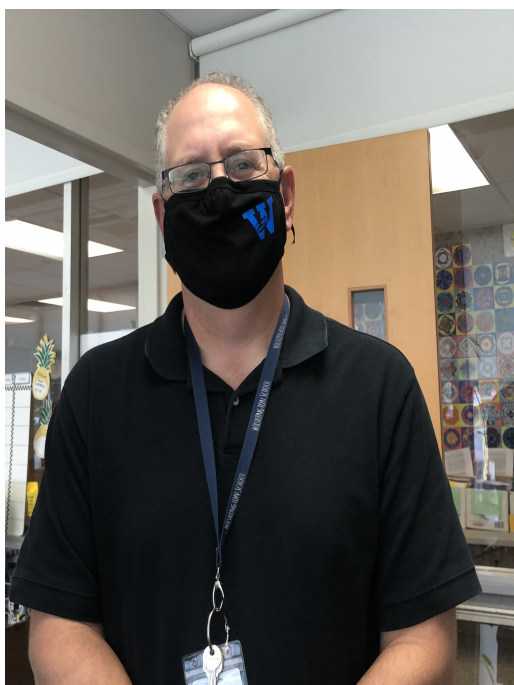




## Principal Spreads Positivity During Pandemic

By Mehr Kothari, Evy Rakhlin, and Celina Chen

At the beginning of the most unusual school year the Washington School has ever seen, the principal, Mr. Mercurio took time to think about his position as the head of the school in the virtual environment. Just after the school's hybrid/virtual model began, Mercurio was asked about how it feels to have students coming in and out of the Washington School. He said, "For the past 8 months, I have not seen students or many teachers in any of the halls or classrooms. When the hybrid model started, I was thrilled to see all of the students walking through the doors. This feels more normal than viewing our students through a screen. I am so excited to expand this program even further to have more in-person learning with our students." Mercurio's response shows his commitment to making the Washington School a better place. He is always finding new ways to make learning more interesting, whether it is on or offline.



Mercurio, masked, worked all summer on site getting school ready.

Mercurio has been a great role-model to the Washington School's students, and his answer to the question "How do you keep a positive environment in the virtual world?" proves his commitment.



Mercurio at his desk looks forward to having all the students back in school.

"I think smiling a lot keeps students motivated, and I always try to show the 7 habits from Leader In Me. I want to be a good example for students by being kind and showing responsibility," Mercurio said.

The reason Mercurio began his career as a principal was because he was first a teacher, but he wanted to make an impact on the learning experience of many students. His definition of a principal is a person who is flexible, patient and leads by example. Four years ago, when Mercurio became the first principal of the Washington School, he felt excited and motivated to assemble an entire faculty. When asked about his top priorities as a principal, Mercurio said, "My top priorities are to give all students an excellent education and by the end of the school year, everyone will be ready for middle school."

Always finding new ideas to improve the Washington School, Mercurio created events like the Howl Hour which encouraged students to participate in innovative off-screen activities. He is also planning to have a possible "Code Day" for the school. He thinks these unique activities encourage students to grow.

When asked about the school morning announcements, Mercurio feels the announcements are helpful because they connect everyone, and allow sharing of important news with the school. He thinks these announcements bring the whole school together as a community. Currently, many institutions can have a negative impact on the environment. Mercurio said that

in every classroom there is a composting bin, and recently, the school encouraged participation in the environmental initiative, Bags to Benches. In the past, the Washington School's active environmental club has had a school wide influence on helping to improve the environment.

On a cheerful note, Mercurio wants to collaborate with the Newspaper Club and make a jokes column. He said, "It can be a great distraction for people during these odd times." These jokes can be of great interest to readers.

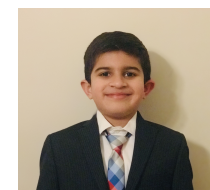
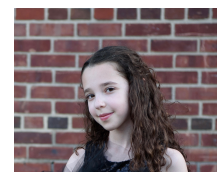
The changes Mercurio is bringing about in the Washington School are making the school community even better. Mercurio keeps trying to improve the school, and all his tireless, hard work has definitely paid off!



Mercurio worked from home in March, surrounded by family helpers.

### Washington School Post Staff

Editor-in-chief:  
Jessica Sherman



Managing Editor:  
Akiv Shah



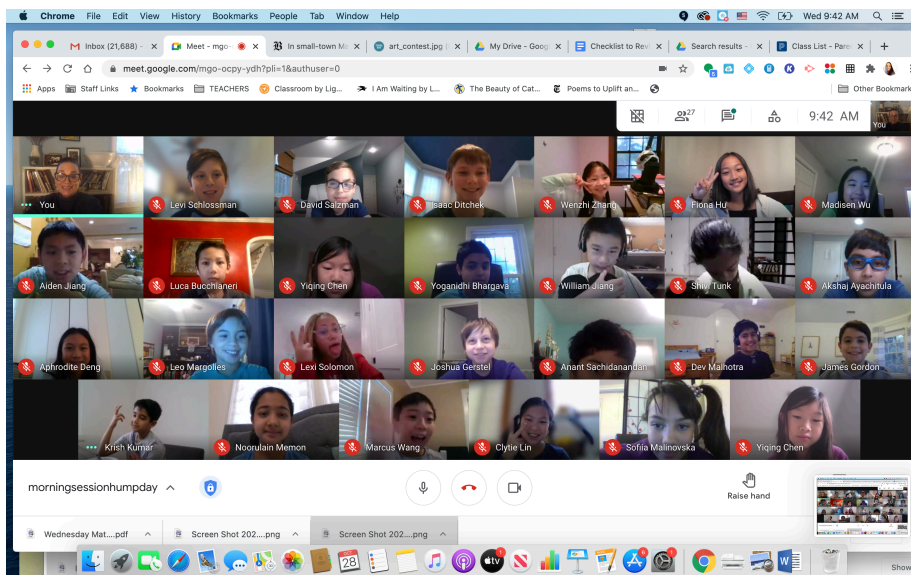
Literary Editor:  
Mehr Kothari

Reporters:

All the dedicated members of the Newspaper Club.

Faculty Advisors: Ms. K. Briber and Mrs. Jones  
Publisher: Mr. Mercurio and the School PTO





## The Ins and Outs of Remote Learning

By Mehr Kothari and Anika Bhavaraju

Ten years from now, people will look back and see how humankind overcame the dangerous pandemic, Covid-19. They will think about the hardships and changes that took place like virtual school, mandatory masks, social distancing, and the tragedy of the millions of coronavirus casualties. They will think about how people solved this global problem. They will be proud that we fixed this crisis. Unfortunately, ten years is far out in the future. What we can do now instead is take advantage of the small feats we have developed in the past. It is a good thing computers were invented so that virtual learning can take place. There are so many positive and negative aspects of virtual learning. Students and teachers at the Washington School are doing their best to cope with remote learning, and not just to survive but to thrive.

Washington School is the place where all the fifth graders from the town come together, ready to build new friendships. Though this year has been challenging and different, the Washington Wolves have been able to build those relationships through a computer. Students would rather be in school to meet and interact with their classmates and the teachers. Nevertheless, there are benefits to distance learning as well. Students can learn in the comfort of their own home or work area, and don't need to adapt to a new classroom.

