

# Four Rivers Currents

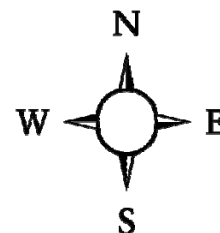
January / February 2019

## From the Principal's Desk...

### THE COMPASS POINTS OF PERSONALITY STYLE

Parents, teachers, administrators, we all have particular ways of communicating, responses to situations, and approaches to getting along in the world. We can't necessarily help these tendencies, but when made aware of them we might be able to find better ways to manage our interactions.

One model of personality styles uses the points of a compass. Characteristics of a style are what you don't like, what you tend to avoid, what makes you feel uncomfortable, what you don't do well, or what you don't enjoy. All of us have some mixture of these different styles, though one might be dominant:



- NORTH: Natural leader; goal-centered; fast-paced; task-oriented; assertive; decisive; confident; determined; competitive; independent.
- EAST: Natural planner; quality-centered; analytical; organized; logical; focused; exact; perfectionist; industrious; structured.
- SOUTH: Natural team player; process-centered; slow-paced; good listener; non-confrontational; sensitive; patient; understanding; generous; helpful.
- WEST: Natural risk taker; idea-centered; creative; innovative; flexible; visionary; spontaneous; enthusiastic; free-spirited; energetic.

One book, [The Four Fold Way](#), describes the four as warrior (north), healer (south), teacher (west), and visionary (east). So which are you?

For our staff, these different directions provide potential insights into how we work on teams together. We work on division teams to coordinate and integrate learning for students. We meet in teams each Monday to talk about students, those who are shining and those struggling. We also work together as a full faculty, reviewing data, learning together, and making decisions together about program and school culture. We have a good balance of all four directions on our staff, so how might we best take advantage of our different styles and strengths?

These compass point styles might also relate to school-home teamwork. What might you as parents need from us in terms of communication, for example? Which of you might really want to know all the details of a particular plan (Norths) and which just want the big ideas (Easts)? Which of you want more day to day glimpses of how your student is doing emotionally at school (Souths) and which of you just want to jump in and get involved (Westes)? If there is a mismatch--a North parent and an East advisor (or vice-versa)--awareness of that difference might be very helpful.

Intrigued? Here is an activity you can do to determine your dominant compass point direction and here is a guide to interpret your results. Because none of us are all one direction or another, we're not going to post a list of staff and our dominant direction, nor would we ask that of you. Communication and working together can be tricky, so if perhaps we find ourselves getting bogged down or not understanding one another, let's check our personality styles with one another and see if we can't meet one another at the center of the compass.

[PERSONALITY COMPASS SURVEY](#)

[PERSONALITY COMPASS AT A GLANCE](#)



*Peter Garbus, Principal*

## Grade 7 News

### MATH and SCIENCE — Ms. Locke

As we begin Semester 2, 7th graders have been checking in on their culture, community and the question, HOW HAVE WE GROWN? We began by checking in about how students feel about the community commitments we made in our candle ceremony at the end of the Mini-Me Expedition in September, asking them where we've grown most and where we still need to grow. They were proud to report that they've found friends and for the most part made one another feel included and respected. They pointed out their progress in terms of Knowing where to go and what to do, Kindness and Friendship, Helping with Academics and making efforts toward Handing in work on time. They are aware that they still have some growing to do in terms of listening, focusing, using class time well to complete on time and meeting deadlines consistently. They pointed out that in middle school we need to continue to focus on Communicating and Respecting needs, and making sure that we always keep an eye on including people. They even went so far as to point out that they could improve at wearing coats outside and cleaning up after themselves!

Next, we moved from feelings and impressions to data analysis. In math we are responsible for learning how to use data analysis strategies for comparing populations. So we re-took the survey we created for the Mini-Me Expedition and compared our September selves to our January selves to answer the question, What measures of center and spread best capture how we have grown as a group? Here is what they said:

*"We changed since the start of semester 1, according to my data, in that many of our favorite animals changed. For example, the "house pets" category has grown almost 10%... and the water creatures category has dropped almost 10%! Also, we gained another student whose inputs on the chart have changed the outcome. Our interests change all the time. These graphs show only a very small bit of this change." -Gretchen*

*Gabe pointed out that, "As the seasons change so does our clothing taste. As summer changed to winter, the type of clothes we like changed, for winter clothes, from 22% to 47%, and summer clothes changed from 59% to 37%"*

