



# In the Middle

Real Students, Real Stories, Real News

April, 2021

Return to GMS

Volume 3, Issue 3

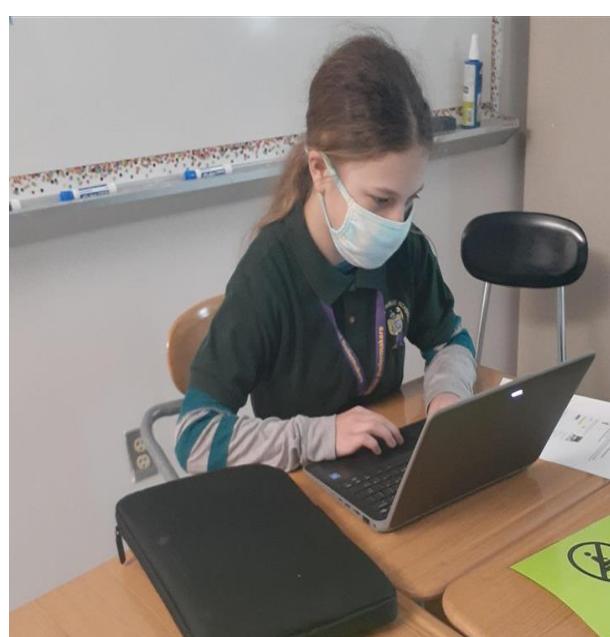
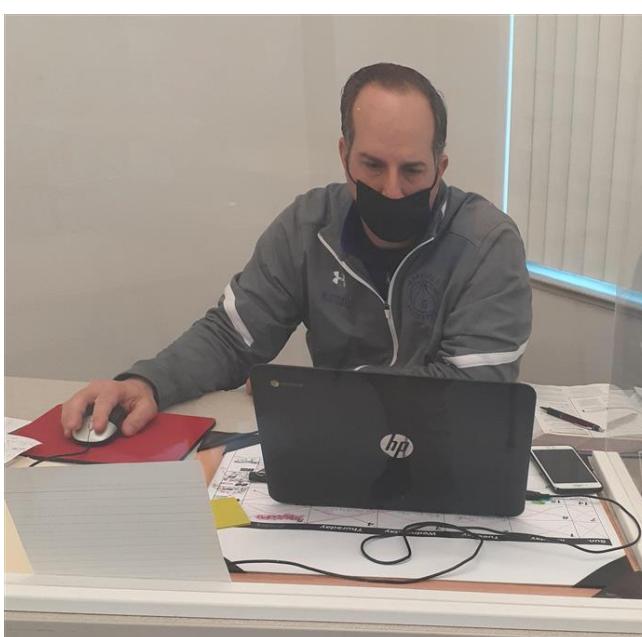
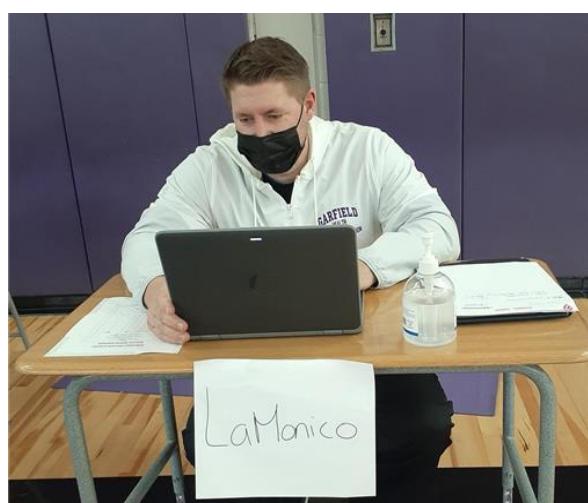
## **Garfield Middle School Students and Staff Return to School March 2021**



On Monday, March 8th, Garfield Middle School was finally able to welcome back students from grades 6, 7 & 8. All GMS students who returned were assigned into either the Purple or Gold cohort and were able to report to school for two one- session days per week. Wednesday of each week right now is a fully remote learning day for all students. The protocols of hand washing, wearing masks at all times, monitoring staff and students for symptoms, contact tracing, and social distancing have all been in place to ensure a safe return to Garfield Middle School.



