asian Americans. No one likes or reshares my posts (social media).”



The D&E Coordinator offered an optional drop-in session on 3/19/21 to process the Atlanta tragedy. Any WHS AAPI student interested in attending the next affinity group meeting, please e-mail caroline_han@waylandps.org or senior victoria_andreasen@student.waylandps.org.

asian american student voices

Please note: This is a portion of a poem that Isabelle wrote about being Asian American. The poem won a gold key at the Scholastic Writing Awards this year. Congratulations, Isabelle!

To read the poem in its entirety, please go to [this link](#).



PHOTO COURTESY OF ISABELLE RIDEOUT

"A Cry for Acknowledgement of All Us Asian Americans"

by Isabelle Rideout

There is no place for Asian Americans
to talk to each other and form their identities
And they see themselves so little
in the media
in their curriculum
in their teachers
in their idols
that they often end up thinking of themselves
as white
They drop the "Asian"
They drop their parents and/or grandparents stories of sacrifice and hard work
They drop amazing cultural legacies that they were never told of
They drop who they really are
Even though they can never drop
the way they are seen
stereotypes and microaggressions
high expectations (parents, people, themselves)
and become just
"American"

Isabelle Rideout is a 9th grade student at Wayland High School.

asian american student voices

ABC: An average Asian

Jonathan Zhang

It feels like I'm always running to catch up to someone my parents are comparing me with or someone I'm comparing myself with. It doesn't matter what the person's relationship with me is – a family friend, my friend or someone I don't even know. At times, it feels as though I'm struggling just to get by. And it's not just me. I've become painfully aware that all around me, especially as my junior year of high school slowly rolls by, there's a cloud of stress that makes the air seem heavy. There's stress about college, COVID-19, sports and school.

To add to the air of stress, each day I hear about someone who's made some accomplishment or taken a step towards achieving their goal, whether that's winning some competition, succeeding in sports or achieving academic excellence. It's endless.

I sat at my desk one night, looking at my resume. I wondered what my friends' resumes looked like. Were they better or worse than mine? Would I be able to get into the school I wanted to get into? Wayland High School is considered a small school, yet, as I made a list of people who were "better" than me in my head, the list just kept growing.

And it was then that I had the thought: why didn't I have the grades that an Asian was "supposed" to have? Why was it that I couldn't do what every other Asian kid could do? There's a stigma surrounding those Asians who aren't overachievers, but it's not like they get judged or bullied. They simply fade into the background, shrouded by the silent disappointment of those around them.

I've noticed this almost scoffing attitude towards less successful Asians all the time. A notable occurrence of this is at Asian family parties. At these gatherings, there are always certain things that are a must. There are parents comparing the heights of their children with others, impromptu mini piano recitals and the awkward tension of being with other children you barely know.

These are the more benign traditions that you can count on. It's when parents start talking about their kids' accomplishments that things take a turn for the worse. I've always thought of myself as above average, but after hearing about the person who got a perfect score on their SAT or the person who won some national piano competition, I start to question that. In fact, I start to question if I'm even average at all.

As the talking continues, it just gets worse. Every pair of parents has something to share about their child that's even more impressive than the previous pair. I feel that I've had my fair share of what I think are "accomplishments" – the occasional win at a tennis tournament or a nice test score – but it always seems like nothing compared to what other parents have to share about their kids.

As more parents finish their boasting session, I can almost feel the expectant glances at my parents who have yet to share anything about me. They don't say anything, but it hurts all the same. I feel like a failure. I feel like a disappointment. And I feel sorry for my parents, who work so hard for me and can only nod politely and abstain from the conversation.

It pains me, but I can never help wondering if my parents ever feel ashamed of me during these times. Soon, things changed: my little brother was accomplishing things rivaling the best of those boasted about at these parties.

Now, my parents could join in on these conversations. This might have been better for my parents, but it just made things all the worse for me. No longer were there expectant glances at my parents, but pitying or disapproving looks towards me.

For a while, I thought it was just my imagination, but at one of these parties I caught a pair of eyes looking at me with confusion after my parents had finished talking about my little brother. I'll never forget that moment. I could almost hear the unspoken, pitying question in those eyes: "what about you?" It didn't feel like pity for me, though. It was like the person pitied my parents for having someone like me, who hadn't made some extraordinary accomplishment.