*"From the beginnings of semester one, our first ever time at Four Rivers Charter Public school, 'til this very day, we have all changed in many different ways. One change that will not surprise you in the least (I hope) is how tall we have become over the past couple of months." On average we have all grown around an inch, raising our average height to around 64 inches instead of our previous 63." - Ben*

*"The second [set of measurements] has more closely grouped heights with a lot of people between 63 and 66 inches. The first time was more spread out with only 14 people between 63 and 66 inches as opposed to 19 from the second time. Because of this grouping around the median of 64 inches, the second semester has a smaller Mean Absolute Deviation (MAD) and a smaller Inter-quartile Range (IQR)." - Avi*

*"Semester one's results showed a higher IQR of 4 than semester two, which yielded an IQR of 3.25. IQR shows how spread out the data is from the median....Another way to test the data is by calculating the MAD. The lower the MAD... the less spread out the data is. The MAD decreased from 2.28 to 2.25, a margin of 0.03.*

*"The mode, or most frequent plot, also changed from 65 to 63 inches.... Something that affected parts of the data like the median is that there were 34 data points in the first semester and 38 in the second. This made the range increase from 11 in to 13 in." - Isaiah*

We hope you'll notice from these examples that the students have gotten stronger as writers, supporting their claims with observations and evidence.

## Grade 8 News

### MEDIEVAL KINETIC ENERGY IN SCIENCE — *Mr. Guillaume*

Linking a science project with their research in Social Studies, students worked to construct kinetic energy weapons in science class. While learning about energy transformations, students also practiced their engineering skills, using the iterative design process to improve their catapult designs. Once their weapons were working well, they used the catapults in a social studies simulation of warfare under the medieval feudal system, launching pom-pom balls at “castles” and “knights.”



After the battle, the kinetic energy weapons returned to science class where students participated in a prediction contest. Using their data analysis and experiment design skills, students launched ping pong balls of different masses, learning how their weapon performed launching different mass loads. Once all the data was collected and analyzed, students predicted the distance their creations could launch a ping pong ball of a different, untested mass. The winning team was the team with both a close prediction and a far launch. Remember to ask your student for updates on the results of the prediction contest!

### 8th SERVICE IMMERSION

The 8th grade participated in a week-long Service Immersion just before winter break in December. We started out by asking questions like, "What is service?" We considered the Four Rivers Mission Statement: "Four Rivers



Charter Public School is dedicated to educating young people for lives of learning and service." We drew comparisons between our actions and our school's Character Virtues: Compassion, Perseverance, Respect, Responsibility, Integrity, and Courage. We contemplated quotes such as, "Service to others is the rent we pay for the space we occupy on this Earth." Eighth graders volunteered with a myriad of organizations, from Community Meals to the Survival Center, from local schools to the Girls' Club, and from pie-making to visiting elders at The Arbors. As they shared in our debrief the day before break, 8th graders not only learned a lot from their experiences, they gave their knowledge, energy, ideas, help, laughter, care, compassion, and joy.

## DIVISION 2 NEWS

### BIOLOGY

Tenth grade biology students are learning about the function of DNA and the process of protein synthesis. They worked in small groups to complete a simulation activity of transcription and translation. They learned how to culture bacteria using sterile technique. They grew the bacteria *Serratia marcescens* and exposed the bacteria to possible mutagens such as cigarettes, DEET, artificial sweeteners, and rubber cement.



Students working in groups to complete a simulation to understand the process of transcription and translation.



### DO SOMETHING DAY

Pictured at left, are 10th graders with keynote speaker Ousmane Power-Greene on Do Something Day, a student-led morning of workshops for the whole school

### ENGLISH - Ms. Ritchie

In 9th grade English, students have embarked on the **I-Search!** This is an eight week research project where students research a topic they are passionate to learn more about. They will research using a variety of sources, including interviewing experts in their topics. Are you an “expert” in any of these topics, and are you willing to be interviewed by a ninth grade student? If so, please email Lisa Ritchie ([lritchie@frcps.org](mailto:lritchie@frcps.org)), and she will connect you to the ninth grade student. An expert is defined somewhat loosely -you don't need to have a degree in it, just a lot of experience! **A list of topics can be found on page 6.**

Students will be presenting what they have learned at the I-Search Fair, to be held at GCC at the end of March. More details on that in the next Currents and the Flash. Thanks in advance for your help!