At the beginning of the school year, students prepared an area at home meant for school. Each and every student created their own area which includes their Chromebook, their textbooks and notebooks, and some other materials that are mandatory for school to take place. Students' areas are exactly like the students themselves. If a student is generally very neat and prompt, then their desk will most likely be

*Continued on Page 3.*

## Fifth Grader Spreads Energy Awareness

By Rebecca Green

On October 7th, 2020, or Energy green. Schaefer, a science teacher Efficiency Day, Suvid Bordia, a in Pack W said, "I LOVED fifth-grader at Washington School Suvid's slides. They were took action to spread the word about informative and gave us easy being environmentally friendly. He ideas of what we could do to presented slides to Mrs. Schaefer's help. Climate change is real, and class, showing them ways to drop we feel and see the effects in the the energy bills and save fossil fuels. world today. We need to address "I was a bit scared at first, but climate issues." The experience throughout the presentation, my inspired many kids to become courage kept escalating," he said. more eco-conscious. Bordia has "People need to understand if we taken more action to promote the don't take measures immediately, welfare of the earth such as the world can actually wither." speaking at the Millburn

His classmates' enthusiasm Township meeting to ban plastic exhilarated him, and it was a great and giving out reusable bags to experience for him to start showing people going into Shoprite. He his work to other people. Classmate, has co-hosted Millburn Green Talia Brookhim, said, "One thing I Team meetings, conducting a learned from EE Day is that there scavenger hunt for students to are many ways to help the planet." find out if their house is energy Mrs. Schaefer's classroom is now effective. Bordia has also full of enthusiasm for going

*Continued on Page 5..*

## Students Stay Strong Virtually

By Jason Jun, Zach Abrahams, Logan Saperstein, and Theodore Reibaud

One student stands perfectly still like a tree. Another throws and catches her balled-up socks. Yet another jumps side to side. One might wonder what these students are doing. They are actually in Mr. Hogan's virtual gym class.

Everyone who goes to his gym meets comes out with a smile. Hogan has exercises to help improve strength and endurance. He introduces exercises such as planks to build the core muscle in the stomach area. This gym teacher always has a special exercise to develop skill and strength.

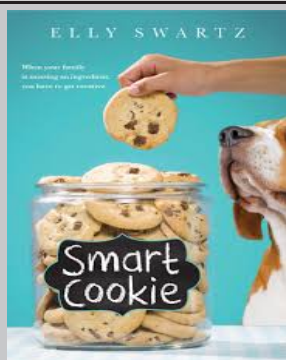
Hogan helps students to stay active, even while learning remotely.



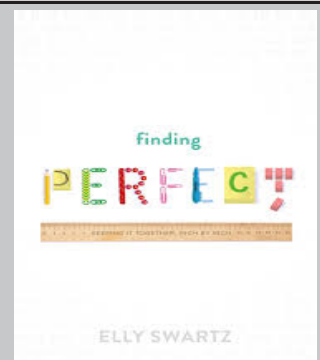
*Mr. Hogan keeps Washington Wolves fit and strong.*

Although the pandemic has inhibited students from exercising and playing group sports, and students are seated daily in front of a screen, Hogan has made Washington School students more comfortable guiding them through exercises and stretches that can help them

*Continued on Page 3.*



**Beginning on December 14:  
PTO SPONSORED AUTHOR RESIDENCY  
With  
ELLY SWARTZ  
All SCHOOL assembly  
followed by  
Virtual Classroom Visits**





## Students Stay Strong Virtually

*Continued from Page 2.*

feel better and stay healthy.

“Students, make sure you do your stretches whenever you have free time,” Hogan said. He also promised students that they would feel better during class time, and he has kept this promise. For example, Hogan once brought the school nurse, Mrs. O’Gorman, to one of his classes to teach students some yoga moves. Also, he has taught his students a lot of new exercises, such as the windshield wiper, an exercise that focuses on leg movements.

“I never really focused on fitness that much, but Hogan’s virtual class taught me how, and I got way better at it,” said current student Evan Elisha. “This is very different than normal gym and much harder to coach!” Elisha added.

Hogan’s class makes sure every student in the Washington School can safely learn exercise skills, healthy life habits, and sportsmanship—even when they are in front of the computer screen!

## Howl Hour Sparks Student Creativity



*Fifth grader James Gordon displays his "Howl Hour" creation.*

*By Gabrielle Saperstein and Ananya Mandrekar*

This has been a year like no other, with the school year starting out fully remote. The Washington School teachers and staff have been working tirelessly trying to bring an enriching and enjoyable

experience to all students. Howl Hour is one of the positive learning experiences for all fifth graders and the teachers! On September 29 during all remote school, Washington School gave students the opportunity to get off of their screens and exercise their creativity.

Washington School has called this time, “Howl Hour.” The school’s Weekly Newsletter explained: “Howl Hour is a time for students to exercise their creativity and independence with screen-free learning, and a time for teachers to collaborate and plan.” The students were given a choice board of sixteen screen free activities. These activities included, creating your own video game, sending a letter to a friend or long distance family member, composing a song, creating a vision board and so much more! The students could work on a new activity each week or work on the same activity over multiple weeks.

When asked how the school came up with the idea of Howl Hour, principal

Peter Mercurio said, “For a long time we wanted to give students an opportunity to participate in a “genius hour” offering them a variety of ways to showcase their skills.” Howl Hour was a valuable time for teachers as well, giving them some time to make their lesson plans, and giving them a well-deserved break! At the end of the month, the students have had the opportunity to showcase their creations through the video platform, Flipgrid enabling students to film and share their projects. Students have enjoyed seeing their peers’ work. Fifth grader Logan Saperstein, said, “I thought watching the videos was super enjoyable because I got to see the unique projects of my fellow students.” Fifth grader Jordyn Gulliford enjoyed Howl Hour: “I liked Howl Hour from the start because it gave me lots of options.”

Mercurio was also a fan of the student creations as they represent the students’ motivation, exploration, and learning in many areas. He has mentioned that the school will be hosting more Howl Hours in the coming months, so stay tuned!

## Spotlight on Mrs. Chibaro: Ruling the World Remotely

*By Krisana Manglani*

Mrs. Mary Chibaro is a favorite fifth grade teacher at The Washington School. She has been teaching for 27 years. Chibaro has taught various groups of students in her long, successful career: deaf children, special education, and students in grades three through six. Chibaro always keeps her students busy by constantly engaging them with a variety of assignments and lots of research. In Chibaro’s class, everyone must participate. She is funny, kind and caring, and she makes everyone feel welcome and important. One of her current students reported just how funny and unpredictable she is: “At unexpected times, Mrs. Chibaro plays the theme song from the movie, 'The Addams Family,' and has us sing along!”

Chibaro said that although the students of Washington School are getting the same curriculum during remote learning, she misses being with her students in person. Her favorite part of teaching is seeing how much improvement her students make over the course of the year. When asked what her favorite activity with her students is, she said, “I honestly don’t have one. I love all of them. I love reading to them and working on projects.”

Talented in many areas, Chibaro has interests and hobbies that extend beyond the classroom. An expert in



*Chibaro pictured in Boston, MA. Travel is one of the many hobbies she enjoys outside of the classroom.*

the kitchen, Chibaro enjoys sharing her family’s favorite recipes with her friends, and loves to bake for her friends and family. Fifth grade teacher Mrs. Sharon Jones said, “Mrs. Chibaro is not only a super teacher, she’s an excellent chef. She has fabulous recipes that have become family favorites at our dinner table.”

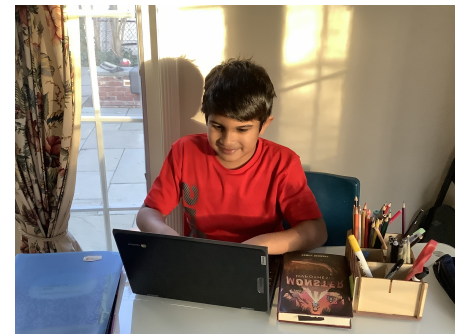
Chibaro is also always a great person to be around. She is loved dearly by her own two grown children, her students, and her fellow teachers. Fifth grade teacher Mrs. Katherine Briber said, “Mrs. Chibaro is a good listener, and has a great sense of humor.” Fifth grader Alisa Gupta who enjoys being a part of Chibaro’s class, shared, “Mrs. Chibaro always says, ‘I can rule the world in 5 minutes!’”

