



REFLECTIONS

empowering bright minds who think & learn differently

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Please direct questions or comments about this publication to info@tncs.org, 804.266.2494 x29.

Cover: Miller and Aidan explore the magnitude of multiplication using base ten manipulatives.
Above: Anne, Mary Stewart, Madeline, Mackenzie, and Natalie take a break from landscaping for a picture.

When New Community rewrote our mission statement a few years ago, the core of what we do did not change. We strive, as we have for more than 40 years, to empower bright, talented students who are challenged by dyslexia and related language-based learning differences. There was one important word that was added to our mission. That word is *customized*. “The innovative and research-based college preparatory curriculum utilizes a customized educational approach to build skills in language and math and to foster academic and personal strengths...” That customized approach means that we are constantly looking for new ways to engage our students and give them individual opportunities to succeed.

This year new initiatives are helping us live our customized mission. Several Upper School students are taking advantage of blended learning opportunities to take college-level courses in subjects such as Latin and Spanish. One senior has been in a film study internship at Richmond CenterStage, helping him earn a place at the Savannah College of Art and Design next year. Additionally, the senior class is undertaking a shadowing program in Senior Seminar, where they meet with and learn from a professional in their desired field of study.

As our students’ skills develop, their language remediation needs may change. This year an Advanced Placement class and higher-level LF have been added to the upper school curriculum. Taking the place of Language Fundamentals

for a small group of students, AP History is giving them the chance to earn college credit while still building their language proficiency. LF4 arose from the recognition that, as our students progress to higher grades where reading demands increase, they need direct instruction in advanced comprehension strategies. “It is designed to enable students to build on previously learned skills while acquiring new strategies for understanding complex text typical of that in higher grades and in college,” says instructor Robin Forsyth.

To give our 8th graders a taste of the real world, a new capstone project has been created. The capstone project is a multi-disciplinary, self-designed project based on personal interests or passions. The project continues to develop, but shows great promise as a way to help our students learn while inspiring their passions.

It gives me great pride to see our faculty embrace our mission of customization. They go above and beyond to create individual experiences for our students who deserve a learning environment that adapts to their needs. By encouraging our students to think in new ways, TNCS is helping them to embrace their gifts and build on their strengths.



Nancy Foy is in her fourth year as Head of School at TNCS.



The boys Varsity soccer team celebrates a big win.

Education in the 21st century is designed to promote problem solving, collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity. Nowhere is this more evident than in The New Community School's arts and electives programs. For more than 40 years, TNCS has been dedicated to helping bright students with dyslexia achieve academic and personal success. In recent years, this has meant an increased emphasis on not just helping them overcome their learning challenges, but also tapping into their inherent gifts to uncover a passion that might lead to a new hobby, or even a future career. "TNCS arts and electives exemplify our motto of Building on Strengths", says Deb Butterworth, Arts and Electives Department Chair. "Through electives offerings, students choose areas of interest and personal successes and, through instruction and practice, make those strengths stronger and turn interests into passions."

"Our students come to us knowing where they struggle." Head of School Nancy Foy adds. "We are here to help them identify their strengths."

For years, TNCS has had a roster of electives such as visual art, drama, pottery, sewing, woodworking, robotics, photography, and yearbook that have given students the chance to expand their horizons and learn new skills. With a newly expanded student body, and a larger faculty than ever before, TNCS has had an opportunity this year to introduce some

new arts and electives classes that help our students explore their passions. Makers Shop is a perfect example. Designed around the principles of 21st century learning, Makers Shop "has students creating new products out of everyday objects," says Kyle Foulger, who is teaching the class. "They have the opportunity to develop their own ideas, as well as participate in more structured project-based activities." Mr. Foulger's class is looking at the needs of society and using the 4-D approach (develop, design, do, debrief) to design, create, and present solutions to everyday problems. While learning about design and problem solving, they are developing effective strategies for collaboration and communication.

Our students come to us knowing where they struggle. We are here to help them identify their strengths. -Nancy Foy

For students who have an interest in finance and its real world applications, It All Makes Cents has been a fun and informative experience. Jim Morgan's middle school elective is run like a real-life game of the Life board game. Using a student-directed mini-economy in the classroom, students are active participants and decision makers, allowing them to go

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Avery leads the rest of the 8th graders through the woods while blindfolded at Richmond Ropes.



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OUR MISSION

The New Community School empowers bright, talented students who are challenged by dyslexia and related language-based learning differences. The innovative and research-based college preparatory curriculum utilizes a customized educational approach to build skills in language and math and to foster academic and personal strengths – igniting the passions and gifts of unique minds.

OUR VISION

The New Community School transforms lives by creating an educational environment that celebrates the gifts of dyslexia and related language-based learning differences. The School empowers minds that think differently and inspires tomorrow's leaders and innovators.

beyond just learning about an economic system, to actually experiencing one. Simulated activities such as finding a job, shopping for a car and applying for a loan, finding a place to live and weighing the pros and cons of having a roommate give students the opportunity to experience lessons in spending and saving, wants versus needs, employment and income, and more. “It’s very realistic. We learned about real-life things like paying rent and taxes, and opportunity costs,” says 7th grader Chris Nelms. “It’s hard work, but sometimes I think I learned more in this class than in my other academic classes.”

