



*A monthly update on the Diversity,
Equity, and Inclusion work happening
at NGFS*

GUILFORD CAMPUS

- For our Lower School Halloween celebration, we made an effort to select costumes that did not show insensitivity to a culture or race.
- In the A Child's Garden Crocus class, they often play music from around the world during lunch: Paris cafe, Bossa Nova music from Spain, steel drums from the Caribbean, etc. The children now ask, "Where are we eating today?" and talk about if they like the music. The teachers share about what it's like in these places, and it introduces the world to our little people. A Choice playtime activity included building a town village that had a diverse population of people in varying community roles.
- In A Child's Garden the teachers continue to have conversations with the children on the idea of inclusion, generally based on making sure everyone is included in play. The teachers also use these conversations to reinforce the idea that even if someone is different from you, and may act differently, their thoughts and emotions are still valid.
- In Sunrise, Erin is incorporating movement break ideas/videos/songs that specifically feature BIPOC, such as Mr. B and Blazer Fresh.
- In Rainbow, the class read the story *Princess Boy* as part of Meeting for Worship and had an amazing discussion on gender norms and individuality. Rainbow also completed a Hispanic Heritage Month module. Students made a poster with a partner on a topic they had learned about and recorded their poster and facts on Seesaw.
- In Horizon, as part of their Human Body unit, students did activities to immobilize thumb and finger joints and then tried to complete everyday tasks. They realized how much we rely on our opposable thumbs and fingers together to grasp things. They talked about when this was not possible, they had to compensate by doing things a different way. The teachers took this opportunity to talk about how some people are born with limb differences, or sometimes as people get older they are unable to use their hands as well as they used to. This increased students' awareness of physical differences and limitations. During Morning Meeting, song selections included: "Who Were the Witches", which provided an opportunity to talk about the stereotype of Halloween witches and the full meaning of the song, and "1492", which focuses on Christopher Columbus from the perspective of and Indigenous Peoples. Horizon teachers shared a Halloween read-aloud video in Seesaw of Gustavo the Shy Ghost, by Mexican author and illustrator Flavia Z. Drago. This story connects with Mexican culture, Day of the Dead, making friends, and being inclusive. Meg also recently began a read-aloud book with her homeroom. She will use the book "Niagara Falls, Or Does It?" by Henry Winkler, to lead discussions and sharing to increase awareness of and empathy for learning differences, strengths, and challenges.
- In Galaxy, students have discussed the theme of racism as demonstrated in their read-aloud book. The Galaxy team added a new book to the Literature Circle selections to increase the diversity of main characters and authors.

- In Music class, listening selections for 1-6 grades have been female artists. Music teacher Jeannie Sykes has talked about how it has historically been harder for women to break into the music scene.
- In Spanish class, students learned about Hispanic Heritage Month, including the importance of the histories, cultures, and contributions of American citizens whose ancestors come from Spain, the Caribbean, and North, Central, and South America. Topics included music and instruments like the marimba; visual artists, including Pablo Picasso and Frida Kahlo; and traditions such as quinceaneras. Students also learned about the meaning of Latina Days of the Dead celebrations and created sugar skull inspired drawings and sculptures.
- In Extended Care, the art supplies include coloring pages that are related to diverse holidays and observances. Examples include Jewish and Hindu holidays, as well as some chosen for White Cane Safety Day.

PAGE-FREDERIKSEN CAMPUS

- Holocaust Survivor Stefanie Seltzer shared her childhood as a survivor with a couple of Upper School History classes and some Middle School students. There were many examples shared with students about how even in the worst of times, there were people who made ethical, moral choices that helped save lives. Through Stefanie's Holocaust experience, she is inspired to carry on sharing the stories and events of her past as a survivor.
- The class of 2025 read and responded to the 13th century Epic of Sundiata from the Medieval West African Empire of Mali.
- Students in English 10-11 completed an essay from their reading and discussion of the Old English epic *Beowulf* and the 20th century novel *Grendel*. This comparison provided social commentary regarding cultural shifts in accepted values. Students are inundated with archetypes presented in media and life on a daily basis. The essay assignment allowed them to examine the cultures of old and that of which they are both product and producer.
- Middle School History students have embarked on their study and exploration of World Religions.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Kim Freedman, Tanisha Jones, Carolyn Howes, and members of the Board of Trustees are participating in the NCAIS course "The Bottom Line." The Bottom Line series is comprised of two distinct opportunities: *The Bottom Line* and *Cultivating Communities of Belonging*. Each program can stand alone or can be paired together for a more robust experience. Both center on your school's mission, culture, community, and readiness for conversation and action around racial equity in independent schools. Through a menu of required materials and additional content chosen by individual participants, and featuring more than 40 industry experts working in the diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ) space, this series focuses on practical, operational strategies and building understanding, and offers a rationale for functional changes.

Our focus for last Friday's Professional Development Day was Dyslexia. Teachers learned more about dyslexia, dysgraphia, handwriting instruction, and reading instruction. One teacher shared this reflection: *Being reminded of the difference between anxiety and stress, and how each comes about, is an important reminder for all of us as teachers and humans. However, understanding how stress and anxiety are exacerbated by Dyslexia inspires me to find creative ways to help my students see their strengths and grow in self-confidence.*

NGFS teachers Barry Bell, Khaira Bolden, Angela Jackman, Danielle Cardille, Neil Swenson, Lauren Dean, and Brad Harrell, as well as Tanisha Jones, Head of Middle and Upper Schools attended the North Carolina Association of Independent Schools (NCAIS) Middle School Matters conference. Attendees chose from a range of workshops and presentations on a diverse set of topics. Barry Bell, Middle School English, shared:

The third presentation I attended focused on service learning, and encouraged building respectful, trusting relationships with community partners in a manner which allows each to act with dignity. It was quite apparent that there are many situations in which this is not the case, although I must say that Jeff and Auxiliary Programs at NGFS have built such relationships, and I was glad to be validated in my feeling that we do it right. While we haven't been able to be as active in the larger Greensboro community since COVID, the presentation gave me a lot of ideas for moving forward with some campus projects as well.

Stay Tuned for What's to Come

We are looking forward to the upcoming National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) People of Color Conference (PoCC). Lorenza Wyatt and Serena Witherspoon will be attending the conference virtually the last week of November. The NAIS People of Color Conference (PoCC) is the flagship of the National Association of Independent Schools' commitment to equity and justice in teaching, learning, and organizational development. The mission of the conference is to provide a safe space for leadership, professional development, and networking for people of color and allies of all backgrounds in independent schools.

Teachers are looking forward to opportunities to discuss Native American Heritage Month.

Congratulations to sophomore Eli Bassett on becoming part of the Community Foundation of Greater Greensboro, Inc.: Teen Grantmaking Council. This opportunity allows "high school youth across Greater Greensboro to gain leadership experience, meet area youth, voice opinions, and make a difference by making grants to youth-led projects that address community issues". Eli will participate in these sessions:

- Paying It Forward through group mission and code
- Exploring the resources and needs of Guilford County
- Selection of community need and prioritized root focus
- Community marketing and promotion of RFP process
- Assumptions and bias, budget & project analysis
- Grantee interviews, group consensus, budget management
- Ending the year by capturing the success of the group