## The Ins and Outs of Remote Learning

*Continued from Page 2.*

tidy. These small environments are unique to each student's home. These special environments are important to the students and they will not have to get used to a brand-new environment. All of the teachers have been exceptional. They continue to patiently help their students through all their technical difficulties, yet create a harmonious learning environment to keep their students engaged. Extra kudos to Mrs. Haggerty, the technology teacher who is doing a lot of work behind the scenes to keep all the students’ applications running smoothly and to help them with equipment issues. She says, “The teachers and staff at Washington School are positively amazing with their abilities to try new things, conquer the technology-whack-a-mole that has become our norm, and continue to teach our students no matter the means.” Through all the hard work of teachers and staff members, there is nothing the students are missing out on in their education. This shows our immense resilience and how adaptable we are in a new environment.

Friendships are very important over screens. Students have to make new friends. Unfortunately, making new friends can be hard when their peers are not face to face. Fifth grade is the right time to especially mix with other students because all students are coming from different schools. It is very important to make new friends because students will



*Managing Editor Akiv Shah in his remote home classroom.*

need them in middle school. Having friends is the key to a good school year.

Imagine a student on her Chromebook who is watching her teacher show her how to multiply three digit numbers. All of a sudden, her screen freezes. She frantically tries to join the meet again so she reloads her page, but she can not get back onto the meet. This is something that may happen to students all over the school, every day. These events have made students problem solvers. They have adapted to solve these mishaps in various ways. They have done an amazing job, and will continue to do so until the global problem of Covid-19 is resolved.

Virtual learning has created a totally different environment for all people. It has had an immense impact on making people work together to foster students' education. Learning through technology with all its problems and issues has weighed down some students, but as always, the Washington Wolves continue to endure.



## Wolf Pack Recs: A Collection of What to View and Read in Your Free Time...

### Movie Review: "Wolf Children" Has Universal Message



By Chloe She

"Wolf Children" is a movie for all ages. The movie is about a young woman, Hanna who meets a werewolf. They fall in love and form a family together. Their children, Yuki and Ame are werewolves, too. Unfortunately, Hanna's husband dies, leaving her unsure about how to take care of her children. Hanna has to find out all about wolves while trying to figure out how to avoid any trouble with humans. Faced with many difficult decisions about how to raise her children, Hanna is left to make crucial life choices alone. The film is an anime, and the characters are simply drawn, perhaps to show how the artwork matches the theme of celebrating what is simple but truly important in life. The movie teaches viewers how to be flexible in times of change, how to embrace one's true identity, and how to keep moving forward no matter what. Viewers will see Hanna grow and develop as the movie progresses. Viewers can watch "Wolf Children" on FandangoNOW, or buy the DVD.

### Movie Review: "Mulan" Inspires Viewers of All Ages

By Shradha Vatsa

"It is my duty, Quia Mulan's duty, to save the kingdom," says Mulan. "Mulan" (Disney's non-animated version) is a favorite movie of many fifth graders. The heroine, Mulan, fights to defeat strong, evil enemies without even a sword. The message of this powerful film is to follow one's passion because Mulan is passionate about everything she does. For example, Mulan wants to fight for her family and kingdom in place of her father who is too old to fight. She risks her life so her father won't lose his.

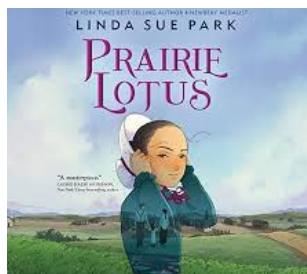
All students should watch "Mulan" to learn what a courageous Chinese girl's life is

like during a war, and how she sacrifices herself to train and fight in the war instead of her father.

Mulan keeps faith in the Phoenix, a divine Chinese presence that protects those who are strong and confident. Her mother however, wants her to see a matchmaker and get married instead of fighting.

Watch the movie to see if Mulan, fighting for the kingdom and her family, can defeat her evil enemies. Mulan's devotion and passion will inspire viewers to be honorable, loyal, and even heroic! Viewers may watch "Mulan" on Disney Plus, or purchase it on Amazon Prime Video.

### Global Read-Aloud: *Prairie Lotus* Touches Hearts



By Vivienne Qiao and Arabella Crofton

Dakota Territory, 1880. Dust fills the air as Hanna walks slowly down the dirt path to school. She thinks about the prairie turnip, timsina, the kind Indians gave her. Not everybody thinks they are kind. Hanna's mind fills with worries about entering school for the first time ever.

"Will they recognize me? Will they see me for who I really am?" She immediately thinks about what her mother would do. Mama tells her to be strong and stay calm when she is stressed. She misses the times with her mom, and she wants Mama to stay in her heart and forever in her life.

Although this school year is different in many ways, the Global Read Aloud continues to inspire Washington School readers and readers around the

globe. Students learn about different experiences through a shared book, and come to comprehend both the book and its characters and their experiences better. This year Washington School and schools around the world have chosen to read *Prairie Lotus* by Linda Sue Park.

The main character, Hanna, moves from California to LaForge in Dakota Territory during the 1800's. Half Chinese, Hanna experiences a lot of difficult situations which compound since her mother sadly passes away when she is seven. Moving to LaForge, Hanna desperately wants to find at least one friend. In telling Hanna's journey, Park writes of the white Americans who mistreat the prairie Indians and Hanna out of fear, mistrust and prejudice. Most of the white settlers don't approve of Hanna and do not want their children going to school with her. Although the book shines a light on hateful prejudice and the harmful mistreatment of minority groups, Park also gives readers a powerful

*Continued on Page 5.*

### Movie Review: New Version of "The Witches" is Hauntingly Good



By Karen Foster

Imagine a young, innocent boy on summer vacation playing quietly with his pets in a huge room as a large group of ladies enter. He hides behind a screen and takes a peek at what's happening. He sees bald headed women with long nails, sharp nasty teeth and square feet. Witches are everywhere. The doors are all locked and there is no way out!

In the new movie, "The Witches" based on the book by Roahl Dahl, Anne Hathaway plays the Grand High Witch (fun fact: Anne Hathaway grew up in Millburn and went to Wyoming School!). The Grand High Witch in the new movie looks a lot different than she does in the book and in the first

movie version. In the new movie the Grand High Witch has sharp teeth and a mouth that stretches all the way to her ears. She has feet with only one toe, and she has a long tongue -- very different from the first movie or book. In the book, the Grand High Witch has a bald head with holes in her face, nasty toes, purple eyes, and yellow teeth. The first movie is exactly the same as the book. The new movie is different and better because of the special effects. It's nonstop action which is more thrilling.

This movie is scary and fun and I recommend it.

I rate this movie 5 out of 5 stars.



Wyoming School alum, Anne Hathaway stars as the Grand High Witch in the new movie version of "The Witches."



## Fifth Grader Spreads Energy Awareness

Continued from Page 2.

participated in Taylor Park Millburn Climate Action poster walks.

Now Bordia plans to grow his idea, spreading his ambition farther and farther. He intends to speak and create a wider public perception on saving energy among larger crowds. In addition to energy efficiency, Bordia has an avid interest in animals, and he has donated to charities to save the lives of sea animals dying from pollution and plastic in bodies of water. Energized and ready to continue his work, Bordia said, "I am ready to take my passion to the next level."

## Former Washington School Post Reporter Goes National



By Suvid Bordia, Akiv Shah, and Rebecca Green

Last school year, Sophia Hou, a former *Washington School Post* reporter, had no idea what lay ahead. She was writing her last article. Soon, she would apply for a life-changing experience. Mrs. Jones, co-advisor of the school newspaper advised Hou to apply to become a *TIME For Kids* "kid" reporter. "I didn't think I would actually get chosen for it, but Mrs. Jones really encouraged me, so I gave it a try," Hou said.