## DIVISION 3 NEWS

At the close of semester one, **Juniors** were working on an interdisciplinary project combining world war content from World History and writing and presentation skills from English class. Building on a detailed understanding of the historic context, students wrote creative monologues expressing their feelings about war, nobility, and moral courage. Here are excerpts from some their work:

**Excerpt from letter from the Western Front, WWI by Zyana:** I go into action on the front tomorrow and don't know how long I'll be in the trenches, but I'll continue to write you every day in hope that one of these letters will reach your graces. You are my sunshine in the rain and distraction in this horrible war brought upon us. I know the odds don't seem in our favor but I know that my love for you is stronger than any gun wound...you, my beautiful nurse, are my beacon in this darkness.

**Excerpt from a letter from the battle of Somme by Skylar:** God's been watching me. I can feel it. The shred of light. A gentle break in the gray and hateful clouds over Somme. God can taste this. His gaze is not weakened by the barrier of sound, the bellow of mortars and cracking of rifles. The solid sheet of noise is only penetrated by Him. The constant ringing in my ears is hushed by His presence for a single moment and I remember why I still fight.

I'm laying in mud as thick as porridge. I'm laying in our home, our latrine, our grave. I leak into pure decomposition in utter numbness. My hand floats up from my side as I pat my body. Where are my wounds? Where can I still feel. The mud is too wet to know if there is blood too. Slow and tingling warmth begins to creep up my body from my toes. As the sensation rolls upward to my head the heat is a searing pain. I cry out and hear nothing. The rattle of my throat is the only indication that tells me I am making sound. I scream so hard my lungs burnt too.

**Excerpt from a WWII letter by Hailey:** However, a miracle occurred, one which is fondly known as the Miracle of Dunkirk. On May 26, hundreds of civilian boats set sail from England and crossed the Channel in response to our lack of military ships. Motor boats, fishing boats even row boats, any kind of boat you can name came flooding into our port to aid in the evacuation. In the end, 340,000 of us were evacuated from Dunkirk.

This brings me to the very thing I would like to impress upon you and your readers, Mr. Poll. Had these civilians not summoned the immense courage to get in their little boats and set off into what surely would have been a death sentence for an entire army, I would never have been rescued. I would have suffered torture and death. Many of my generation make the mistake of thinking warfare is a noble undertaking. I believe it is not. There is no nobility in war, sir; only people. Nobility lies in any human connection that results in massive spread of hope. Nobility is the defense and aid of any people simply for the sake of doing so. It just happens that we notice noble actions more easily in the face of a powerful beast such as war.

**Seniors**, meanwhile, are busy in the post-production weeks of film making. Groups are script-writing, animating, and editing chapters for their documentary about the Columbia Gas explosions in the Merrimack Valley, and their implications for our energy future.

**Post-production reflection from Grace:** I am so proud of our team. We got down to business, color coded everything, and explained things to each other when we were MIA and/or confused. The File Folks will live on in my heart forever. We all worked hard on every aspect of the project and had some great communication. Our team was really the ideal team, and reinforced the ideas of communication and organization and how important they are to a (cross-functioning, self organized) team. We all facilitated. It was a magical experience, truly magical.

**Post-production reflection from Emily:** My strength during this part of production was getting into the groove of editing audio and embracing the challenge of it. It is helpful that editing comes with instant gratification. I struggled with editing Audrey Schulman, but every door slam I took out made the audio sound better instantly. Editing Ms. Schulman has been my biggest challenge so far, it was hard to remove background hums without making her sound like she's underwater. I'm still struggling with this. Another strength of mine was my wont to brainstorm ideas for footage to use for our chapter. Since the epilogue focuses on young people's ability to make change, I thought we could really affect people by using footage of child activists like Malala. I don't know that we'll definitely follow through with this idea but I think my imagination is one of my strengths that I need to cultivate more. **Continued on next page . . .**

Continued from page 4 . . . Division 2

### I-Search Topics — Looking for experts to connect with 9th grade students

Animal Rights	How to make a living as an artist	Mental & physical wellness
Antarctica	How to be a successful You-tuber	in teenagers
Benefits of writing	How to make a living by doing	Music production
Bread	an extreme sport	Photography & developing
Chickens	HTML	35mm film
Coffee	Influence of Ancient Greece on	Pitching curveballs
Concentration camps (past and	our world today	Punk music
present)	LARP latex weapon creation	Recording studios
Effects of sugar on the body	Left handedness & the brain	Role playing games
Greece	Lo-Fi music	Sharks
Happiness	Medieval weaponry and	Sneaker culture
History of making musical instru-	architecture	Snowboarding
ments	Mental institutions and	Tae kwon do
Horror movies	therapeutic procedures	Unhealthy relationships
		Video game plagues

Continued from page 5. . . . Division 3

**Post-production reflection from Teagan:** I learned how to find archival footage in different websites without legal issues. A highlight of this part of the production was when my group used my archival footage. As I said previously I was proud that my work found a good use. That was the first time I actually felt accomplished about something.