I don't have a perfect GPA. I've never played at Carnegie Hall. I didn't sell a house while my parents were off vacationing in Florida, which is something one of my friends actually did. So, what am I? If there are all these talented and successful people out there, where does that leave me?

I'd like to think that what others accomplish and what they think about me doesn't matter. I really would. But that's not true. It's aggravating, and it really sucks. There's no other way to say it. It's such a terrible feeling when everyone thinks I'm supposed to be successful from the start just because I'm Asian.

The truth is that I'm me, and I can't change that. Regardless of what I do or try, nothing's going to change that fact. And sure, it hurts that there are so many people out there who are so much better than me, but to all those other "average" Asians out there, just remember: even if there's always someone "better" than you, there's always someone "worse" than you too. I feel like we get so caught up looking ahead at the person who's running in front of us that we forget to look back at all the people we've passed or are struggling even more than us.

More importantly, however, instead of constantly comparing yourself to others, set goals for yourself and focus on bettering yourself. You might not be able to become the best, but try to become the best version of yourself. You're alive in this beautiful world so take a deep breath and smile. It's going to be alright.

This article is reprinted with the author's permission. I would like to thank Jonathan for allowing his piece to appear in this special issue of The Equity Lens. It takes courage and skill to write such a personal and vulnerable piece and then be willing to have it reach a wider audience of teachers, parents/guardians and community members. Thanks again, Jonathan.



Jonathan Zhang, Class of 2022, is a copy editor for WSPN. He plays tennis for Wayland High School. Click on his photo to read more of his columns that appear on WSPN.

equity moves!



Exhibit A: Ms. Moquin's 5th Grade Cohort A - Claypit

Boston Krème reports that Ms. Moquin's class is reading Heart and Soul, by [Kadir Nelson](#) (Nabrey holds the book, see photo). This book read earns a 🐾. The story centers the voices of African Americans, their history and shows their personal power, full humanity and achievements in the face of racial injustice and oppression. It's also an ["Own Voices"](#) book.

Samples of Kadir Nelson's artwork appears below. [Here's](#) a great interview that he did for Fold Magazine.



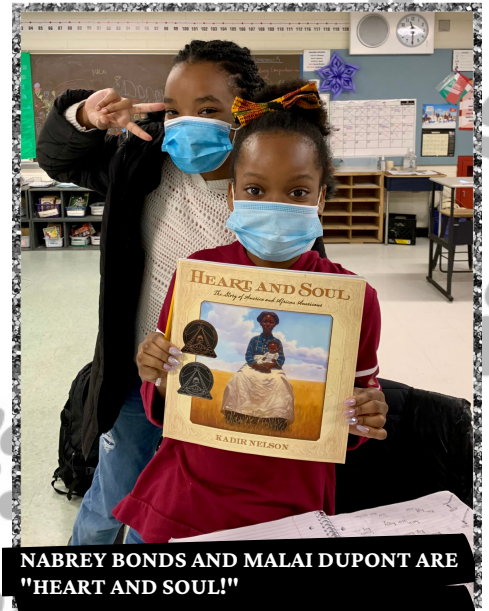
WORKS BY KADIR NELSON

From the desk of:
"Boston Krème"

—

The Equity Lens'
#1 Canine Detective

For immediate release:
Teachers & students caught flexing
their equity moves!



NABREY BONDS AND MALAI DUPONT ARE "HEART AND SOUL!"



VIDEO! CLICK ON PLAY BUTTON. COHORT A BUSTS OUT THE DANCE MOVES WITH METCO COORDINATOR MS. DOWNES AND MS. HAN!

equity moves!

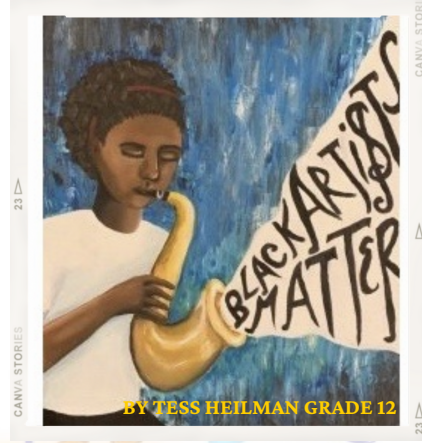


From the desk of:
"Boston Krème"