*TIME For Kids*, an educational news magazine for students demanded two rounds in the application process. In the first round, Hou wrote about

the transition from in-person school to virtual learning. In the second round, she wrote about a hometown hero, a woman who supports a local animal shelter. One of Hou's first *TIME for Kids* articles is a debate piece about whether or not the voting age should be lowered to 16. Also, Hou will participate in a podcast, 'TIME for Kids Explains' which talks about the cover stories of the magazine and other current events. "My mentor, an editor at *TIME for Kids*, will typically give me the articles I am going to write. I can also pitch ideas, and I hope to cover some articles with an environmental aspect, like the Great Pacific Garbage Patch," she said.

Continued on Page 6.

## Global Read-Aloud: *Prairie Lotus*

Continued from Page 4.

message: that the strength of the bond between a mother and a daughter cannot be broken. Even death cannot diminish or weaken that powerful bond, as Hanna continues to follow her mother's ways and advice.

Washington School's classes partnered with buddy classes around the country and the globe. Many communicated using the Flipgrid platform to share ideas, questions and opinions.

In Mrs. Murphy's class, students listened to the audible version of the book every morning at 9 AM. Students jotted notes or drew as they noticed special moments in the book. Although other classes may have had different times and routines for reading and experiencing the book, all classes read *Prairie Lotus*. Many students also participated in the global *Prairie Lotus* Kahoots, a fun interactive activity testing students' knowledge and memory of the text as the chapters progressed. When asked about the Global Read-Aloud, Mrs. Murphy

said, "I love the Global Read Aloud. The goal of it is that one book can connect to the whole world. I think it's important for kids to make global connections, and we do that by reading the same book."

When asked what Murphy thought about *Prairie Lotus*, she said, "I love the book. It teaches kids about diversity and trying to live in a peaceful world. It teaches children to never exclude anybody because of how they look." Park has shown readers her writing talent and her unique way to entertain and educate the millions of readers around the world.

*Prairie* life, Mama, sewing and so much more, this book has made its way into the hearts of Washington School students and readers around the globe.

Author Linda Sue Park delivers powerful themes in *Prairie Lotus* inspiring Washington School students to think deeply and connect with readers all over the world.



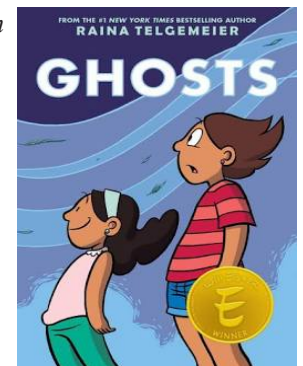
## Just the Right Book

By Talia Brookhim

When readers finish a book, finding the next great read can be challenging. Many fifth graders may take a long time to find just the right book. For students looking for a book recommendation, search no more! A book many readers really will enjoy is *Ghosts* by Raina Telgemeier, a *New York Times* bestselling author of the books *Smile*, *Sister*, *Guts* and *Drama*.

The genre of this graphic novel is fantasy. *Ghosts* is about a girl named Catrina also known as "Cat" and her sister Maya. Cat and her family are moving to Northern California because her little sister, Maya is sick. Cat isn't happy about moving, but moving will benefit her sister so she won't be sick anymore.

As Maya and Cat explore their new home, one of their neighbors lets them in on a little secret: there are ghosts in Bahña de la Luna. Maya is determined to meet one, but Cat wants nothing to do with them.



Because the festival "Day of the Dead" or "Dia de los Muertos" is around the corner, there is a possibility that they might see ghosts, so Cat's goal is to figure out how to set aside her fears for her sister's sake and her own. One of the book's themes is to try to be brave, and to never be scared to try something new. Once Cat tries to warm up to the ghosts, she has a big realization!

When asked how she would rate *Ghosts*, fifth grader Rebecca Green said "I would rate this book a 7/10 because of the message of the book. This book talks about sisterhood." Since Green has sisters, she can relate to the bond between Cat and Maya. This book is truly amazing, "just the right book!"



## Sophia Hou Goes National

*Continued from Page 5.*



*Hou proudly shows her TIME for Kids press pass*

Before Hou wrote for the *Washington School Post*, she had never written any newspaper articles. “I really love to write, so I joined the newspaper club,” she said, “Mrs. Jones and Mrs. Briber taught me everything I know about reporting, from the different types of leads to the structure of a newspaper article.” She first started reporting at Washington School last year where she had fun writing articles for the newspaper. Her speciality became teacher profiles. Over the summer when Hou was completing her application, she never expected she would become a reporter for TFK. Mr. Mercurio was proud of Hou when he heard the news: “Sophia’s initiative really demonstrates the leadership skills we teach here at Washington School.”

Appearing at a recent Millburn Board of Education meeting, Hou said “I never thought I would get in.” Hou’s advice for other young reporters is “to be curious and ask the questions you would want to know the answers to.” When asked how she felt when she was accepted, she said “I was really excited and I couldn’t wait to start writing!” Hou has a great passion for writing, and this is just the beginning!

**I WONDER HOW THE RESULTS OF THE ELECTION WILL CHANGE THE PATH OF OUR COUNTRY.**

—SOPHIA HOU, 13, SHORT HILLS, NJ



*Hou appeared in a special TIME for Kids election issue.*

## Washington School Continues to Implement the “Leader in Me” Program

*By Arianna O’Connor, Suvid Bordia and Connor Qiao*

President Ronald Reagan once said, “The greatest leader is not necessarily the one who does the greatest things. He is the one that gets the people to do the greatest things.” A leader motivates others to accomplish their goals which is one key reason why Washington School became a “Leader in Me” school. Fifth grader Tara Radoicic, shared her thoughts on the leadership curriculum: “I think it’s great to expand your knowledge, and you get to learn life long lessons from reading the workbook.” Washington School has implemented the

program since the school began in 2017. This year in the midst of the worldwide pandemic, the school had to rethink how to deliver the lessons. Teachers collaborated to create Leadership Google Slides for remote learning. School guidance counselor, Bonnie Loew spearheaded the project: “My hope is that through Leader In Me, our students will learn some valuable tools to be successful leaders in their own lives and in working with others. Leader In Me teaches us to be leaders in our own lives by being proactive, beginning with the end in mind and putting first things first. In other words, when we take responsibility for ourselves and our choices and set goals, we feel successful. We also learn the essential tools necessary to work well with others. Using a win-win mindset, and seeking to understand and then be understood allows us to form successful partnerships or synergize with others.”

The leadership syllabus offers valuable

*Continued on Page 7.*



## How to with Deal with Day-to-Day Tech Issues

*By Naman Mehta, Josh Gerstel, and Jason Jun*

When the Covid-19 pandemic hit, most schools switched from teaching in person to virtual. Teaching virtually can be difficult for both teachers and students. Posting and grading assignments virtually can have flaws, and meeting with teachers online can be challenging. On top of all that, there are a lot of technology issues that can slow learning down even further. Here is a list of shortcuts, suggestions, common technology issues, and ways to fix them:

### **Technology Shortcuts:**

- \*To take a screenshot, do ctrl + II.
- \*To restart the computer, do ctrl + shift + q + q.
- \*To ctrl + z to undo the most recent thing typed. (Note: This will only work on Docs)
- \*To start caps lock, do alt + search (magnifying glass).
- \*To select all, do ctrl + a instead of highlighting the whole thing.
- \*To change between the English and international alphabet, do ctrl + space.
- \*To open up the most recent tab deleted, do ctrl + shift + t.
- \*To clear cache, do ctrl + h. Then click on “Clear browsing data”.



*Tireless tech expert Haggerty is always available to help.*

- \*When on a very long pdf or doc and can not find a word, do ctrl + f and type in the word.
- \*To view word count on Google Docs, do ctrl + shift + c. (Note: This will only work on Docs)
- \*To add a link as a bookmark, click the ☆ next to the URL bar (or do ctrl + d). Then click “Bookmark Bar” on the drop-down menu. If the star turns blue and the link is below the URL bar, it is bookmarked.