## **Welcome Back GMS Hybrid Students and GMS Staff**





## Strangers Helping Strangers - Just to lend a hand

### Mr. Braitsch - Founder of a rescue charity tells his story

Written by Samantha Doell, Grade 7



Since Covid-19 hit the United States, communities have been coming together to help their towns, and Garfield is one of them. All over town, a group called "Strangers Helping Strangers" has been helping people in need with food, supplies, and nearly any necessity the people of Garfield need. They have also been supporting frontline workers, such as healthcare workers, and helping the homeless, while getting the youth involved as much as possible.

It may have started out as a way to help a few with groceries but snowballed into an incredible organization that helps anyone in need, and not just in Garfield. Putting others first has always been important, and with SHS bringing the youth into helping people, it will lead to a much brighter future for everyone.



Mr. Caiazzo and Mr. Braitsch

The group helps people in our town and other towns but what exactly is SHS? Strangers Helping Strangers is a non-profit group formed by Mr. Christopher Braitsch in March 2020, which seeks to help those in need. They not only help the homeless and people in need, but they also support frontline workers who work hard to keep people healthy and safe, even during the pandemic. Mr. Braitsch not only gets the community involved, but also involves the youth as much as possible, in hope of forming a brighter future full of compassionate people. Whether it is with school supplies, or groceries, or supplying hot meals, SHS has got your back, and you might even find some hot food on your doorstep from this amazing group.

SHS has helped many people this past year, but how did this incredible group even come about? Ever since Hurricane Sandy, Mr. Braitsch has always had a tendency to help others, so when the Covid-19 Outbreak came along, he was ready to help out. He put up flyers in the elevator and lobby of his Condo complex offering to help people go grocery shopping if they could not go to the store, or if they needed anything then he would help them. It soon snowballed from there, where Mr. Braitsch was helping people all over town, but he decided he needed to do more. So, he posted on Facebook if anyone wanted to help him help others. The next thing he knew, he was forming Strangers Helping Strangers!

## STRANGERS HELPING STRANGERS

### just to lend a hand

We are looking to help the elderly, the health-compromised, those who are not able to leave home but need essentials for themselves and their young children, and anyone else in need.

Throughout the pandemic, people have not always been able to provide or get everything they need for themselves and their families. Luckily, Strangers Helping Strangers has been able to provide aid to people whenever they needed it, while also supporting the essential workers.

What types of projects do they work on? In Garfield and other local towns, SHS has been working with the community to help give back during this pandemic, and not just in Jersey. Along with Sergeant Jeff Stewart of the Garfield Police Department, Tara Campistrous of the YMCA, and The Garfield Neighbor Network, SHS traveled to Brooklyn to help NBA player Taj Gibson and his foundation paint new basketball courts that were installed in places such as an old rundown housing project courtyard. This was a major step in getting the youth to help out and get involved, while also providing a place to get exercise and have some fun.

### DOLLAR THURSDAYS - SFS FUNDRAISER

WHAT: DONATE \$1 ON THURSDAY

WHY: HELP PURCHASE DINNERS FOR FAMILIES IN NEED.

ALL DINNERS BOUGHT FROM LOCAL SMALL BUSINESSES  
THROUGH STRANGERS FEEDING STRANGERS PROGRAM

STRANGERS  
HELPING  
STRANGERS  
*Just to lend a hand*

### DONATION INFO

VENMO @SHS-NJ

ZELLE 201-370-0721

CASH APP

SSTRANGERSHELPING



Mr. Rigiglioso is a founding member

Many members of this fantastic group are volunteers, and many are young students who want to help people, which is still an option for students who would like to join. Getting the youth involved has been a constant goal for the group since the beginning, and there have been many willing to help out.



Sergeant Jeff Stewart hard at work

According to Mr. Braitsch, "providing aid is just a band aid, a necessary band aid, but still temporary; getting the youth involved and showing them what it is like to put yourself last is vital to bring a future without these societal issues that we face today". Strangers Helping Strangers is actually also in the process of creating a youth program, but the project is still months away from launch. So, the community is a major part of this group, and they intend to do good by it and make way for a brighter future for all of us.