The Equity Lens'
#1 Canine Detective

Band teacher Joe Oneschuk and chorus teacher Rachel Carroll have introduced their classes to accomplished BIPOC performers (see left!). I say that this "masterclass" series is a "masterful" idea. Two paws up! 🐾🐾



BY TESS HEILMAN GRADE 12



Ashleigh Gordon, Viola



Akrobatik, Boston area hip hop artist



Jason Max Ferdinand performer and choral director



Lynne Rosenberg artist, actor, advocate



Anum Spriggs singer and composer

WHS fine arts masterclass series explores music, race and identity



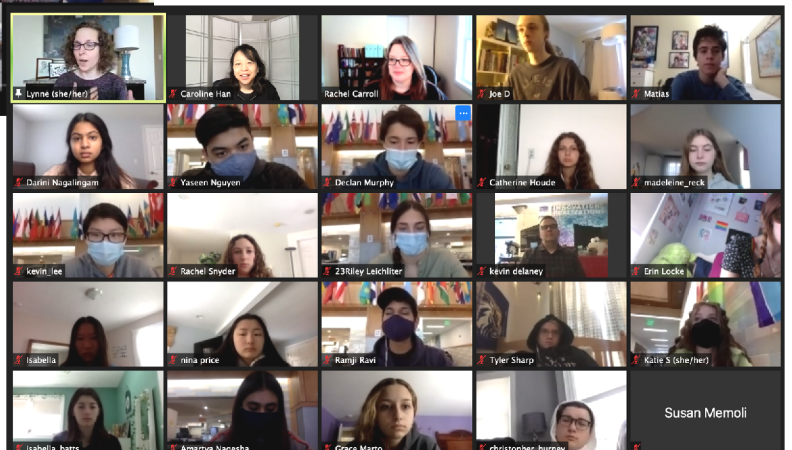
I really felt an importance to feature Black artists, especially in the turbulent time that we were in, and to celebrate Black artists, because Black artists do matter.

**Joe Oneschuk
WHS Band Director**

Credit: Isabella Ciasullo "[Composing for Change: Fine arts offers Black Artists Matter masterclasses.](#)" WSPN



MASTERCLASS WITH AKROBATIK



MASTERCLASS WITH LYNNE ROSENBERG



**A STUDENT'S WRITING BLOSSOMS
WITH A TEACHER'S "JUST RIGHT"
CHALLENGE, LOVING SUPPORT
AND UNWAVERING HIGH
EXPECTATIONS**

BY: CAROLINE HAN • April 12, 2021

Thank you to 2nd grade WRAP teacher, Kristin Murphy and her student Jemima Saint-Fort (see photo). Many thanks to Ms. Edouard and Mr. Saint-Fort, Jemima's parents, for granting permission to share her work to support our efforts to highlight culturally responsive teaching practices that truly make a difference in a student's confidence as a learner, capacity to meet high academic expectations, and academic achievement.

Background: This is the story of a student's rapid growth in written fluency in just under two months. Her story is also her teacher's. Many of us know of at least one student whose life trajectory was altered due to the dedication and unbounded optimism of one teacher. Repaying the "opportunity debt" (also called "equity gap" or [the problematic](#) "achievement gap") begins with one teacher, one student. I truly believe that it's as basic and profound as making a decision to teach one marginalized student of color how to build their brainpower and capacity to do deeper learning.

Jemima's writing, included with this piece, is proof that "culturally responsive teaching" is more than a buzzword (or buzzphrase!). There are teachers across the district with stories like these...stories that inspire and teach. If you have a story that you would be willing to share, please [contact me](#). Elevating and celebrating these stories are best practice. They provide models of what has worked and contribute to our collective efforts to give our Black and Brown students equitable access to rigorous and rewarding opportunities.

Here are some key components of Ms. Murphy's work with Jemima that created an environment for this 2nd grade student's writing to blossom:

1. **The original prompt had meaning and relevance to the student:** *Tell me about a place that is important to you, a person who is important to you, and an object that is important to you.*

The why: In addition to the benefits of student choice for all learners, a white teacher who recognizes the racial mismatch between herself and their students of color, can use choice to help "students [of color] navigate both the content and the classroom community" (Zaretta Hammond). For a brief synopsis on how student choice deepens learning and

FOR A LESS BLURRY COPY OF THIS ARTICLE, PLEASE SEE [THIS LINK](#).