### **Technology Issues:**

For most issues on Google Meet such as trouble hearing, camera does not turn on, or lag, leave and rejoin the Google Meet. If that doesn’t work, power the chromebook down for

*Continued on Page 7.*



## Leader in Me Program

*Continued from Page 6.*

advice to young learners. The Leader In Me workbook shows students the seven ideal leadership qualities. These traits are to “Be Proactive, Begin with the End in Mind, Put First Things First, Think Win-Win, Seek First to Understand, Then to be Understood, Synergize, and to Sharpen the Saw.”

The Leader in Me program has positively inspired so many students, current and former, to become better leaders and people. It has taught many life lessons, including the seven habits for teamwork. Many teachers on the Leadership Committee have worked hard to successfully implement this program into the curriculum.

## New Teacher on the Washington Block

*By Ananya Mandrekar and Naman Mehta*

Every morning, she greets her students with a warm smile and a calm voice. Kind, firm, creative, and enthusiastic, she tells the most amazing stories and loves teaching her class. This multitasking new teacher is Miss Cassels, Pack S's homeroom and science teacher.

Before coming to Washington School, Cassels taught in both Millburn Middle School and High School for over two decades. When asked why she was drawn to teaching, Cassels said, “Kids are, by far, the very best teachers.” She truly believes that she teaches so that she can learn, and is thankful for everything she has learned from



all her students. Cassels is a believer in being a life-long learner. Currently she is studying for a PhD in Literature. She attends school every night after her Washington School day is done.

Cassels loves traveling to different countries to study and experience unique cultures. Some of her adventures have included visiting Mount Everest and Japan. One of her favorite travel memories is her trip to Misawa, Japan where she travelled

through most of Japan, and loved how gentle, welcoming and respectful all the people were. She has collectables from all the places she's visited, including a Tibetan Singing Bowl and a Japanese Daruma Doll. Every morning before leaving home, Miss Cassels hits her singing bowl to make a beautiful sound. She says that it brightens up her day. Her next must-see place is India. “My travel plans are on hold until the world heals,” said Miss Cassels. “Once that happens, I'll be on the first flight! Miss Cassels loves to try new foods from all different cuisines. Her favorite cuisine by far is Indian. She is also predominantly vegetarian, and some of her favorite foods include vegetable pakoras, samosas, *Continued on Page 8.*

## Transitions: Learning to be Independent

*By Chloe She*

Making the transition from 4th grade to 5th grade was never a big step until a few years ago, when the district decided to create a brand new school dedicated solely to educating fifth graders. Samantha Wong, now a 7th grader in Millburn Middle School said that as a 4th grader, she felt sad to leave her elementary school, Deerfield, since she had spent most of her life there. Samantha was also nervous, because she was afraid that she wouldn't make any friends. However, she felt more mature by going to Washington School. Even though many students may be nervous about starting a brand new school in fifth grade, current 7th grader Morgan Tobin has reassuring words: “While the school is built to help students with their transition to middle school, it's pretty much the same with elementary school,” she said. Fifth grade teacher Mrs. Jones also explained, “The whole school is dedicated to making the fifth grade experience the best it



*This year, Washington Wolves have become resilient and independent, ready to take on any challenges.*

can be.” After Washington School was created, the fourth graders are now the oldest grade in their elementary schools. As a result, they take on more responsibilities. In turn, the fifth graders get to meet new students from all over Millburn! The fifth graders also get to enjoy more responsibilities such as participating in school clubs and taking on more classroom jobs and responsibilities. This year, however, transitions have been even more challenging. Due to COVID-19, everyone has had to begin the school year virtually, including the fifth graders. While there can be a lot of problems with virtual learning, from student interaction to technology glitches, both the current hybrid and remote models can teach students some valuable

*Continued on Page 11.*

## How to Deal with Day-to-Day Tech Issues

*Continued from Page 6.*

about 30 seconds then log back in.

In the meet, sometimes, students' cameras go black. To fix the problem, students can leave and rejoin or turn the camera off and back on.

If a student's WIFI is disconnected, students can go to the WIFI section which is at the right bottom. Then, students would be able to find their WIFI and put students' WIFI password.

### Technology Suggestions:

When on a website, look at the button on the left of the URL bar. If there is a , then the website is safe. If it shows a circle with an i in it, then the website is not secure and it is best to leave that site.

Don't use the “Blur background” or “Change background” feature in Google Meets because it slows down not only the blurred screen but other computers too.

Try to minimize apps or extensions to only things needed. Too many downloads can cause lags and other computer issues.

Try to keep less than 7 tabs open at a time when on a chromebook.



If there are any other higher-level technology problems that can not be fixed by following the suggestions, contact The Washington School Technology Facilitator, Mrs. Haggerty at [danielle.haggerty@millburn.org](mailto:danielle.haggerty@millburn.org)

Encountering technology issues with distance learning can be frustrating, but knowing ways to fix them can make learning easier and more fun!



*Remember to shut down your chromebook every night before bed!*



## New Teacher on the Washington Block

*Continued from Page 7.*

chutneys and mango lassi. She loves cilantro in all her food.

Students agree she's a great teacher. Fifth grader Abigail Chung said, "Miss Cassels is relatable. In class, if there is a story she can tell that might help us understand what we're being asked, then she'll tell us a story." The one book she would recommend to all her students is *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry.

Welcome to Washington School, Miss Cassels!

*The Little Prince is a classic book with thought-provoking themes for students and adults.*



## Zooming in on the 2020 Holidays

*By Jessica Sherman, Rhea Tyagi, and Jordyn Rielle Gulliford*



*Fifth grader Yoganidhi Bhargava celebrated Diwali with family members at home.*

### What do Washington School students celebrate?

Washington School students come from many different backgrounds and cultures, and celebrate so many different holidays. The most recently celebrated holidays were Thanksgiving and Diwali. The

activities they used to enjoy. When school and restaurants are out of the picture for many, how can people even think about holidays? Holidays are a good way to connect and spend time with family, Zoom, Google Meet and FaceTime are some of the many alternate solutions families consider. Some Washington School students and teachers are thinking of creative ways to celebrate. So, what do they do?

### Check the Mail!

For many religions, Christmas, Chanukah and Diwali are some look at the upcoming holidays for important holidays. Out of them 2020, and how folks plan on however, only Diwali has happened celebrating during the pandemic.

### Charge the Computer!

Because of the pandemic, People still can receive gifts families have been urged to stop though. Just like before, relatives many of the normal day-to-day

*Continued on Page 9.*

## Students Log Off to Stay Refreshed

*By Jessica Sherman, Jordyn Rielle Gulliford, and Meera Saha Choudhury*

If students were online for the whole school day, none of them would concentrate, and might all have major headaches. To prevent aches, teachers have made breaks for all the students. These include some short ones throughout the day, in between subjects, and one for lunch and recess. There were also half day Howl Hours designed to get students offline, and to spark their creativity. These breaks help to keep the students engaged, and to have them working to the best of their ability. In schools all over the world, students have had to go virtual because of the pandemic. Instead of being in the classroom with their teachers and classmates, students have to be on a screen for more than six hours every weekday which is why Washington School has decided to make a difference.

### Screen breaks: What do students do during their short breaks?

Many students do different activities during breaks. For instance, student Gabrielle

Saperstein said, "During breaks I always try to get outside. Sometimes I ride my bike to feel the fresh air. Other times I draw or read a book." Small breaks between subjects are helpful so students can stretch and get some fresh air throughout the school day. School nurse, Mrs. O'Gorman, encourages students to make the most out of their screen breaks. Students need these breaks to stay happy and healthy.

