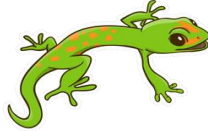




Newsletter Date: November 30, 2022

The Gecko



MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL:

Dear Concept Community,

We are more than a third of the way through the school year and I am happy to report that things are going well at TCS. We have 33 students enrolled after adding four more students since the year began and they have been a welcome addition to our community. Interest in the school continues to be strong.

Winter weather is approaching, so please be alert to possible school closings. We will post it on our website, send out an email, post it on Channel 10, and send a text message via the Remind app. Many parents and guardians have signed up to receive text messages. If you have not, click [HERE](#) to join. Our building can be a bit on the chilly side, especially when the temperatures outside dip. Please make sure your student dresses in layers and has a sweater or sweatshirt with them.

We are fast approaching the date for our Shakespeare play on December 20, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. The students will remain at school after dismissal and eat dinner here. Families will take their students home after the play finishes. Our students always do an amazing job, and I can't wait to see their talents this year.

Finally, please remember that we revised our calendar on November 21, 2022, to make Monday, January 2, 2023 a holiday. School will reopen on Tuesday, January 3, 2023. I am excited to report that I am scheduled to be taking a trip to Africa on January 2, 2023, and will return to school on January 17, 2023. Mr. Schullery will be "in charge" during my absence, but I will be in communication with him and Mrs. Piccone as long as I have internet access.

Thank you for allowing us to work with your son or daughter. I wish you a safe and happy holiday season.

Sincerely,

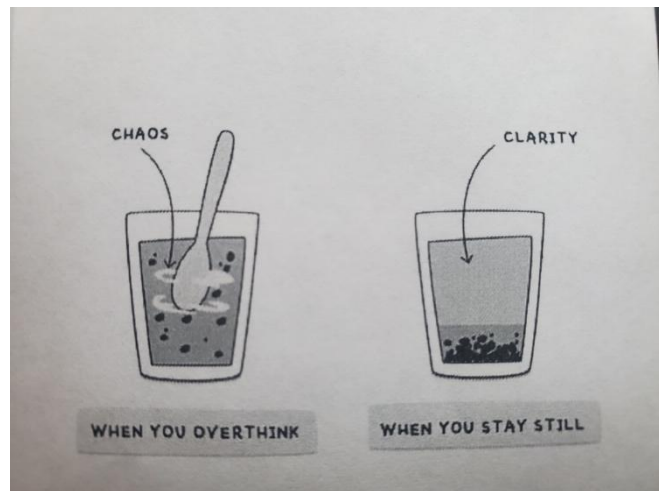
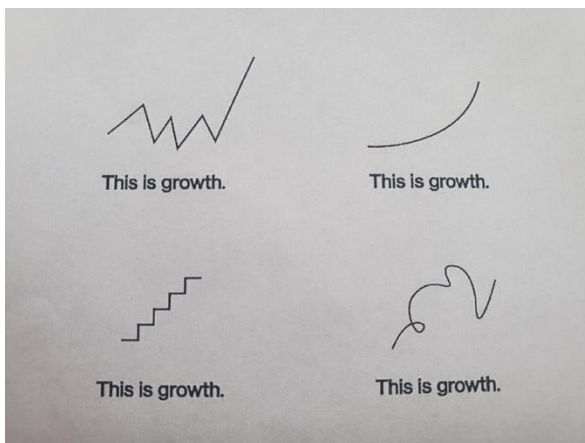
Bill



December 20 – Shakespeare Play – 7:00
December 22 – January 2 – Winter Break
January 3 – School re-opens
January 16 – School closed – MLK Day



Thank you to Mrs. Griffith for sharing these thoughtful images!



-Mr. Schullery



Each year, the Brandywine River Museum in Chadds Ford, PA displays their Brandywine model railroad. On a few dates, they provide special access to a "sensory friendly" viewing of the railroad for those with sensory sensitivity (e.g., autism). If you have not seen the railroad, it is highly recommended. It is a large layout with multiple trains running at the same time. The longest train can have about 100 cars!