Want to get involved? Their Youth Crew is up and running. GHS student Natalie Fucile is President. Email: [strangershelpingstrangers@gmail.com](mailto:strangershelpingstrangers@gmail.com)



## The GMS Book Review: Reading during remote

Written by Samantha Doell, Grade 7

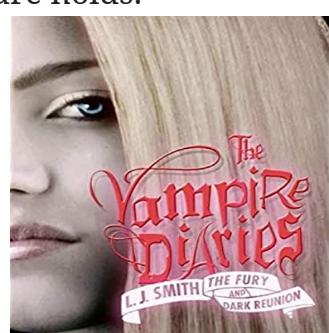
"The Vampire Diaries: The Fury and Dark Reunion" by L.J. Smith is a fascinating horror fiction novel which can attract fans of both *Twilight* and other books such as *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *The Vampire Academy*. Horror/Supernatural fans will love this bestseller, and it is only the third book in the series, so if you have read the first two, then it will be perfect timing!

This novel will draw you in further into the wonderfully horror saga. Two feuding brothers, one golden girl, and a dangerous threat on the horizon are the key characters. Can these blood-ravenous hunters put aside their thirst for revenge to face a threat of the past, or will their desires for love be their undoing? High school just got complicated. The book really peaked my interest, since I wanted to find out the differences between the show and the books.

This thrilling novel gave me a fresh and new perspective on the plot, and the characters. I especially enjoyed the development of the relationship between Stefan and Damon Salvatore, since I find it interesting to picture their feud-to-brotherhood drama in my head. I never really expected myself to like reading the books, since I tend to favor the show a lot, but after reading this book, I am really looking forward to getting the other books in the series, so this book did not just satisfy my love of reading, but it fueled it, inspiring me to want to read more.

Usually, I do not too often read an entire series, but these novels will certainly find their way into my bookshelf, and they are here to stay. Elena Gilbert just woke up to the most horrifying sight she has ever seen, and she is not the only one confused. The Salvatore brothers, Stefan and Damon, have been feuding for over a century, and this revelation did not make reconcile any easier. In this horrific mystery, both brothers attempt to win over Elena's heart, but who will prevail? Or will dark forces intrude and destroy everything they love? They will have to work together to stop this other power, to hopefully one day find peace.

The main idea is to live life to the fullest, and to enjoy it, because it is the only one you have. No one knows what comes next after death, but people have one life on Earth, so they should make the most of it, and not spend so much time on the past or future, because no one knows what the future holds.



## GMS Student Council

"Maskerpiece" design contest

Students and Staff design their own masks and show off their designs

The GMS Student Council had a "Mask-erpiece", mask designing contest, in March. Students and Staff were encouraged to design their own masks and take pictures of themselves wearing them to submit to the Student Council for judging. Here are some of the submissions and the winners.



**Meghan Markle and Prince Harry - The explosive Oprah Interview**

March 7th, 2021

Written by Sebastian Galvis, Grade 6

Prince Harry and Meghan Markle recently made a decision to quit the royal family and it is one of the biggest scandals to hit the monarchy in recent memory.

The couple announced their stunning decision at the beginning of January and are expected to make things official this spring. On Sunday March 8th, 2021 Prince Harry explained his reasons for leaving the royal family were due to a "lack of support and lack of understanding." During a discussion about Harry's frustration with the British press, he acknowledged that although the "UK is his home," he had to remove his family from the situation because he "could see where this was headed," in what could be a reference to the struggles of his mother, Princess Diana.

Money has never been a problem for the royals, but in the interview, Harry said the royal family has



"literally cut me off financially".

It's not like the couple will be poor ever. Harry inherited millions from his mother who died in a Paris car wreck in 1997. Meghan has her own money from her Hollywood acting career. And the royal couple has signed big deals with Netflix and Spotify.

Their security detail was being removed which motivated them to move to the U.S. Meghan especially was the target of death threats, some based on her race, she told Winfrey, yet that didn't change the palace's decision. They now reside with their son in California.



**GMS Students take virtual Smithsonian Museum Tour with Smithsonian Secretary Lonnie Bunch & Garfield High School's Tomorrow's Teachers**



Garfield Middle School students and teachers were able to take a virtual tour of the Smithsonian group of museums in March. The students were offered an opportunity to ask the director and Secretary of the museums questions as part of this virtual tour exercise.

On March 2nd, Garfield Middle School students were able to attend a question answer panel (pictured above) with the museum director, Secretary Bunch.