### Lunch and Recess:

During lunch breaks, some do more than just eat lunch. Students can go outside, enjoy indoor games or maybe even go to a friend's house for a little while. Student Audrey Welner likes to draw and is currently drawing Rapunzel. Welner said, "At lunch I like to use my drawing app, and also eat cheetos and chocolate." Lunch breaks help students refresh their minds for the afternoon activities. It is very important to have these breaks because it makes the long day much easier. These highly needed breaks are a great way to get students focused and ready for an awesome Washington School day.

## From America to Australia: Distance Learning Around the Globe

*By Rhea Tyagi*

"Technology is just a tool. In terms of getting the kids to work together and motivating them, the teacher is the most important," said Bill Gates. Little did the tech giant know when he made that statement that technology would be the very tool bringing millions of teachers into the homes of their students in every corner of the coronavirus ravaged globe. The coronavirus pandemic has compelled many students to become concerned about their current education, but several countries will not let the virus stop them from continuing education as they know it.

Restrictions due to Covid-19 have pushed approximately 91% of the world's enrolled students into distance learning. This has brought to focus the extremely uneven distribution and availability of technology. 183 countries have some Internet services but 71 of those countries have less than 50% of their population with internet access. TV and radio access varies almost as much as Internet access in some countries. Given the divide



between resources in different communities, schools use different strategies to tackle distance learning.

The five most common ways of virtual learning are learning from public digital websites and private digital websites. Other common methods include TV learning programs, Radio learning stations, and take home packages. These varying ways of online learning all work differently.

Government based learning works by the government laying down a curriculum for schools. Private digital websites are privately run so the teacher is allowed more flexibility to develop content. TV programmes work by the teacher assigning students to watch an educational

*Continued on Page 9.*



## Zooming in on the 2020 Holidays



*Continued from Page 8.*

can still thankfully send gifts through mail or give online gifts, although experts warn people should not gather inside.

### **Gobble Up All the Turkey!**

The flaky apple pie is on a tray next to the colorfully decorated harvest basket, filling the living room with the sweet scent of cinnamon. Next to all the Thanksgiving food and decorations, little squares appear on a screen from all over the country and around the globe -- smiling faces ... family. Teacher Mrs. Monaco said, "I'm hosting a Thanksgiving meet with my family and Mr. Monaco's family." What other holidays are there?

### **Spin the Dreidel!**

Chanukah is an important holiday. Although more people in the country may celebrate Christmas, Chanukah is celebrated in many Washington School homes. Most traditions will remain the same, lighting the menorah, and getting the presents, but some celebrations may change. Inviting family to light the candles or to play dreidel will not be easy. Although Chanukah can not be celebrated with extended families in person, the scent of latkes should still waft through the homes of Washington School families.

### **Hang the Stockings!**

The strong scent of gingerbread cookies fills the air with a cozy feeling. Children's eyes find their way to the fireplace where the stockings are about to be filled. Right next to the fireplace, the Christmas tree stands, just waiting for gifts.

### **Light the Candles!**

The colorful diya or candle is lighting up the whole house. The house is spotlessly clean but there's a cozy feeling at the same time. Everyone eyes the samosa, a crispy, savory appetizer, as mouths start to water. Student Diya Bathula who celebrated Diwali said, "My family this year celebrated Diwali by inviting a few friends and enjoying fireworks."



Candles glow in family celebrations for Diwali, Chanukah and Christmas.

## Google Meet Bridges the Distance

*By Sarah Jia*

After the entire world was forced into isolation, many schools turned to online classes. The Washington School was and is no exception. One of the stars of virtual learning during the pandemic is Google Meet, a video communication service that allows teachers and students to interact virtually. Google Meet has many features to assist with learning, such as the feature that allows both teachers and students to present their screens to everyone in the meet.

However, Google Meet has some glitches that can disturb the flow of the class. A recent issue is that student camera screens abruptly turn black. Nobody can see the student until the problem is resolved. Fifth grader Lilian Schwartz said, "This camera glitch has been happening a lot to some of my classmates and me. I'm not sure what is causing it, though it sometimes happens when I go to a different tab while on a meeting." One solution is the student should turn their camera off and back on to restore the image. Despite the occasional problems, Google Meet has many helpful

*Fifth Grader, Josh Gerstel shares his guitar with class members on Google Meet.*



features. If someone cannot hear anything, with the touch of a button, students can simply turn on captions which allows participants to read what everyone is discussing. However, sometimes captions misinterprets words so the best solution is to log off and on again. In early fall, Google added a new feature allowing teachers to split students into small groups, or breakout rooms. Small review groups and discussion groups are now possible. Pinning users to the screen is another useful feature especially during instruction time so students can see enlarged what a teacher is presenting.

Thanks to Google Meet and its updates, Washington School and schools across the globe can offer students a variety of learning opportunities and social communication experiences.

## Distance Learning Around the Globe

*Continued from Page 8.*

show on the TV. Radio programs are similar to TV learning programs except in radio learning it is learned by audio whereas the TV is visual. In take-home packets all students have a (weekly, daily, monthly) packet to complete at home. There are so many ways of distance learning.

These different options vary depending on the country's education system, and whether the school was already set up to be virtual before the virus. The infrastructure of the specific school system or state can drastically affect the entire country if the online learning was handled poorly.

In several rural or impoverished communities in the US, students do not have Internet access. In North Carolina with a large rural population, "100,000 K-12 students were unable to connect to online services in August," according to the North Carolina Department of Information Technology. Teachers spent hours making flash drives with pre-recorded videos to teach lessons for students without the Internet. "I was teaching online in an empty classroom from 7:30-3:00 P.M., after which I spent several more hours working on flash drives before grading assignments," said Sharon Hunt who was

exhausted by the day's end. Some places in India also suffer from no Internet access.

There are different learning strategies around the world. New Dehli Mysha Sharma, a private school 7th grade student learns by using private apps. "Both Sharma's school and Washington School have really types of online learning," said Sharma through a FaceTime interview. Even though in Mysha's private school they are learning from private apps without government guidelines, some private schools have government guidelines. For example, in Bahrain's private school Ibn' Kaldon they learn based on government guidelines. "Just because it's a private school doesn't mean it is not government based," said student Maria from the private school. David Kojnoc is a student in Budapest. He learned from a take-home packet he received by mail, completing it weekly and mailing it back to be graded. "We had to study from 9 AM-1 PM, and complete the packets for all the subjects," Kojnoc said through a call. "The learning kept getting more advanced," Kojnoc said, "in

*Continued on Page 12.*



# The Write Stuff: A Collection of Creative Writing from our Washington Wolves

Literary Editor: Mehr Kothari



## Autumn Days

By Mahan Malhotra

The leaves become a welcoming brown,  
Squirrels hunt acorns all around.  
Animals say goodbye to their homes,  
For now, to someplace new they'll roam  
Leaves departing their trees do know  
In spring, again they'll once more grow.  
Preparing, raking and baking pies,  
Some people may let out heavy sighs  
That barren winter's coming soon.  
For now we enjoy Autumn's whispering  
tune.

## Where I'm From

(Inspired by George Ella)

By Aphrodite Deng

I'm from confidence and perseverance  
Performing the nutcracker mice as an experience  
Playing sports in the hot summer sun  
Being a pianist is lots of fun  
Swimming as a mermaid attracts the sea  
Skiing in the mountain Oh look there's a bee  
Winter snow days  
And waterpark playdates  
Happiness is my always

I'm from modeling for Vogue magazine  
And dressing fancy like a Queen  
Early mornings of Christmas Day  
And unwrapping presents on the way  
I'm the champion of the tournament  
And as a treat, I eat a mint

I am from delicious tasting food  
And cold ice cream sprinkles glued  
My grandma's fresh out of the oven cookies  
And birthday cakes my mom baked as goodies  
I'm from eating juicy well-done steak  
And picking apples by the lake  
The hot balloon goes up and the purple sunshine  
goes down



## Huskies

By Vivienne Qiao

Dogs are nice and sweet  
They run like the breeze in the wind and  
like the rushing waves from the ocean  
They love to play and be happy every day  
If I had one, I would hug it every single day



## The Hammock

By Lillian Hark

Swinging. Slowly. Swaying  
The hammock goes side to side.  
Scared. Surprised. Speechless  
Falling on the ground.