Students at New Community often see language in non-traditional ways, which is why Becca Carmichael’s American Sign Language class is such a unique addition to the electives program. Students are learning skills through a variety of methods including direct instruction, hands-on activities, and digital media. Apart from learning the language at a beginner level, students are exploring topics related to deaf culture and the contributions of deaf Americans throughout history. Mrs. Carmichael remarks that “through this elective, it is my hope that students enjoy the beauty of a language that doesn’t involve written words. If they can also make comparisons between themselves and another population who must overcome challenges and learn to own their identities, I will consider the journey a success!”

Science is all around us, but it sometimes goes unnoticed. Digging Into Science gives students the chance to explore the many ways that science affects our daily lives in a fun and hands-on way. Whether observing the behavior of terrestrial and aquatic critters such as worms and arthropods or solving mock crimes using forensic sciences like DNA analysis and fingerprinting, Digging Into Science helps “students realize the many ways that science affects our daily lives,” says instructor Mrs. Angela Taylor. “The class is engaging their curiosity about the world around them. It may just light the fire for a future scientist.”

TNCS graduates have gone on to become everything from engineers and designers to financial wizards and owners of international corporations. By encouraging our students to explore their interests, we may be helping to uncover the next Steve Jobs, Richard Branson, or Steven Spielberg. As art teacher Aaron Webb puts it, “it is our belief that the school has an obligation to educate the whole child by balancing the components of heart, hand, and mind.” Arts and electives are a chance for every student to lay the foundation for what could become a new passion or even a new career.



Dan Stackhouse has been New Community’s Director of Development since 2013.



Kaki, Emma, Aly, Emma, Olivia, and Rachel take a quick break before heading into the “Around the World” themed Upper School Dance.



TNCS students transform themselves every day - by understanding their learning difference, but not letting it define them. Through hard work and the dedication of passionate faculty and family members, TNCS students transform to become the bright, talented people we know them to be.

The TNCS Annual Fund exists to aid in this transformation. From supporting arts, athletics, and student life programs, to funding financial aid, every dollar of the Annual Fund helps our students grow. A gift to the Annual Fund is a gift of a brighter future for these amazing students.

To make your gift today, visit tncs.org.

Thank you.



Max, Benjamin, Gavin, Madeline, Ned, Walker, Arriana, Odin, Ms. Latta, and Jeff put up a fight in tug of war during field day.

If you've read anything from The New Community School recently, you know that the school has grown considerably in the last few years. Starting this school year with 146 students means that TNCS has grown in size by nearly 50% in the last 4 years. Up until now, the school has housed this growth by creating new classroom spaces in Massey Hall, Arts & Humanities, and elsewhere, moving the Development Office to a house on Westbrook Avenue (creatively named Westbrook House), and this year installing two modular classroom trailers on the green. These modulares are temporary, however, and the school is finalizing plans to expand the campus in smart ways to meet the current demand for facilities and prepare for future growth.

The first step in this plan came in December, when the school closed on the purchase of 4219 Hermitage Road. This house, located next door to the Rancher, had been owned by the Kirksey family since 1988. The Kirkseys approached the school in the spring of 2015 to let us know that they were considering moving, and inquiring about our interest. Seeing an opportunity to strategically grow the campus, the Board of Trustees evaluated the property and approved its purchase.

Once renovated for use as a school building, 4219 Hermitage Road will house three new classrooms, with the possibility of a fourth in a detached garage sometime in the future. Smith McClane Architects have done a great job

designing a renovated space that meets state standards for classroom size and accessibility. It is hoped that renovations will be completed by Spring.

The other larger step in our smart growth is the construction of a new academic building on campus, scheduled to break ground in the first half of this year. Plans for this building have been in development for more than 4 years, and the board of trustees could not be more excited about its potential for the school and our students.

The new building will be built where the Rancher is now. The Rancher has faithfully served the school for more than twenty years, but its design only allows for three classrooms. Many of us will be sad to see it go.

Our involvement in this design allows us to help facilitate the educational process which has created a path to success for so many students. -Eddie Smith, Architect

Our new facility has been designed by Smith McClane Architects. Eddie Smith and Pat McClane have been extraordinary partners, understanding the unique nature of