Please click on the link to learn more.

<https://www.brandywine.org/museum/events/sensory-friendly-access-hour-brandywine-railroad>

DeSales University WillPower visit

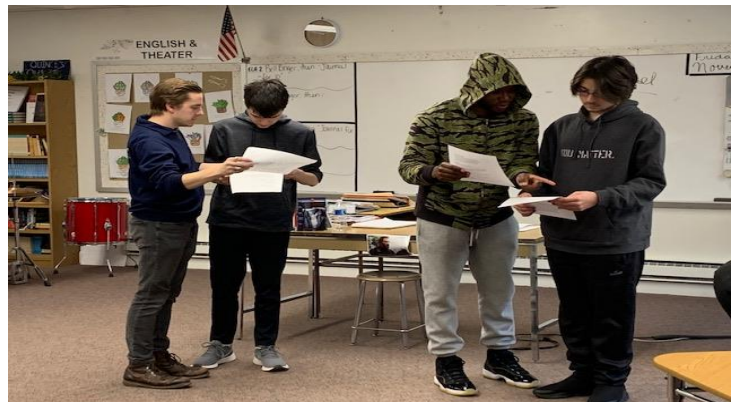
On Friday, November 18th, our students and staff welcomed the DeSales *WillPower* acting troupe to our school! The troupe had just finished their run of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Members of the troupe worked with our students in two separate groups and

provided two separate workshops: one for understanding Shakespeare's language and another one based on movement in acting. Many students who seemed reluctant to participate ended up having



the most fun! Thank you to Mrs.

Griffith for keeping TCS connected to this amazing program from DeSales University!



Thanksgiving - Something for Which to be Thankful

by Mr. Burtch (who is thankful for math)

Harvest Festivals and Giving Thanks

The story of American Thanksgiving is a little complicated. On one hand, Thanksgiving is such an important American holiday (like Christmas or the Fourth of July aka Independence Day), that Americans might assume that Thanksgiving is celebrated elsewhere too, and perhaps in a way that is similar to how we do it in the U.S. This is not universally true.

It is true that in some parts of the world, the story of Thanksgiving is tied to the notion of either hoping for, or celebrating, a good harvest. Accordingly, late summer and fall harvest festivals are common in diverse cultures ranging from the U.K. to Germany to Japan to Rwanda. However, the form of Thanksgiving that we enjoy in the United States today is tied to some circumstances that are particular to our country. It seems that as Thanksgiving grew in importance in the U.S., it also spread to parts of the world where America held influence (e.g., Liberia, Norfolk Island [an Australian independent territory], Grenada and the Philippines). See attached list of Thanksgiving in various countries.

Thanksgiving in the Good Ole U.S. of A.

Thanksgiving in the U.S. has been tied to some important national events (e.g., the Pilgrims in New England, the American Revolution, the Civil War), and also a powerful aspect of our national culture - shopping and commercialism. Thanksgiving Day has been set by proclamation by two of America's most revered presidents - Lincoln and Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR). However, Thanksgiving was observed on different dates from the early days of the Republic until 1863. In fact, the actual date of observance varied from state to state in the early days. In these early days, Thanksgiving also occurred near another holiday, Evacuation Day, which was November 25.

By the beginning of the 19th century, the final Thursday in November had become the customary date in most states. This date coincided with, and eventually superseded, the holiday of Evacuation Day which had declined in popularity. Evacuation Day celebrated the day the British exited New York after the Revolutionary War.

Abraham Lincoln proclaimed modern Thanksgiving for all states in 1863. He set a "national Thanksgiving" by proclamation for the final Thursday in November. It was intended to celebrate the bounties that had continued to fall on the Union and for military successes in the Civil War. However, a nationwide Thanksgiving celebration was not achieved until the Reconstruction was completed in the 1870s.