IN-TEXT HYPERLINKS ARE NOT ACTIVE. PLEASE SEE RESOURCES AT END OF ARTICLE.

improves outcomes, see [this article](#) from ASCD.

2. **The teacher interpreted the student's behavior through a culturally responsive lens.** As she did with every student in the class, Ms. Murphy met with Jemima for a writing conference. The 2nd grader had no trouble talking about her story and used strong descriptive details. Ms. Murphy, confident that she was ready for the next step, instructed her to begin writing her story. When she checked students' progress, Jemima had typed only the first few words of her story. Ms. Murphy also noticed that Jemima was disengaged during the writing process.

There is more than one way to interpret and make meaning of a student's behavior. Two educators Barbara J. Dray and Debora Basler Wisneski developed a protocol ("[The Mindful Reflection Protocol](#)") designed to help teachers slow down "fast brain" interpretations of student behavior that are susceptible to implicit bias. Their aim is to "support teachers in a process of deep reflection that interrupts historically deficit views and responses to students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds." Their protocol involves a three-step process designed to mitigate against that risk: **description** (What happened?), **interpretation** (What does this behavior mean to me?) and **evaluation** (What positive or negative value judgment or social significance do I make about the behavior?).

Ex of interpretation: Jemima's behavior might be interpreted as: *Jemima lost interest because it got hard, OR Jemima needs one-on-one help, OR Jemima looks bored.*

Ex of negative evaluations: *Jemima needs one-on-one help, becomes, I don't have time to find out what's going on (i.e., She is asking more of me than I can provide, which leads to feelings of ____).* OR *Jemima lost interest because it got hard turns into, She needs to learn how to persevere just like the other kids. When I was her age, I wasn't allowed to give up.*

Ex. of positive evaluations: *Jemima lost interest because it got hard turns into, Jemima is stuck. I appreciate that she's not interrupting me [in my work with other students] or demanding immediate attention. I know what it's like to give up when I don't know how to do the next step. OR, Jemima is bored turns into, She was so excited telling me the story. I wonder why she looks bored/disinterested. Something must be getting in her way that I didn't anticipate.*

A teacher's response (i.e., to engage or not, tone and approach, and so forth), depends upon their interpretation of the student's behavior. If a teacher has a belief that the task is too challenging, perhaps because the student lacks the requisite

cont. on next page



a student's writing blossoms

(cont. from previous page)

skills, then they might lower the expectations or simplify the task. Zaretta Hammond [explains](#) the importance of teachers' holding back and allowing students time to struggle:

“

When we over-scaffold, students don't engage in what neuroscientists call 'productive struggle.' As a result, they develop 'learned helplessness' - always at a loss about how to start a learning task or how to get unstuck when confused.

Let's look more closely at how Ms. Murphy offered support without lowering her academic expectations, thus exposing Jemima to productive struggle.

- 3. Teacher made her moves (CRT moves!).** I asked Ms. Murphy how she responded to Jemima's lack of engagement with Seesaw. She explained:

I always assume that a student who can do something, will do it. So I help those that are struggling (which can show up in behavioral issues) as if they raised their hand. So when I noticed that Jemima was a bit disengaged, I offered to help. During classtime while students were busy working on their assignment, I scribed for her as I asked her questions about this or that part of her story. I typed quickly as she told the original kernel of a story, and then, as she told me the answers, I shared my screen, and we talked about where each extra detail might go in her story. I also asked her if she could write some of her story, so she could build up a little stamina for drafting. After that, I asked her to do a little typing or writing on Seesaw with her screen shared. We just gradually built up her stamina, each taking turns typing her story into Seesaw. I used the same process for the Fiction Story.

I gave frequent, specific praise for her interesting, creative ideas or word choice. I kept the mood light, all the while communicating an expectation that I knew she could do it and that I expected her to.

I asked her how it felt to write out her personal narrative, and she said, **"It was a lot of work!"** *But she smiled when she said it.*

It brings me great joy to share three of Jemima's stories, all written in under a two-month period. Yes, Jemima, like many culturally diverse students, always had this potential. However, like fish swimming against the current, the longer Black and Brown students remain in school, the further they fall behind relative to their peers. Teachers are the linchpin that can reposition them to swim with other members of their "school."