Lonnie G. Bunch III is the 14th Secretary of the Smithsonian. He assumed his position June 16, 2019. As Secretary, he oversees 19 museums, 21 libraries, the National Zoo, numerous research centers, and several education units and centers.

The secretary met with our GMS question and answer panel on March 2nd and answered any questions they may have had about the Smithsonian group of museums and their history.



**New Teacher Spotlight  
Welcome to GMS -Ms. Kim**

Ms. Kim is a new Math teacher here at Garfield Middle School. She comes to us in her 11th year of teaching. She had been teaching Middle School and High School Mathematics in South Korea for 2 years, and then 8 years here in New Jersey.

Ms. Kim has wanted to be a math teacher since she was in high school. When she was in High School, she loved helping her friends who were struggling with math and it made her happy when she saw them understand it. In fact, that is what she likes best about being a teacher. She loves teaching her students Math and showing them the "beauty of the subject".

Ms. Kim loves teaching in the Middle School. She loves the sense of humor of Middle School students that make her laugh. She also likes to see the growth in these grade levels. It's the place where they explore, fail, and learn from their failures.

Unfortunately, like all of us, Ms. Kim misses the full of interaction with students now that we have had the challenges of remote learning the students. When hybrid learning began,



**Ms. Kim, GMS Math Teacher**

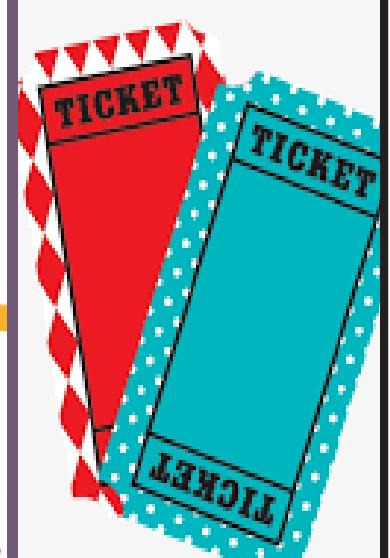
she was thrilled to meet her students in the classroom and interact with them again.

One message she will always try to convey to her students is, "If you believe in yourself, anything is possible."

One of Ms. Kim's favorite teachers was Mr. Nam who was her High School English teacher. "He was very fun and taught English very well. I really enjoyed learning English with him, and it pushed me to learn even more English in college!", Ms. Kim stated.

This summer Ms. Kim is going to try to take a Graduate School course herself. She is also teaching her daughter how to read and write in Korean.

Let's all welcome Ms. Kim to our GMS family !!



**Now open with limitations  
Masks must be worn to be in the library.  
Six feet distancing will be observed.**

**30min limit inside the library.**

**<https://garfield.bccls.org/>**

**GARFIELD  
Public  
LIBRARY**





## GMS Super Hero Spirit Day

### March 26th, 2021



Tianna Sosa, Grade 8



Caileigh Thompson-Williams, Grade 8



**BE A  
HERO**

## St Patrick's Day Cupcake Designs

Ms. Teggert & Ms. Gunar's Students show their cupcake creativity

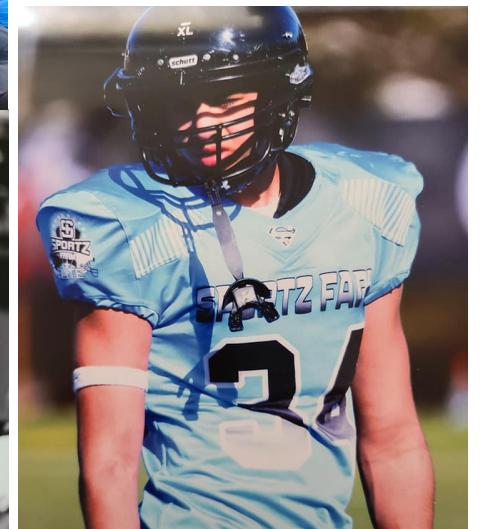


### Garfield Middle School Student, Richard Rigoglioso Competes in 2K21 Football Tournament in Atlantic City

One of our Middle School Students, Richard Rigoglioso, was able to participate in the 2K21 Sportz Farm All American Games in Atlantic City this past Easter weekend.

The Sportz Farm is an educationally based Non-Profit organization that incorporates after school programs, sports training, tutoring & mentoring students into the development of future professional athletes.