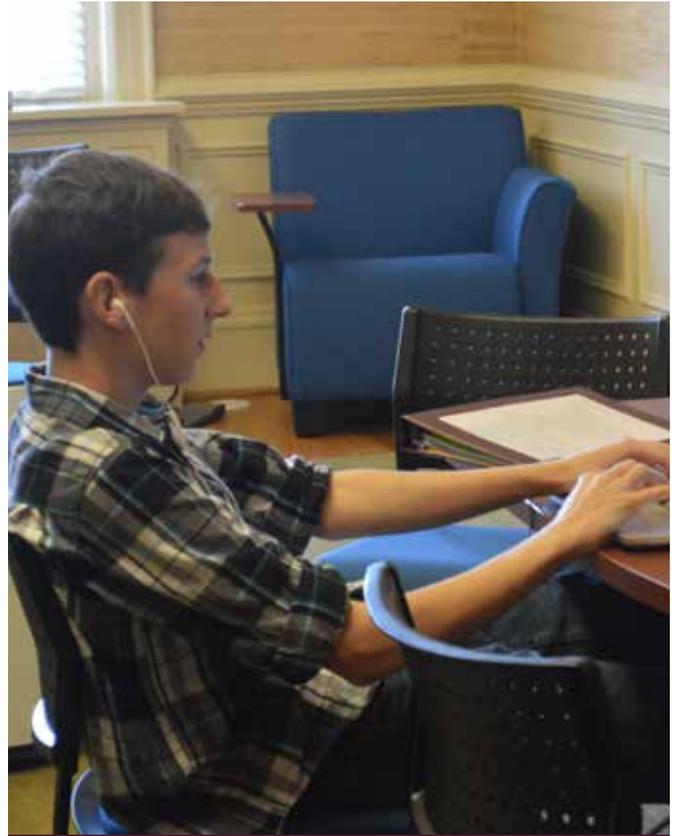


our program and the need for a space specially designed for the way our students learn. Eddie Smith is particularly aware of our program, as he is the father of Maggie, '94 and a former trustee. "We are so pleased to be working with The New Community School on this exciting project. Our involvement in this design allows us to help facilitate the educational process which has created a path to success for so many students," says Mr. Smith. The space is fresh and modern, while still in keeping with the architecture of the campus and our Hermitage Road Historic District neighborhood.

The first floor will include an arts and electives wing that will house new 2D and 3D art rooms with a new kiln for pottery and an outdoor art yard for students to create in the fresh air. Across the hall, a new music and drama room will be the school's first space dedicated to the performing arts, while a room dedicated to technology-based electives will help inspire our students while they work on robotics, makers shop, CAD modeling, and more.

On the other end of the first floor will be a new commons. As we have grown, it has become harder and harder to find space where large groups of students can gather for lunch, divisional assemblies, collaborative projects, and more. This new commons will be able to seat approximately 170

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Brandon studies during break in the Library, which has been newly furnished thanks to the generosity of the Parents Association.



View from Hermitage Road.

people lecture-style, and almost 110 in rounds for lunches. Additionally, a new catering kitchen will allow the school to prepare for programs and receptions, and will give students a place to store and heat their lunches. These spaces will be used by the whole student body on a daily basis.

The upper level in the new building is entirely dedicated to academics. In addition to a new language fundamentals suite of four rooms, a total of eight new academic classrooms are being designed with flexibility in mind. One will be a new science classroom, while the rest are planned to be used however they are needed. All will be designed with smart projectors and flexible furniture so that teachers can arrange the room to best suit the needs of their students. As currently designed, the upstairs will house middle school classes, but the flexible design means that they can be adapted to the area of greatest need with ease.

In addition to Smith McClane Architects, we have assembled a top notch team as we put the finishing touches on the design of the building and look toward construction. Evolve Architecture is providing design services for the interior and furnishings. Hourigan Construction has been selected as our contractor for the project. Hourigan impressed us in the interview process with their eye toward the safety of our students, their understanding of our mission, and their desire to find educational opportunities for the school as the building goes up. "The collaborative spirit of this team

has been tremendous. Each one of us has our lens and the collaboration has made this a better building for our students," says Head of School, Nancy Foy.

The school has been hard at work raising the support needed to begin construction. Thanks to the generosity of early investors, we have made wonderful progress. We will continue to reach out and work with additional donors. With their support, we hope that the school can break ground by June of 2016. If we can, Hourigan Construction estimates that we should be able to move in close to the beginning of second semester next year.

This project has been a labor of love for so many people, and I hope that you are as excited about it as we are. If you have any questions, or would like to find out how you might be involved, please contact Dan Stackhouse, Director of Development at dstackhouse@tncs.org or 804.264.3276. With the purchase of 4219 Hermitage Road and the groundbreaking of the new building on the horizon, TNCS is closer than ever to providing our students with facilities that are as remarkable as they are.



Mike Bland serves on New Community's Board of Trustees and is the Chairman of the Buildings and Grounds Committee. He had two children attend TNCS, Jack G'13 and Emily T'15.

Tomorrow begins today.

Have you remembered New Community in your estate plans?

The Dickinson Greenwood Society honors individuals who have included TNCS in their estate plans. As you plan for your legacy, we hope that you will remember New Community and help carry on our important work.

Planned gifts such as bequests, retirement designations, charitable trusts, annuities, and more help to ensure that New Community has the ongoing resources to help ignite the passions of young minds, and enables you to make a gift that will provide benefits for a lifetime.

For more information please call 804.264.3276 or email development@tncs.org.





ADMISSIONS PROGRAM

FRIDAY, APRIL 29, 8:45 - 10:30AM

Our educators, parents, and students will share details about our unique blend of a rigorous college preparatory curriculum and academic skills development for middle and upper school students.

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