You get back up again  
but slowly start all over  
You're fine but don't know it  
You exaggerate but don't know it

You get back on  
And you're secured tightly  
Not knowing if scared or enthused  
You become happy  
And have a great time



## Deadly Pool

By Rishi Saraf

I splashed around in the hot tub of my cousin's pool. I was about 4 years old, and I was having a blast. I splashed my cousin with hot water and laughed at his surprised expression.

My cousin laughed too and pushed me into the pool, but even though I didn't know how to swim, my floaties pulled me right back up to the surface. I sat on the edge of the pool, and laughed again.

My cousin pushed me off the edge again. It didn't matter. My floaties would pull me back up. But when I counted on them most, they failed to bring me to the top of the pool. I flailed around in the freezing water, unable to breathe. I wanted to hold as much of my breath as possible, but the fall came by surprise and I almost sucked a gallon full of water into my lungs. I tried to scream but all that came out was bubbles.

I thought to myself, *I can't end like this! I'm only 4!* I struggled and tried my best not to think of anything besides not breathing. But my wandering mind got the better of me. I imagined my lifeless body slowly floating down to the bottom of the pool. (I was a very dark child with very dark thoughts.) I imagined my grave and people standing around it with solemn expressions. I prayed that I still had a chance of survival.

I looked up at my cousin who looked down at me. He was smiling, probably thinking we were just playing. Then he looked into my panic-filled eyes and his smile turned round. He said something I couldn't hear. He finally realized that I was not having fun. He reached for my hand and pulled me onto sweet, almost-dry land. I coughed and vomited water. I was oblivious to everyone yelling around me. I lay down on a hard rock. At last I could finally breathe...

## Colors

By Suhaas Penubarthi

Black, A color of sadness and sorrow  
White, A color of purity and innocence  
Blue, A color of inspiration and wisdom  
Green, A color of growth and renewal  
Yellow, A color of positivity and optimism  
Purple, A color of peace and devotion  
Red, A color of war and love  
Orange, A color of enthusiasm and fascination  
Pink, A color of affection and harmony



## A Walk with Nature

By Richa Kurup

The leaves fell dancing to the ground, swift but soft. Fall's cold air brushed against my face, making me shiver at the exposure. Fighting the frosty wind, I walked down the street, holding my dog's leash in my glove-covered hand.

"Thump, thump" went my shoes as I glided down the stubby road. I shivered, though layered up with jackets and sweaters. I craved layers and layers of fur like my dog, Cooper. But I would rather be home, snuggled in a fluffy and cozy blanket on my bed, reading a book or on the couch watching television instead of going on a stroll down this street.

My dog by my side and my mom and sister ahead, I trudged through the dark, airy night. With all the energy I could muster I caught up to their speedy legs. I would have been by their side, walking through this twilight-lit sky but, Cooper slowed my pace, relieving himself and sniffing all the scents around us. My sister pointed out that right behind us, was a magnificent sunset. It looked as if it were sitting on top of the tall trees.

"Whoa!" I froze, gazing at the beauty of the sunset. I felt a wave of joy flow through me as I stood and watched in awe....



## Coronavirus

By Kiara Chopra

Coronavirus is opening the eye  
Surprising every cry  
Doctors treating more people  
Coronavirus laughing at even more people  
Laughing, crying, I am sick of that  
So I went home and sat  
I keep safe at home  
While my sister combs  
School is not open  
Neither is my dad's office open  
I am sad  
I am mad  
Instead of going to school we have work at home  
We meet on zoom  
Talking about everything we do  
Talking about advantages on zoom  
Talking of no advantages too  
Speaking with everyone  
Spending time with family  
Feels so good  
Looking at every friend in my class  
With a smile on my face  
Talking to my friends  
Staying locked at home  
Keeping everything I love  
Coronavirus is very mean  
At least it keeps family together!  
Stay safe  
And be aware of coronavirus!



## Transitions

*Continued from Page 7.*

lessons and skills. For example, there is a lot of trial and error with technology. Students have had to learn to be patient and flexible. They have learned to work problems out on their own with this new way of learning. Learning virtually also teaches students to have more self-motivation and to become more independent. In a way, remote learning has taught people to persevere and to solve problems under challenging circumstances. Washington School students will be more than ready for whatever challenges await them in Middle School.



*Washington Wolves will be ready for the rigors of Middle School.*

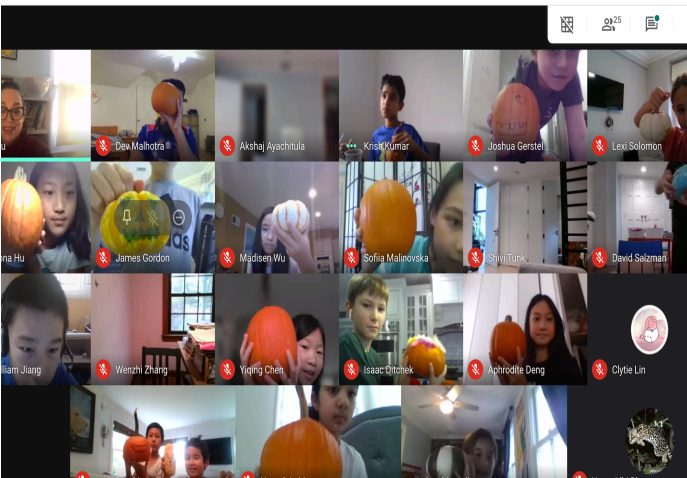
## Distance Learning Around the Globe

*Continued from Page 9.*

the beginning it was really boring, but then after a month they started to give more work in subjects, and I actually learned things!”

The majority of the schools interviewed had the same learning as Millburn. “Our school in Brazil, Mobile School in Sao Paulo, had learning from 8 AM-4:30 PM on the iPad or computer, it was public or government based,” said Luiza Ramos. It was the same in Melbourne, Australia. “The learning is the same as yours,” said student Eliza Strike, speaking for friends in Melbourne.

With all these ways of distance learning, there is one important similarity: keeping students safe. Creativity prevails in the bleakest year of our generation. Never lose hope because we are adaptive species and we have adjusted, time and time again. Here in Millburn, our teachers provided take home learning packets in the beginning of quarantine, but gradually the learning evolved into what we have today. In schools all over the world, successful education is living proof that people, no matter how far apart, can work together even now. Hybrid or remote, students are happy and confident and continue to learn.



*Pack E Students decorate pumpkins, sharing their creativity across miles with remote learning.*

## Literary Editor Takes First Prize in Red Ribbon Poster Contest



*By Akiv Shah*

From October, 26 through October 30 students participated in a variety of drug awareness activities to honor Red Ribbon Week, including a poster contest. Guidance counselor, Bonnie Loew coordinated the school wide activities. First place winner was *The Washington School Post* Literary Editor, Mehr Kothari who said, “I thought about how people all over the world should all be happy, brave and drug free so I made my drawing centered on kids around the world all holding hands.” Saumya Kataria came in second place and Yoganidhi Bhargava came in third place. When Kothari discovered she had won first place, she was thrilled. The winning posters are on display at [www.mmacnj.org/red-ribbon](http://www.mmacnj.org/red-ribbon). Congratulations to all students who participated.

