

# Four Rivers Currents

May-June 2016

## From the Principal's Desk...

### CLASS OF 2016: TO YOUR RESILIENCE AND LIVING IN THE STRETCH ZONE

*For those of you who could not be at our graduation this year, I'd like to share my welcome comments for the Class of 2016.*

It is my honor to welcome all of you to the ninth graduation ceremonies of the Four Rivers Charter Public School.

As today approached, I've been thinking about this class. Some of them think that we have thought of them as the "bad" class. What seems true to me is that many members of this class have faced an inordinate number of challenges in their young lives. Even those who haven't, they've had to take on the normal doubts, uncertainties, and trials of growing up. Without going into details, I want to travel a tiny bit down these roads as you have arrived at today's milestone.

I want to play a short, clean, school-related game of "Have You Ever?" Please stand up if the statement is true for you -- audience members included. Have you ever:

Attended a charter school?

Gone swimming in very cold water?

Parked a car inside a building?

Faced academic or personal challenges in your time at Four Rivers?

Felt that school is not your most important priority?

Taken a risk and stretched yourself to try something that was hard for you?

Spoken up in class even though you are a shy introvert?

Stayed silent in class, letting others get airtime, even though you are a boisterous extrovert?

Been knocked off your feet -- metaphorically -- and raised yourself back up to try again?

Wondered if you would make it to this day?

As I look at the members of the Class of 2016, I can think of moments for each and every one of you when you faced challenge and had to grow your way through the moment. The word that keeps coming into my mind is resilience -- the capacity to recover from difficulties.

What I and your teachers love about our work is having the privilege of watching you grow up through challenges and struggles. We have done our best during your time here to put you in learning situations that stretch you with just the right amount of adversity. Too much and a person can end up in their danger zone, traumatized. Too little and you might never leave your comfort zone. Learning happens when you stretch out of your comfort zone, but just short of your danger zone.

This afternoon, we honor 33 students who have completed our requirements for graduation. We will hear words from the 3 senior advisors introducing us to each of the graduates that sit before you. In a relatively short amount of time, you will know this class.

The featured speakers of the day are 6 members of the Class of 2016 who have chosen to share something of their experiences here, what they've learned, and what they carry forward. We are honored to have you join us today.



*Peter Garbus, Principal*

# Grade 7 News

## WALK-A-THON

Attached are photos from the one-hour walk-a-thon where seventh grade math students tested the predictive power of proportions. Using a test walk and a test run around the parking lot, students attempted to predict the number of miles they could walk in an hour. On May 20th they set out to see how their predictions held up. Some walked; some ran. And one runner even managed to lap the students who chose to walk on the bike path loop! The event ended with a rehydrating popsicle toast to a walk well done!

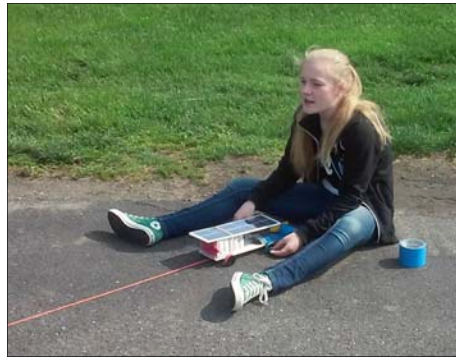
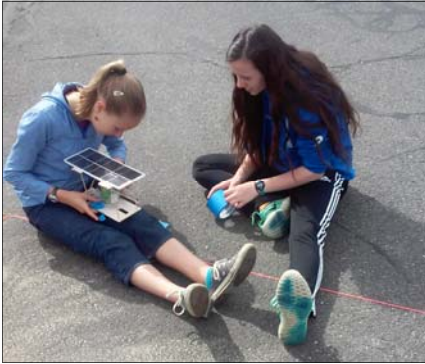
*Photos clockwise from below: Melina, Beth and Sylvia stride out strong; Charlotte, Fiona, and Charlotte's mom (chaperone) on the bike path; Aidan laps the walkers; a congratulatory toast with popsicles!*



## Grade 8 News

### SCIENCE & MATH

Students in 8th grade math and science have been working to complete their Solar Powered mini cars. This investigation used the Engineering Design Process to design and create vehicles that moved fast and straight over a 20m course using a small solar panel as the power source. In the process, students investigated forces, energy transformations, and gear ratios, collected data about their vehicle speed in various conditions, made graphs of their speed and used mathematical analysis to interpret those graphs.