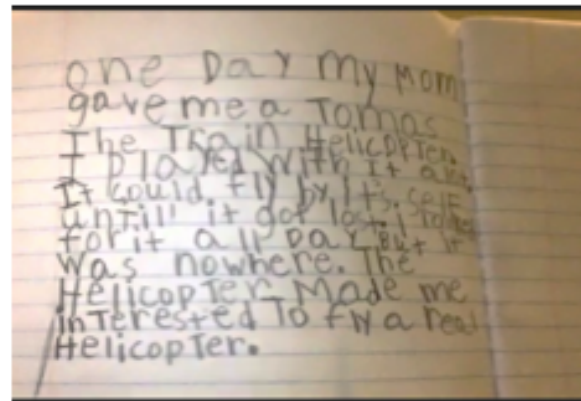
FOR A LESS BLURRY COPY OF THIS ARTICLE, PLEASE SEE [THIS LINK](#).

IN-TEXT HYPERLINKS ARE NOT ACTIVE. PLEASE SEE RESOURCES AT END OF ARTICLE.

Thank you again, Ms. Murphy and Jemima. Keep up the great work, Jemima! I can't wait to read your next story!

September 2020

#1: Personal Experience
46 words



Over Zoom, Ms. Murphy and Jemima worked on one of her first written pieces. Initially, Ms. Murphy typed as Jemima spoke. Gradually, Ms. Murphy transferred more of the work of typing to Jemima all the while maintaining the warm rapport and message, "You got this! I know you can do it!"

cont. on next page



a student's writing blossoms

(cont. from previous page)

Early October

#2: Personal Narrative Story 149 words

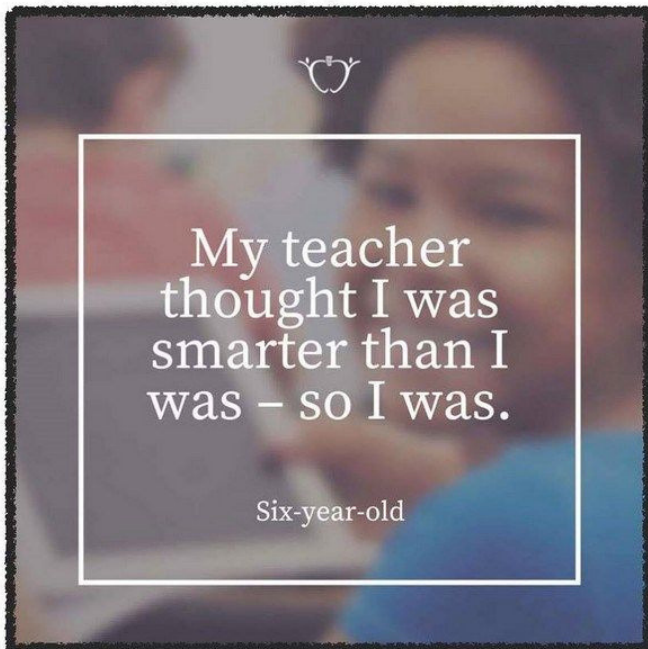
I went on a hike with my mom. Then we went to a park to hike. I rode my bike, and my mom walked. We found a pond and we took a break. I sat down on a rock. I was looking at the water. After the break was over, I rode my bike over to the soccer field and played some soccer. My mom came with me. After I played soccer, we went and got ice cream. I got vanilla and my mom got vanilla, too. The ice cream gave me energy, and I rode my bike as fast as I could out of the park. When I was too tired to ride my bike, I grabbed it and walked with my bike to the car and put it in the back seat. I felt happy. I will never forget the day that I hiked at the park.