On October 31, 1939, FDR signed a presidential proclamation changing the holiday to the next to last Thursday in November in an effort to boost the economy. The earlier date created an extra seven days for Christmas shopping since at that time retailers never began promoting the Christmas season until after Thanksgiving. Confusion and division ensued (yes, America suffered these even back then too). For several years, Colorado, Mississippi and Texas celebrated both dates! Finally, on December 26, 1941, the official national Thanksgiving Day was set as the fourth Thursday in November starting in 1942.

As you learn more about the evolution of Thanksgiving in our country, you might come to the conclusion that early Americans of English descent (e.g., Pilgrims), simply adapted the English tradition of a fall harvest festival to match their circumstances upon arrival in the New World (e.g., the Massachusetts Bay Colony). Or maybe American Thanksgiving is a wholly new and American idea that is not tied to the Old World. You can form your own opinion and "stick to it" - that's an American tradition worthy of giving thanks.

Thanksgiving in Other Countries

Country	Date	Name	Related to U.S. Thanksgiving (Y/N)
Brazil	4th Thursday of November (as of 1949)	Thanksgiving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes (a Brazilian diplomat proposed it after being posted to DC)
Canada	2nd Monday of October (as of January 1, 1957)	Thanksgiving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No (tied to feasts of Thanksgiving held by early British explorers and French settlers who held feasts of thanks since 1604. Celebrated as an annual <u>holiday</u> in most of Canada since November 6, 1879. While the date varied, it was commonly the second Monday in October)
Germany	1st Sunday of October	<u>Erntedankfest</u> (Harvest Thanksgiving Festival)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No (popular German <u>Christian</u> festival)
Grenada	October 25 (after 1983)	Thanksgiving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes (tied to 1983 U.S. invasion)
Japan	November 23 (adopted during the <u>American occupation</u> after World War II)	<i>Kinrō Kansha no Hi</i> (勤労感謝の日, Labor Thanksgiving Day)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes and a little No (<u>holiday</u> to commemorate <u>labor</u> and production and give each other thanks. It has roots in the ancient <u>Shinto</u> harvest ceremony (<u>Niiname-sai</u>))
Liberia	1st Thursday in November (as of 1883)	Thanksgiving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes (Liberia was settled by African Americans in 1821 but food is not a major part)
Netherlands	1st Wednesday in November	Thanksgiving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No (a religious celebration)
Norfolk Island (Australia)	Last Friday in November	Thanksgiving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes (brought by visiting American whaling ships)
Philippines	4th Thursday in November (no longer observed)	Thanksgiving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes (began in the early 20th century after Americans took control. Ended after Japanese Invasion and aftermath of Dictator Marcos)
Rwanda	1st Friday in August	Umuganura Day (Thanksgiving festival)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No (Thanksgiving festival marking the start of harvest)
Saint Lucia	1st Monday in October	Thanksgiving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No

Classroom News

Mr. Burtch's Math class:

Recognition to Spencer Rosin for undertaking a special research project for the senior-level Financial Math course. Spencer did a thorough job of explaining:

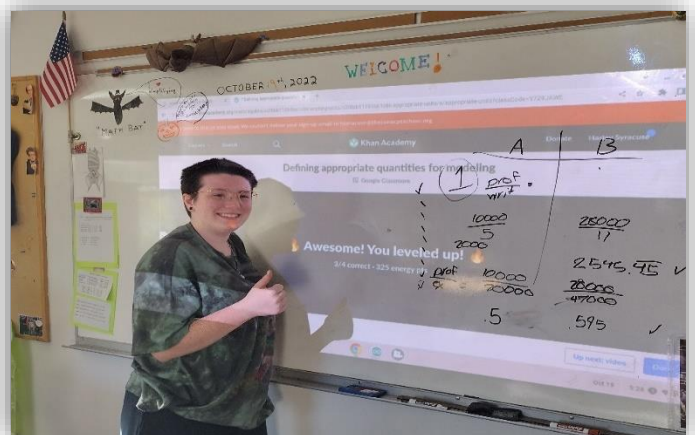
- The origins of income tax in the U.S. and the world.
- Flat versus progressive tax.
- The specific progressive tax regimes for Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the U.K. and the U.S.
- The nature of state income tax regimes across the U.S.