*Left:  
End of  
year  
card-  
board  
boat  
challenge  
in  
Goshen*



## DIVISION 2 NEWS

### TENTH GRADERS ASK: WHY WAR?

Tenth grade students culminated their Why War? expedition with a trip to Washington D.C. Students did extensive research on U.S. foreign policy as well as war and conflict in the 20th and 21st centuries. They interviewed war veterans from multiple wars and did field work at a private non-profit that provides social services to veterans. Students wrote vignettes to portray views of why we decided to enter the war, citizens' and soldiers' feelings about our involvement, as well as the perspectives of both sides. The vignettes were quite moving; they were performed for the Four Rivers community on Thursday, May 19th and on May 24th students performed at multiple war memorials in Washington D.C. (WWI, WWII, Korean, Vietnam, and at the Washington Monument). It was an amazing experience.

While in D.C., students also interviewed a national security and defense editor from the news publication *Politico* as well as visited the Capitol building and spoke with Congressman James McGovern. Their questions were impressive and showed great insight about issues in our country today. They also had time to do a night time walk on the National Mall and visit a Smithsonian Museum of their choice. It was an incredible trip.



Left & Right:  
Washington, DC  
photos by Charlie  
Olchowski, driver  
and  
photographer  
extraordinaire.

*WHY WAR?*



## DIVISION 3 NEWS

### PROM

The prom was held this year at The Top of the Campus at UMass and it had a sort of seafaring watery theme. Ahoy and Arrrgh!

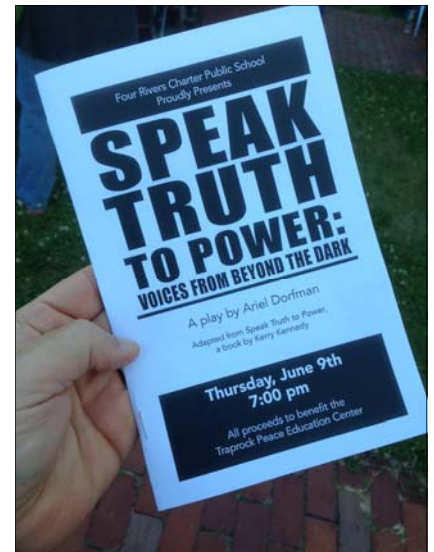


### SPEAK TRUTH TO POWER



As they were finishing their chemistry portfolios, learning about fractals, and writing their satirical pieces for the Undercurrents, the 11th graders performed a powerful reading of Speak Truth to Power on Thursday, June 9th.

A storm knocked out electricity in Turners Falls 2 hours before the show (while they were rehearsing at the Shea), so they moved the performance out-of-doors to the Great Falls Discovery Center down the street.



### I DON'T KNOW HOW TO SAY GOODBYE, I SAY HELLO — HELLO HELLO

At the last community meeting on Friday, June 10th, the 11th grade wrote appreciations to one another on pieces of paper taped to each others' backs. It was pretty sweet.



## NURSE'S NOTES

As summer approaches please schedule your child/children for their routine physician exam and immunization updates. Physical exams are state mandated for all students entering 7th and 10th grades; all new students; all students who are participating in sports programs.