**Post-production reflection from Jaida:** I was an editor. This means I had to work with Adobe Audition to clean up sound, and Adobe Premiere to cut the movie together. Although I have worked with these programs in the past, I had to almost relearn how to use the software, which was a challenge. A highlight: every time I would find a perfect clip of B-roll and it wasn't already claimed. Also in this section we worked on transcription which was quite a large task. Specifically, I helped transcribe the beginning 6 minutes of Andrew Maylor's interview. I am looking forward to the documentary being finished and seeing all the pieces come together.

## SIBLING ENROLLMENT FOR FALL 2019

### SIBLINGS OF CURRENT STUDENTS:

- Siblings of current students who wish to enroll next fall, for the 2019-20 school year, **MUST complete an admission application and submit it by the due date—Monday, February 25, 2019, at no later than 5 pm.**
- Siblings are given priority in the lottery – which will be held on February 28, 2019.
- Applications are available on the school's web site under Admissions, from Ms. Taylor at school, or at our next Admissions Information Sessions on Wednesday, February 13 at 7 pm.

## SPECIAL EDUCATION ANNOUNCEMENT

Four Rivers Charter Public School is required to adhere to the federal requirement: **Child Find**. We are required to identify, locate and evaluate all children with disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disabilities. The obligation to identify all children who may need special education services includes all children who are suspected of having a disability, including children who receive passing grades.

If you are concerned that your child may have a disability or if you have questions about any special education process, please contact Kate Conant, Director of Academic Support.

## COLLEGE ADVISING

**SENIORS** are starting to hear back from colleges. Schools that have already said YES! to our students include:

**University of New Hampshire, Eckerd, Champlain, Clark University, UMass Amherst, Wentworth Institute of Technology, Sarah Lawrence, Marymount Manhattan, University of Vermont, Ithaca College, Western Colorado State, Montana State, Keene State, AND MORE ON THE WAY!!**

### JUNIOR NEWS

#### SAT TESTING:

Kahn Academy provides customized test preparation, based on PSAT scores, and also allows students to create a practice schedule tied to their chosen SAT test date. Recent data shows that 20 hours of Kahn Academy practice leads to an average gain of 115 points. All of our juniors are encouraged to take advantage of this.

Most juniors take the SAT for the first time toward the end of their junior year, and then again in August or early in the senior year. Upcoming testing dates and registration information are available on the College Board website, [www.collegboard.org](http://www.collegboard.org)

#### UPCOMING TESTING DATES:

Test Date	Deadline to Register
March 9th	Feb 8 (Late registration through 2/27)
May 4th	April 5th
June 1st	May 3rd

Subject Tests are required by some of the more competitive schools, as well as for those looking to enter programs in the hard sciences or engineering. These are school specific, but if required they need to be considered as part of an overall testing schedule. Again, the College Board website has a lot of information.

I will be meeting with all members of the junior class over the next month or so to help with developing initial college lists and post Four Rivers plans. February and April breaks are excellent times to visit colleges while they are in session. We will be hosting a College Admissions Evening for Junior families in the spring – keep a look out for details in future editions of the Currents and in Flash emails.

Questions? Contact Andy Stenson: [astenson@frcps.org](mailto:astenson@frcps.org)

## NURSE'S NOTES

State mandated health screenings will be scheduled in March. GCC nursing students will be performing the various assessments under my direction. It is important to remember these are basic observations and any abnormal finding must have a follow-up by the students' physician. I will notify you in writing if there is a need to follow-up with your child's doctor. If you wish your child to not participate, a waiver form can be obtained from me. Have a safe vacation.

~ Jeanne Milton, RN ~



Above "Sock It To Me", Recycled socks on paper, by Melina Coy, 10th grade.

## ART NEWS

Artspace on Mill Street in Greenfield hosts its 45th Annual Teen Art Show from January 21 to February 15 with an artists' reception on Friday, January 25th at 5:15-7:00 p.m.

This year art work by Lexy Austin, Melina Coy, Lolahanna Russell, Abby Selva, and Celeste Wise will represent Four Rivers in the exhibition.

"This institution is an equal opportunity provider. To file a complaint of discrimination write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Washington, DC 20294"

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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