Coaches from Paramus Catholic, St. Joes, DePaul, Bergen Catholic, St. Peter's and more were on hand to mentor the athletes during the tournament.



### Looking for Clues Garfield Middle School Scavenger Hunt Easter 2021





## Principal Thoughts From the desk of Mr. Rigoglioso

I am so happy to return to in-person instruction at Garfield Middle School. The staff has been working hard to make sure our students have the safest and best learning environment possible.

It has been wonderful to see both our staff and students returning to GMS over the past few weeks. Although we do not have all of our students back in-person yet, we are glad to see students in the hallways and in our classrooms once again.

Over this past year since we have switched to virtual learning, we have gone through so many challenges. I am glad to see how well everyone has been doing with the transition back to in-person instruction.

I am looking forward to transitioning even more students back to GMS in the near future. We are ready to welcome you back and can't wait to see even more students back in-person.



Mr. Rigoglioso and San-Tooman Dossou, Grade 6

Teachers and staff are working hard to maintain social distancing as well as frequently cleaning commonly used areas. We are utilizing temperature checks every morning for safety and require masks be worn in all areas at all times. This is all done to promote a safe environment for all.

I look forward to seeing you soon!

## GMS Library Watch Parties - February 2021 Watch for more coming soon

CELEBRATED AUTHOR

### Angie Thomas

February 23  
TUESDAY @ 6 PM

REGISTER NOW  
Space is limited

click **Register Here**

Join Ms. Marx's Watch Party on Teams to be entered to win a burger from Steve's Burgers! Chat with classmates during the event! TEAM Code:xufcdsn

Submit your questions to Angie Thomas when registering and join the Watch Party using the code. If your question is chosen during the event you win a pizza delivered to your house!

Must have 10 participants to run the contest!  
Email questions or reach out on TEAMS to MM Marx@gboe.org

CELEBRATED AUTHOR

### Jason Reynolds

February 26  
FRIDAY @ 5 PM

Join Ms. Marx's Watch Party on Teams to be entered to win a burger from Steve's Burgers! Chat with classmates during the event! TEAM Code:xufcdsn

If Jason answers your question in the webinar you will win a pizza delivered to your home!

Must have 10 participants to run the contest!  
Email questions or reach out on TEAMS to MM Marx@gboe.org

**TOGETHER, LET'S KEEP GARFIELD SCHOOLS SAFE!**

**What is Covid-19?**  
Corona viruses (CoV) are a large family of viruses. Covid-19 is a new virus caused by the SARS-CoV-2 corona virus. It spreads by respiratory droplets transmitted from person to person with close contact (~6 feet).

**STAY HOME IF YOU HAVE ANY OF THESE SYMPTOMS:**

- Fever
- Tiredness
- Dry cough
- Trouble breathing
- Loss of smell/taste
- Chills
- Muscle aches
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea

**HOW CAN I PROTECT MYSELF?**

- WEAR A MASK THAT COVERS YOUR NOSE AND MOUTH.
- MAINTAIN 6 FT DISTANCE FROM OTHERS.
- WASH YOUR HANDS WITH SOAP AND WATER FOR AT LEAST 20 SECONDS.
- DISINFECT SURFACES THAT YOU TOUCH OFTEN.
- STAY HOME AND ISOLATE IF YOU ARE SICK.

**I MIGHT HAVE BEEN EXPOSED TO COVID-19. WHAT DO I DO?**

If you have been near someone who has Covid-19,

- Notify your school's nurse and principal immediately.
- You must quarantine at home for 14 days. Do not come to school.
- If you experience any symptoms, seek medical attention immediately.
- If you have any health-related questions or concerns, please see the school nurse.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus>



## GMS Library News

### Reading Remotely

GMS Media Center offers open E-books to students



#### Growing readers

Open eBooks readers enjoy:

- Popular books - featuring award-winning and bestselling authors
- Unlimited downloads - on both KindleBooks by Amazon devices for 6 weeks
- No cost - free to readers through qualifying organizations and no late fees



To read Open eBooks:

1. Go to the App Store on your device. THIS ONLY WORKS WITH APPLE OR ANDROID DEVICES
2. Search for "Open eBooks" and follow the instructions to download
3. Open the app
4. Login through FirstBook
5. Agree to any terms and conditions
6. Enter your code and PIN when prompted
7. Browse the catalog of books available or search names of authors you know and love
8. Download the e-Books of your choosing and enjoy reading!