Any student traveling off campus requiring medication while they are away and all students requiring medication at school will need to have their doctor complete the Medication Order Form found here:

[http://www.fourriverscharter.org/docs/Medication\\_Order\\_Form.pdf](http://www.fourriverscharter.org/docs/Medication_Order_Form.pdf)

Printed forms may be obtained from Carolyn Wood. I will be in my office periodically during the summer so please leave me a message at 413-775-4577 x211 if you have any questions. Have a safe and restful summer. ~ Jeanne Milton, RN

## ULTIMATE ENDINGS

The ultimate season came to a close over Memorial Day weekend. The boys varsity had a strong finish taking their last 2 games against Longmeadow and Lexington and finishing 5th in the state tournament. The girls varsity finished second losing to Amherst in the final.

We had over 90 students playing on 6 different teams this year. The young teams for both boys and girls are very strong. The future is bright for ultimate at Four Rivers.

Last call on the Four Rivers Summer Ultimate Intensive from June 27 - July 1. Details are on the school web site under Our Programs.

## THANKS

**Special thanks to all who helped with the Graduation Reception. You who cooked, set up, cleaned up, made punch, brought flowers from your gardens, decorated with balloons and streamers—we could not do what we do without your cheerful and dedicated help. We Salute You!**

## SHOUT OUT TO I-SEARCH EXPERTS

Big thanks to everyone who helped ninth grade students find experts to talk to for their I-Search projects! Your help was essential, and the students have learned so much. They presented their I-Search posters in the atrium at Greenfield Community College on Monday, June 13.

Thank you!

~ Lisa Ritchie ~

## COLLEGE ADVISING

***Juniors (rising seniors): Are you wondering what to do with all that summer spare time? How about:***

- Read a good book! Need some ideas? The College Board's "101 Great Books Recommended for College-Bound Readers" is here:  
[https://www.goodreads.com/list/show/21804.101\\_Great\\_Books\\_Recommended\\_for\\_College\\_Bound\\_Readers](https://www.goodreads.com/list/show/21804.101_Great_Books_Recommended_for_College_Bound_Readers)
- How about a few minutes each day doing some SAT prep? There are lots of good resources on the College Board website. Don't forget about your MyCollegeQuickstart account which provides targeted test preparation based on your PSAT scores.
- Work! Save some money for college and demonstrate that you are reliable, responsible and hard working!
- Take a class at a local college or take a pre-college summer program.
- Visit colleges. Take campus tours and talk with admissions counselors.
- Create a résumé—a record of your accomplishments, activities and work experiences since you started high school.
- Look at the schools on your college list in Naviance. Update the list as you discover new schools that you are interested in and remove ones that don't seem right.
- Thinking about Early Decision or Early Action? If yes, you should be coming back to school in September with a good idea as to where you are planning to apply.

Relax! Go to the beach, have fun, kick back and prepare yourself for your senior year!

Questions over the summer? You can always email Mr. Stenson! [astenson@frcps.org](mailto:astenson@frcps.org)



MORE PROM PICS



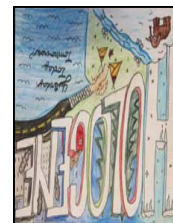
## NOTES FOR FAMILIES:

- Summer Reading lists are posted on the Four Rivers website under Links & Documents
- School Supply lists are posted on the Four Rivers website under Links & Documents
- Check FOCUS for student account bills (books not returned, uniforms not returned, unpaid program fees)
- Summer Standards makeup work will be available for pick-up on July 5th
- MA state law mandates all 7th and 10th grade students; all new students; and all students who participate in a sports program have an up-to-date physical on file at the school (done within the last year)
- Note on your calendar: Advisor meetings 8/29; Orientation 8/31-9/2

HAPPY SUMMER!



Four River Charter Public School is dedicated to educating young people for lives of learning and service. The school offers a rigorous academic program aligned with the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks and an emphasis on character development for moral and social responsibility. Three central themes – nature, technology and community – pervade the teaching and learning at the school. Four Rivers works closely with parents and seeks both to serve and learn from the many resources of Franklin County.



Four Rivers Charter Public School  
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