Well done, Spencer.

Period 3 math students living the dream



Tor enjoying morning math and Jasper the Sun Dog



Harley masters Modeling with Units

Ms. Schwind's Art class:

Spencer's mask came out great!



Mrs. Griffith's English classes:

Students in Mrs. Griffith's ELA Writing classes have had a busy time learning proper email etiquette, recognizing typos and the importance of proofreading (not just in our classes but in jobs and the world).

We just finished learning how to annotate literature. Sandra Cisneros' vignette "My Name" from *The House on Mango Street* has given us much to work with in terms of connotation, diction, mood, and figurative language.

Students are currently writing a pastiche of Cisneros' story. Using their names as springboards, students are researching, practicing their language art, and writing stories about what their moniker means and says about them!

In ELA Reading, two groups have just finished a unit on Ayn Rand's *Anthem* and Plato's *Allegory of the Cave*. We discussed collectivism vs. individualism and noticed ways in which today's society uses aspects of both. The final projects were fantastic! Students were asked to create a google slide presentation in which they chose music representative of the beginning, middle, and end of the novel. Students demonstrated how the lyrics and music of their chosen songs tied to the plot points of the book. The students examined their feelings surrounding the novel and the warning it seemed to send. Additionally, they incorporated their understanding of the myth of Prometheus and its relation to the main character, Equality. Finally, students presented their individual slide shows to their peers.

In another ELA Reading class, students have been examining the art of the short story. We have been understanding point of view and other literary terms and devices. We are especially focused on the plot mountain and will be making an enormous plot mountain on our wall after our film study of "The Lion King". They will not be watching it through the eyes of a child; rather, they will be studying it through the lens of a literary scholar!

The theater class with Mrs. Wright and Mrs. Griffith has been playing theater games, building trust, table reading, and watching the film of our December play: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Rehearsals on the stage begin next week!

Mrs. Griffith's **Fourth Period** read the Langston Hughes poem "Dreams" and wrote pastiches using similes instead of metaphors.

Dreams

By Ryan Stulak

Hold quick to dreams,
For if dreams die,
Life is like games of Fortnite
That just won't go your way.

Hold quick to dreams,
For if dreams go,
Life is like a Minecraft world
That isn't going anywhere.

Hold quick to dreams,
For if dreams die,
Life is like a Roblox game
That got removed from the platform.

Hold quick to dreams,
For if dreams go,
Life is like games of Rocket League
That you can't seem to win.

Hold quick to dreams,
For if dreams die,
Life is like Fall Guys rounds
That you can't seem to qualify.

Hold quick to dreams,
For if dreams go,
Life is like your Overwatch 1 Main
That when you hear it's getting nerfed for
Overwatch 2.

Alexander Var-Khoun's Poem

Hold fast to life
For if life dies,
It is like a plant
Dying without water.

Hold fast to life
if life goes
It is like a leaf
falling from a tree.

Jack Ryan's Poem

Dwayne Johnson is the best.
When he wrestled, he never took a rest
He is a champion.
He's as strong as Hercules.

He's a legend.
He inspires others.
He will continue to bring positivity.
His heart is as big as Mt. Everest.

Mrs. Wright's English classes:

Room 9 has housed many short story readings and creative writing pieces in the last several weeks!

Those in literature class have been immersed in seasonally themed works by authors such as O. Henry, Edgar Allan Poe, Guy de Maupassant, and various poets! Our literature selections have brought forth deep and meaningful conversations about life and humanity as well as reminding us of the power literature has! Students have studied the three types of irony, plot, and conflict, and have rediscovered literary devices, such as, metaphor, personification, and allusions. I am glad to have such happy readers!