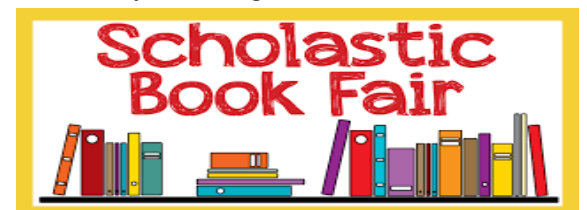
## Annual Book Fair Goes Virtual

*By Akiv Shah*

At the beginning of the 2020 - 2021 school year the Washington School held a virtual book fair. The fundraiser took place from September 15th through September 28th. Even though the book fair could not be in person, The Washington School PTO found a way to make it fun. For example, there was a virtual reality activity where students could see what the book fair would have looked like. The PTO used the Scholastic Books website to share the activity.

Because the book fair was virtual, the students had a wider variety of books to select. There were over 6,000 books from many different authors! When asked what would make the book fair better, Samara Tichauer said, “Give people a better description of the books. It was very hard to know which book was the right one for you.” The book fair encouraged students to read more during Covid-19 when other sports and activities were closed. Fifth grade teacher, Ms. Gottfried said, “The Virtual Book Fair helped students look at books from a different lens because the students could spend more time looking for books.”

Tichauer said “I’ve seen a lot of book fairs, but this one I will definitely never forget.”



## Blended by Sharon Draper Echoes Black Lives Matter Movement

*By Daisy Bredlau*

On June 8, 2020 over a thousand Millburn residents participated in a Black Lives Matter March from Millburn High School to Taylor Park. This protest was just one of many that took place in the United States this spring. They started after a white police officer killed George Floyd on May 25th.

The incident was not unique. In fact, the Black Lives Matter movement started in 2013 in reaction to other situations like this. The BLM movement is focused on raising awareness that racism still exists and that people and other minorities in the US are still treated unfairly.

The book *Blended* by Sharon Draper could be called a Black Lives Matter book because Draper helps kids understand that racism still exists today, and shows readers some of the forms it takes today.



*Students, teachers and residents gathered at the high school for the Black Lives Matter June rally.*

SHARON M. DRAPER  
New York Times bestselling author of *Out of My Mind*



*Blended is highly recommended for all students who participated in the Black Lives Matter March and for those who wish they had.*

The main character of *Blended* is Izzy, an 11 year old biracial girl. She is a good pianist, and she also likes to make slime. It is easy to identify with Izzy because she is like a lot of 11 year olds. Izzy has some challenges in the book to do with difficult family changes, challenges any sixth grader could experience. But, because Izzy is biracial, she also faces racism, and as she gets older she notices it more. Izzy experiences racism and microaggressions at school, at the mall and even driving around her town. Reading about Izzy's experiences helps the reader understand that for African Americans, simple acts like going to the mall, or talking to a friend can become difficult and hurtful, and even physically dangerous.



## Friday Fun Prevails

By Arabella Crofton

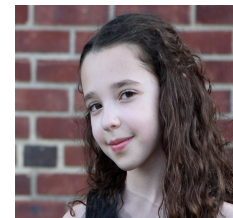
Even though these times are rough, the Washington School continues to give students Fun Fridays where everyone can have a break from work and think positively about the weekend to come. From Bingo games to On-and-off camera games, the teachers and staff have done an incredible job making the students look forward to these interactive Google Meet games, and students are eager to see what games and fun is in store for them every Friday. Friday Fun is also called a “Pack Meet.” since some packs come all together on Friday to play games and have fun. Washington School is lucky to have such creative staff and teachers to make the end of the week worthwhile.

## From the Editor's Desk...

If writing is something you like to do, just like me, there are a lot of ways writing can keep you happy during the pandemic. I love coming up with ideas and editing them all.



Since my favorite school subject is Writing, I also very much enjoy being a part of the Washington School newspaper. I am so grateful to be the editor-in-chief because it gives me an opportunity to write more articles and stories. Writing is not only my favorite activity, but also something that really can keep up my happiness. It is really helpful for me, and a lot of fun when I just start writing. I am really happy that I have the opportunity to write and jot down all my thoughts. Writing gives us all ways to express our feelings and stay calm. We can write in journals to remember our past, or jot some important subjects down on a piece of paper. For example, we can write about all the things that have happened to us and our family during the pandemic. Or, we can jot down our opinions, thoughts and feelings - good or bad. If anyone becomes stuck or suffers from “writer’s block,” find a penpal! Check out International Pen Friends or Global Penfriends to find a penpal and start corresponding. Writing can help us all stay connected with family and friends and make us feel happier. I usually like to text my friends or family. But reaching out by email or writing letters is also something to do to keep in touch. Just keep writing...and keep reading *The Washington School Post*.



Jessica Sherman, the new editor-in-chief of *The Washington School Post* from Mrs. Monaco's class urges fellow classmates to keep writing!

### Finding a Penpal:

\*Visit PenPal Schools to connect your class with another class from around the globe.

\*ePals can connect a whole class with another class anywhere in the world.

\*PenPal World connects individual students with an international student. Parents can help with the search to find the perfect penpal.

Happy holidays,

Editor-in-chief

*The Washington School Post*

## Washington School Welcomes Newcomers

By Celina Chen, Krisana Manglani, and Samara Tichauer

Many students are new here in Millburn including Sahasra Chalasani. She shared her thoughts about living here: “My favorite part of the town is the South Mountain Reservoir. Before I moved here I lived in Jersey City, Hudson County. It is different here because I don’t have to touch elevator buttons, and everybody is in masks.” When asked about school she said, “My favorite part of Washington School is that it is so much bigger than my old school. Also, our class isn’t overloaded with too much homework!”

Lots of newcomers haven’t seen a lot of the places here yet. Welcoming new students can ensure everyone has a successful and fun filled year. After all, new students have new opportunities. Although Chalasani commented on how large Washington School is which can sometimes be overwhelming, many students like

Chalasani think the size is a great feature of Washington School. Many new fifth graders haven’t actually been inside the school! Even though this is an unusual school year, Washington School teachers and students are helping new students catch up and feel right at home.

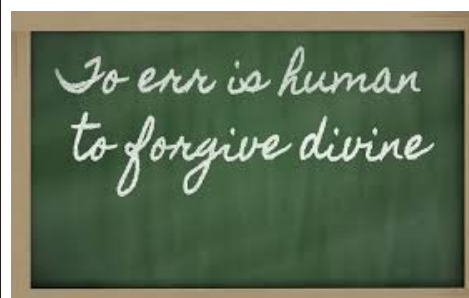
Newcomer Penelope Lee from Mrs. Chibaro’s class said, “Millburn is great! It’s so fun here and much quieter than where I used to live. In fact, people here are also so nice. I really love it here!” Lee lived in Manhattan before moving to Millburn. She and many other new students have weekly lunch meetings with the guidance counselor, Mrs. Bonnie Loew, to help adjust to the new school. Showing kindness towards someone makes a difference. Writer Mark Twain said, “Kindness is the language which the deaf can hear, and the blind can see.” Although it is hard to move during troubling times like these, Washington School students have been friendly, kind and helpful to all the new arrivals.

## Breakout Rooms Foster Engagement

By Evan Elisha

Before the release of the Breakout Rooms feature, teachers wondered how they could help students become more engaged with each other.. With the release of the new Google Meet breakout option, teachers now have just the solution. Keeping students interested through communication with their peers, the teachers of the Washington School are surely making good use of this new tool in their virtual classrooms every day. Breakout rooms offer Google Meet users the opportunity to chat in smaller groups without the need to start a new meet. When these small groups finish their chats, they are able to rejoin the main meeting very easily.

This enhancement is already receiving rave reviews from students and teachers alike. Washington School fifth grader Zach Abrahams said, “Google breakouts have let me get to know my fellow classmates better.” Abrahams echoes students from all over the school who are enthusiastic about Google’s new capability. Google breakouts enable students and teachers to gain some of the social aspects of a traditional school day. Until school fully resumes, Google breakouts provide a good solution to bridge the gap between in person and virtual learning.



**The editors, reporters and faculty advisors of *The Washington School Post* would like to apologize for any errors or omissions. We tried our best!**