Note: when using the app standard data rates apply

Please note: You can download 10 e-Books at a time. Each e-Book will be available for 56 days before it must be renewed.

To return a book, press the cover and then hit return.



## Essay Contest Winners

### VFW Patriot's Pen and Garfield Police Department

Every year, nearly 230,000 of our nation's youth compete in the VFW's Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen essay competition for their chance to win a portion of more than \$3 million in college scholarships and awards.

Open to eligible middle and high school students, the Voice of Democracy and Patriot's Pen essay competitions require students submit an essay based on a selected patriotic theme. Winning entries selected by local VFW Posts go on to compete at their District and Department (state) level, with state winners competing at the national level.

Congratulations to the winner of the Patriot's Pen essay contest, Marcelo Giglio. His essay theme was: "What is Patriotism to me".



Commander Irwin Wasserman (pictured above) and all the members congratulate the participants and encourage all students to enter next year's competition. The Garfield VFW is proud to sponsor a \$300 prize for the middle school winner.



The Garfield Police Department, in partnership with the Bergen County Prosecutors Office Community Engagement Task Force also announced the winners of the Youth Writing Contest. Over 100 student essays were judged by a panel from our Juvenile Division and Community Affairs Division. The winners received a certificate from the Principal of their school and a brand new ANDROID CHROMEBOOK laptop.

The winner from Garfield Middle School is 7th grader Mila Cekovska.

Congratulations on a job well done!!

## Nike designs a "Hands Free" sneaker

Written by Julia Feldman, Grade 6



A 16-year-old boy named Matthew Walzer was born with cerebral palsy. He always loved Nike shoes because they provide the ankle support he needs in order to walk. So, he decided to reach out to his favorite shoe brand on Social Media through Twitter. As luck would have it, Nike had been working with Special Olympians to overcome similar challenges and was thrilled to help Walzer. Little did he know that his heartfelt request would lead to the creation of Go FlyEase — the world's first fully hands-free sneaker.

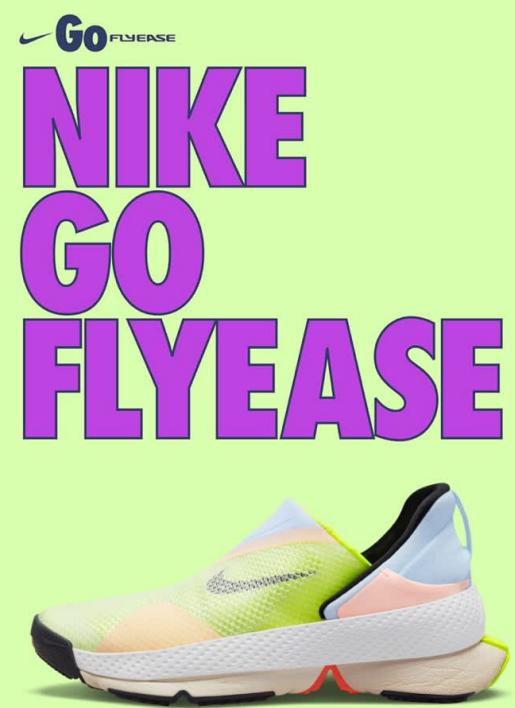


Pictured: Matthew Walzer and LeBron James

This all started because Matthew felt that he would need to be able to put on his shoes to become independent as a teenager and adult. "My dream is to go to the college of my choice without having to worry about someone coming to tie my shoes every day. I've worn Nike basketball shoes all my life. I can only wear this type of shoe because I need ankle support to walk. At 16 years old, I am able to completely dress myself, but my parents still have to tie my shoes. As a teenager who is striving to become totally self-sufficient, I find this extremely frustrating, and at times, embarrassing." Matthew Walzer stated at the time.

Though Nike was able to create a custom shoe to meet Walzer's immediate needs, they knew the design could be improved. The Nike design team spent years refining the shoe, sending each version to Walzer for final approval.

The first release of the shoe was in 2015 however, the model was not entirely hands-free. This shoe was created with a collaboration with LeBron James. Then, on February 1st, 2021 the Go Flyease was introduced.



An entirely hands free shoe model.