Mid-to-late October

#3: Fiction Story 412 words

Mr. Chomps was about to walk out of the door of his house, but when he opened the door, he saw that a monkey was standing right outside. The monkey introduced himself. Mr. Chomps was confused about why the monkey was at his doorstep. "Why are you at my door, Monkey?" The monkey said, "I'm just here for a quick second. I'll be right back." Then when Mr. Chomps set one foot out of his door. Mr. Monkey was back. Mr. Chomps said, "That was a fast second. How did you run so fast?" Mr. Monkey said, "I've been running for years, which is why I am so fast." Mr. Monkey and Mr. Chomps closed the door. The next day, Mr. Chomps opened his door. Monkey is not at my door! Said Mr. Chomps, and he went back inside and put on his clothes to go for a walk. He got his special binoculars and put them in his pocket. He was going to use the binoculars to look through walls and see what everyone was doing. Then, Mr. Chomps opened the door to go outside and he took out his binoculars to see who was running down the street. There was Mr. Monkey! Mr. Chomps was in total shock! In his mind, he thought, "How did he run so fast?" The next day he went back outside, opened his door, and did NOT see Mr. Monkey. Mr. Chomps went out for his usual walk. When he went for a walk, he saw that Mr. Monkey was waiting for him at the front of the entrance to the park. When Mr. Chomps saw Mr. Monkey, he told himself that he had had enough exercise for one day. Mr. Chomps had had enough of Mr. Monkey knocking at his door. Mr. Chomps went home.

The next day, Mr. Chomps felt sorry for ignoring Mr. Monkey for the whole day. He decided he would make a surprise for Mr. Monkey. The surprise was that Mr. Chomps sewed a plushie for Mr. Monkey. When Mr. Chomps was done, he felt happy. In the box was a plushie of Mr. Monkey. So, the next day, Mr. Chomps went to Mr. Monkey and gave the box to Mr. Monkey. When he did, Mr. Monkey said, "Thank you so much! I will keep this forever." Before Mr. Chomps left, Mr. Monkey asked him if he ever wanted to be friends. Mr. Chomps said yes. Then they played cards.



Hyperlinks:

P15: "[the problematic achievement...](#)"

P15: "[contact me](#)"

P15: "[Zaretta Hammond](#)"

P15: "[this article](#)"

P15: "[the Mindful Reflection Protocol](#)"

P16: "[explains](#)"

d&e doings



MS. HAN READ "INTERSECTION ALLIES" TO MS. MULLIN'S (CLAYPIT HILL) COHORTS A & B. WE DISCUSSED THE IMPORTANCE OF ACKNOWLEDGING AND RESPECTING DIFFERENCES. STUDENTS COMMENTED THAT SOMETIMES YOU MAY THINK YOU DON'T HAVE ANYTHING IN COMMON WITH SOMEONE WHO LOOKS DIFFERENT THAN YOU, BUT THEN YOU GET TO KNOW THEM AND FIND OUT THAT YOU DO! :)



MS. HAN SURPRISED MS. MORRISON'S COHORT A CLASS AS THE MYSTERY READER OF THE DAY! WE READ A BOOK CALLED, "YOU ARE WORTHY." WE TALKED ABOUT WHAT IT MEANS TO FEEL WORTHY. THEY CAME UP WITH GREAT EXAMPLES!

affinity group for staff of color



AN AFFINITY GROUP FOR STAFF OF COLOR BEGAN MEETING LAST SPRING. THE GROUP HAS STARTED TO MEET MONTHLY. WE HAVE ENJOYED GETTING TO KNOW COLLEAGUES ACROSS THE DISTRICT!

Monthly D&E Community Conversations - you're invited!



Monthly D&E Community Conversations You're invited!
 4/27, 5/18, 6/15 - 7:30-9 PM. Open to WPS families and staff. E-mail [Caroline Han](#) if interested in attending a session.

EQUITY

K-12 teachers: Would you like a classroom visit?
 Please [e-mail me!](#)

There is never time in the future in which we will work out our salvation. The challenge is in the moment; the time is always now.
- James Baldwin



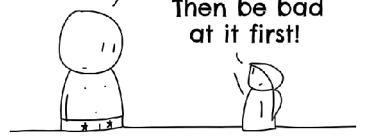
ACTION

PICK A TOOL.

SMALL IS GOOD.

I wanna be good at something.

Then be bad at it first!



@myeasytherapy

What do I do?

Start small... start with just one thing... but start!

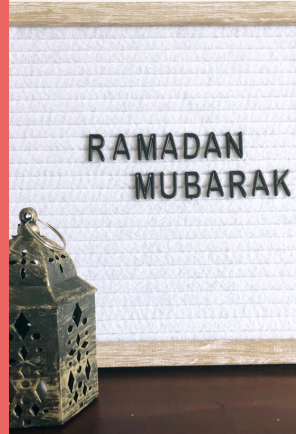


“
In every lesson look and listen for students' assets.
”
- Tonya Ward Singer



“
Make it clear that racist language is offensive to you, and should be offensive to everyone.
”
SHELDON L. EAKINS, PH.D.
LEADINGEQUITYCENTER.COM

EVERY KID IS ONE CARING ADULT AWAY FROM BEING A SUCCESS STORY.