Those in writing class have been working hard to create thoughtful and descriptive writing selections. Their writing journals are jammed-packed with miniature narratives, favorite pastimes, memories, jokes, and vent sessions! Students are learning the importance of language through writing and doing an excellent job in doing so! Students even read an interesting article about the Oxford Comma and how some wish to do away with it in our writing. We say, keep it!

Check Out Some Student Work!

"Thankful" Six - Word - Stories

Thankful: Oasis, Eminem, Theater, and Mother. - Mark M.

Thankful: MYTHOLOGY, Math, technology, and animals. - Mark M.

Thankful for the Do Not Disturb. - Javon H.

Thankful for my incredible feminine sassiness. - unknown

Thankful; school, teachers, friends, and theater. - Robert A.

Feeling thankful; awesome job; fun boss. - Robert A.

Luke shared some valuable information in a writing assignment about one of his hobbies, Mountain Biking!

Luke Alansky

There are several safety rules for mountain biking. One of the important safety rules is to wear a helmet so that you don't hit your head when riding or in a crash. Never do wheelies because you don't want to fall over while riding or get injured. Another important safety rule is, check over your bike's condition before you race or ride so that you don't need to stop while riding and have the whole group

stopping. Skidding is not allowed because you don't want to run into the other person in front of you or behind you. When riding in a group, call out turns so the people don't get lost while riding. Following all these rules will ensure a fun and injury-free ride.

Faith wrote about how an educational TV series has remained popular throughout the years!

Faith McAfee

Sesame Street is a popular TV show that many people of all ages continue to enjoy. The show teaches kindness through storytelling in a fun and engaging way. Viewers even learn reading and math. The Puppets are cute and have fun personalities. Every puppet can be loved because they all are unique, and viewers can relate to them. The writers make sure there is diversity in the show's episodes and include celebrities for entertainment purposes. Sesame Street was always popular and still is.

All the School's A Stage!



Harken!

Parents, take heed!

Shakespeare is approaching! For several weeks now, students have been busy preparing for this year's annual Shakespeare Festival. The directors, Mrs. Wright and Mrs. Griffith have chosen *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for this year's production. Roles have been cast, scripts printed, props and scenery are coming to life, and lines are being memorized! We even had DeSales University's *WillPower* acting troupe visit our school on Friday, November 18th to share their passion for the Bard! It was such a joy to see smiles and participation from all students and teachers, too!

Please be on the lookout for important information in the form of a permission slip for your student and you to read together and sign pertaining to the Shakespeare Festival. Per tradition, all students have a hand in creating and putting on the show. No stage acting is required, but participation in some way is.