They tested various no-lace solutions, including velcro, zippers, and cable dials, and also drew inspiration from existing Nike shoes, such as the Nike Hyperdunk and the Nike Zoom Soldier, created in collaboration with LeBron James — Walzer's favorite basketball player.

The Nike design team says, "LeBron's footwear provided the ankle support Matthew needed, but of course, getting into and out of high-top shoes can present its own challenges, so we focused not just on replacing the lacing system but also creating an easier entry system for the foot."

Unveiled early this year, the revolutionary shoe features a bistable hinge — one that toggles between two different positions. When not worn, the hinge props up, creating a sort of "clog" shape. Angled at about thirty degrees, it allows the foot to slide in easily. Once the foot is in, the hinge snaps shut, and the shoe tightly grasps onto the foot with a suctioning motion. The "clog" arch flattens out to provide cushioning and heel support.



It is fascinating and heartwarming that Nike did all this, and it all started with a post on Twitter. (And you got to be honest those shoes look so cool! I love the colors, the design, and just everything about it!)



**The Record newspaper meets with  
GMS Publishing classes**  
**March 25th, 2021**



On March 25th, GMS Publishing students were invited to an open online discussion with The Record newspaper's Editor-in-Chief, Dan Sforza.

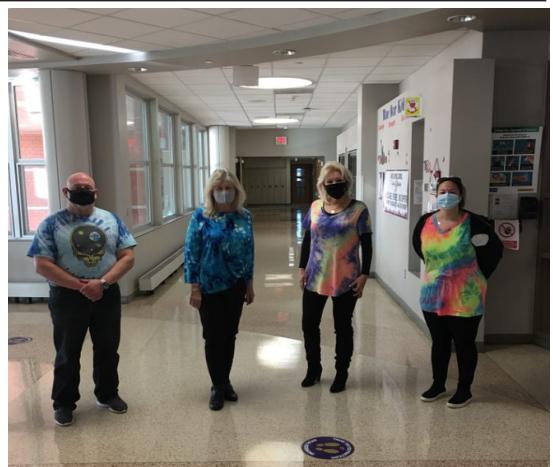
Mr. Sforza spoke to the students about the challenges newspaper and reporters face in today's times. Topics that were discussed included social media, fact checking and mis-information. Students were able to ask questions about the difficulties that reporters and newspapers face today regarding gathering information and interviewing during lockdown. Mr. Sforza spoke to the students on Teams about how each issue is put together now and how things have changed for the Record newspaper reporting staff and distribution along with predictions for the future.



**GMS Staff and Students Wear Tie-Dye  
District Spirit Day**  
**January 22, 2021**



Vice-Principal, Mr. Gray



The Main Office Staff



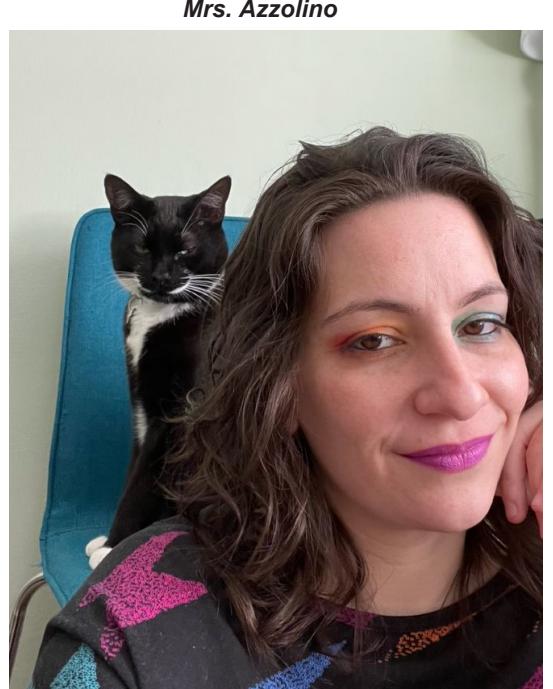
Allana Lugo, student



Mrs. Azzolino



Alyssa Ochs, student



Ms. Ryden (and her bestie)



*When spring came, even the false spring, there were no problems except where to be happiest.*

— Ernest Hemingway



**Look for our next issue with...**  
**More articles written by our outstanding students!**  
**Teacher Spotlight and more polls**  
**GMS happenings and highlights**  
**More book reviews**  
**and of course, more GMS news!**