- ### REMINDERS FOR HARD DAYS
1. A bad day does not equal a bad life. *(You are not this struggle)*
 2. Not all thoughts are true. *(Phew)*
 3. Feelings are not facts. *(But all your feelings are valid, real, and allowed)*
 4. The only way out is through. *(DARN IT)*
 5. Your worth is not contingent on circumstances. *(You are LOVABLE and ENOUGH, always)*
 6. Nothing stays the same. *(Life guarantees this)*
 7. You can't be everything to everyone. *(But you can be true to yourself)*
 8. Be gentle with yourself. And trust your inner voice, strength, resilience, and strength. *(And be vulnerable)*
 9. You're not alone. It's okay to ask for help. *(And be vulnerable)*
 10. Focus on the things you can control. *(Let go of the rest. This is easier said than done)*

CONVERSATION STARTERS ^{for kids}

- If you could change anything, what would it be?
- What is something you've noticed about adults?
- What is one invention you could not live without?
- Would you rather be able to talk to all animals -or- be fluent in every human language?
- Is it ever okay to break the rules? If so, give an example.
- What is something most people your age think about?
- Would you rather go on a camping trip -or- go to an amusement park?

WholeHearted School Counseling

“High achievement always takes place in the framework of high expectation.”

staff shout-outs

There are so many ways that we show kindness, recognition and appreciation to one another on a regular basis. At the start of every faculty meeting at the Middle School, staff have an opportunity to "give a flower" to a colleague as a gesture of appreciation or recognition. In daily or weekly memos, principals extend genuine thanks to their faculty and staff.

On any given day in the district, staff celebrate personal milestones, surprise someone with flowers to say, "thanks," pop their head into a colleague's classroom to say, "good morning," remember to ask about a sick family member, actively listen to a colleague, etc.

"Staff Shout-outs" offers just one more way -- through peer-to-peer recognition -- to support each other through what has been for most educators, a physically, emotionally and mentally taxing year. We go out of our ways to make sure students feel seen and appreciated. What if we asked ourselves individually: *What small act can I do today to show a colleague that I see them and appreciate them? What small act can I do today to show myself the kindness, recognition and appreciation that I deserve?*

(Clockwise from top left corner):

Emeliza Ciavarro (Loker). The way she has handled the specific challenges of her class with the ever-present Covid cloud looming over our heads is nothing short of heroic.

Mike Kotin (MS): Whether he is whistling down the hall or just giving greetings, Mike lifts up everyone with his cheerful attitude. He shares his gratitude for his colleagues. I am grateful to work with him!

Lynne Cribben (HH): Thank you for all of your help in the library!

Emily von der Heyde (Claypit): Every morning Emily cheerfully greets every student as they come into school. And not just her students, I mean EVERY student. She remembers their birthdays, pets' names, their siblings. I am completely in awe that she knows them in such a personal and heartfelt way. I am lucky to be witness to her warmth!

Meghan Sullivan (Claypit): Meghan is a model of tenacity when it comes to advocating for students. She goes the extra mile to make things happen so that they have access to the curriculum. Her collaboration with colleagues and support for students is a model for us all.

(cont. on next page)



staff shout-outs

(cont. from previous page):

Meridith Palmer and Meghan Sullivan (Claypit): Thank you for being so supportive! I feel so fortunate to be sharing a space with both of you!

Heather Leonard (Happy Hollow): Heather, thanks for always pitching in to help. It is always appreciated.

Tricia O'Reilly (Happy Hollow): Thank you for always being so calm, cool, and collected. (Even if you're faking it!)

Alayna Coates (MS): Alayna is always keeping issues of equity on the front burner. She shares helpful DEI articles with staff and incorporates engaging readings focused on social justice into her reading and writing classes. I appreciate her unwavering dedication to the work.

METCO Staff: Thank you to my METCO staff for your continuous dedication to our students. Your tireless work with, and on behalf of students, does not go unnoticed. Our students and the district are very fortunate to have such an amazing team.