Date: Tuesday, December 20, 2022

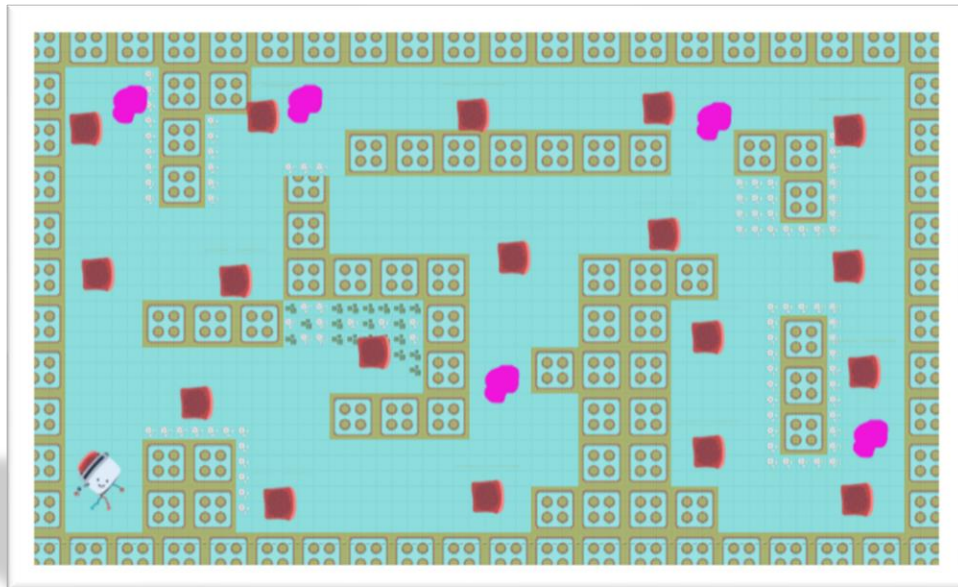
Time: 7:00pm

Mrs. Frederick's classes:

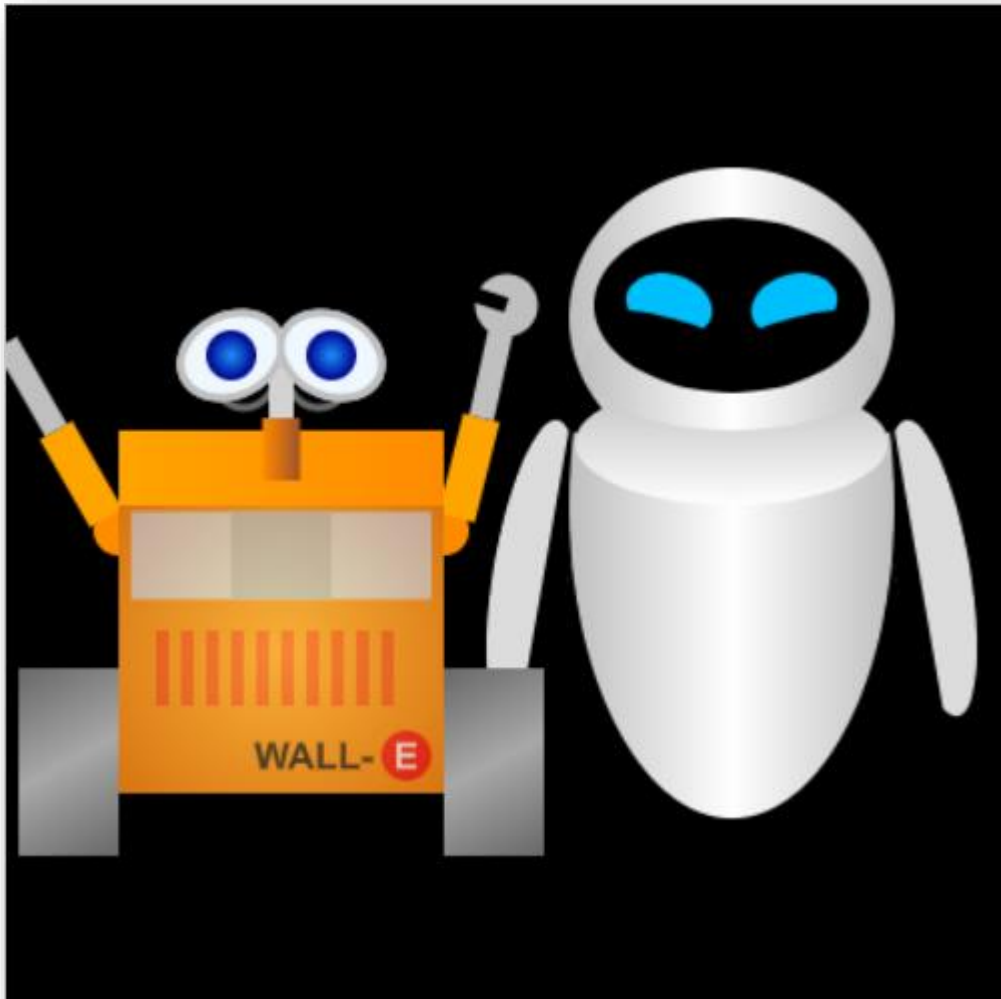
Mrs. Fredericks' 3D Printing Class has been very busy! The students have learned many new concepts including measuring, adding and subtracting shapes to create a new image, and more! Some of the items we've done are a 2-piece Happy Halloween sign that will be interchangeable with other words such as Happy Thanksgiving, a "puzzle" piece that has a hole in the back that we put a magnet in and a word on the front that meant something to them, a ghost with the center hollowed out to add a tealight, keychains, and a bubble wand.



Mrs. Fredericks' Game Design Classes just started two new programs, "Construct 3," which is a game engine, and "Piskel," which is a sprite drawing program. Our current project is a Pacman style game where the sprite goes through the maze and tries to collect objects while avoiding the enemy.



Mrs. Fredericks' Coding class is learning the basics of Python. They know how to use coordinates on the page, how to draw rectangles, circles, ovals, stars, polygons, and other shapes using coordinates and other criteria. They know how to change colors including fills, gradient fills, borders, and border widths. Next we will learn how to create animation using the skills they learned during the first marking period.



TCS Picture Gallery

Fall field trip to Pete's Produce





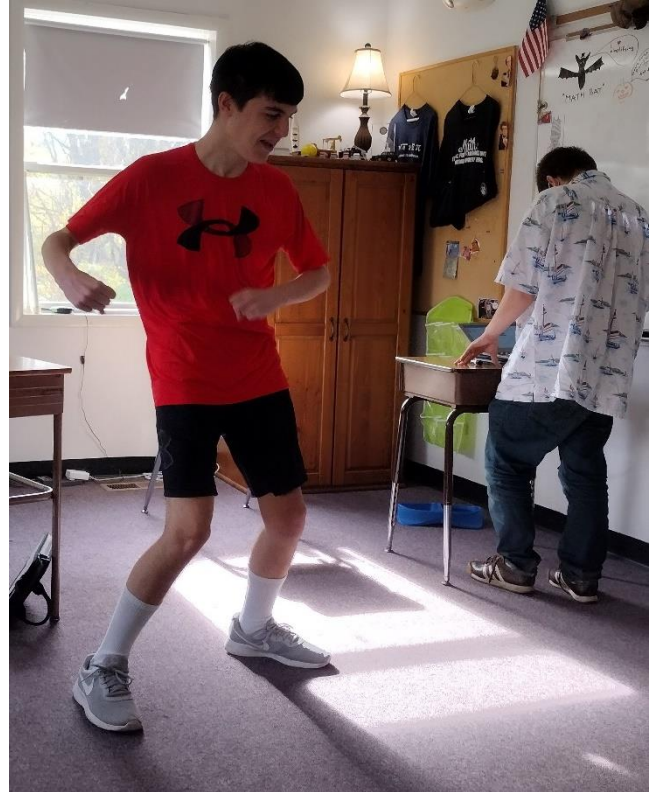
Go Phillies!!

Halloween 2022



Surfin' Bird

... A-well, a bird, bird, bird, well-a bird is the word

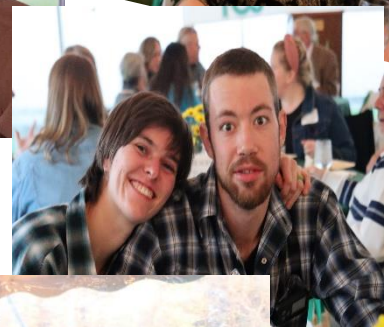


Spirit Wear



Celebrating

1972 **50** 2022
TCS THE CONCEPT SCHOOL







The Concept School Alumni

A special thank you to Mrs. Fredericks for taking such wonderful pictures to remember this special event!