Please see collage (right): begins at top left corner, goes clockwise.

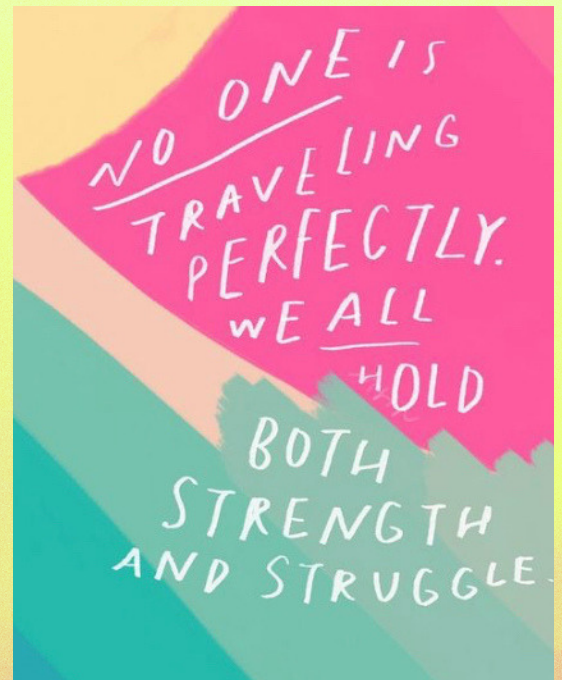
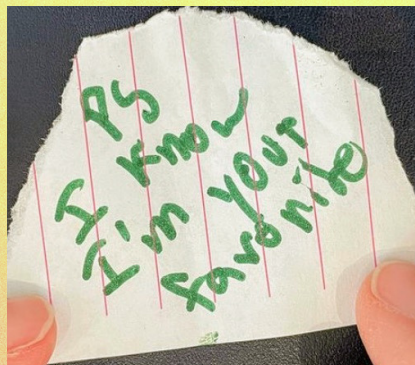
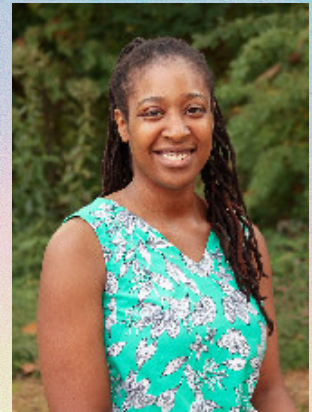
Laura Evers (Claypit): Laura stepped up to support me, a new LTS reading specialist. She organized the schedule for our new K groups, sharing their data and looping us into conversations about personalities, literacy needs, and teacher feedback. She shares her space and resources openly and is positive and proactive about serving students in need. I look forward to our collaboration time. Thank you, Laura!

Gisele Kouka (Claypit): Every year, Gisele assists me in my class and always goes above and beyond. She quietly enters my classroom, corrects any papers in the finished work bin, copies any worksheets that need to be copied, and helps students with anything they are working on. I truly appreciate Gisele and all she does for the students and me!!

Latoya Downes (Claypit): Latoya is the ultimate team player. She does so much behind the scenes that goes unnoticed inside and outside of school. She is such a resource and great support system! Latoya for President even though she would respectfully decline. =}

Administrative Assistants (K-12): Our administrative assistants have had many, many more tasks put on their plates this year. We appreciate all you are doing for our students and for the teachers. You are amazing!!

WRAP teachers (K-12): I'd like to give a shout-out to all of our WRAP teachers. Many times they are forgotten and under-appreciated. We know how hard you are all working and truly appreciate you! You all rock!!





Happy Hollow's 3rd, 4th & 5th music students share a song about peace.

A We All Need Peace Unlisted
by Amy Pohl



A note from **Amy Pohl Music Teacher**: This is a song about hope, peace, and love that 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students learned in zoom music class this year. Given the challenge of the times we are living in, this song's message of hope and peace seemed to fit what we were feeling. Anyone who wanted to was invited to make a video.

"We All Need Peace" by Karl Hitzmann

We all need love, so we can fill the world with hope.
We all need hope, so we can build a lasting peace.
We all need peace, to keep our dreams alive.
We all need peace, to make our planet thrive.
We need to sing, so that the world can hear our song.
We need a song, so that the world can sing along.
Our song will spread its message loud and clear.
Our song will spread to people far and near.