

# STORIES

## FROM THE JOURNEY:

KINGSWAY  
COLLEGE SCHOOL

### KCS Head of Senior School Update

12 . 8 . 2021



We're on a special journey with our grade 9 parents, students, and staff. Thanks to our founding community, and the many others helping in myriad ways, we've enjoyed a fulsome first term. Getting to know our 'place' in West Toronto and meeting passion-driven experts who help shape it have infused the school experience. It's a pleasure to share some specifics on how that works, including news on our special programs, construction progress, and the learning underway among staff.

### KCS Learning Partners

Beyond the knowledge and skill development expected in the curriculum, our grade 9 students have had special opportunities to meet a variety of KCS Learning Partners who help connect curriculum to the world outside of school. Since September, here are the external experts who have contributed to our enriched experiential program:

- Jenny Davis, [High Park Nature Centre](#)
- Kat Maurer, [High Park Nature Centre](#)
- [Philip Cote](#), Indigenous Knowledge Keeper, artist, activist
- Sean March, Architect with [Architecture Counsel](#)
- Rudy Tomaini, Construction Project Manager, [TriAxis](#)
- Bill Dixon, avid ecologist and photographer
- Sam George, author and Residential School Survivor
- [Ontario Science Centre](#)
- [Toronto Adventures](#)
- John McGraw, KCS parent, passionate amateur ecologist, and fly fisherman
- [Swim Drink Fish](#)
- Nate Bitton, [Rapier Wit](#)
- [A Greener Future](#)
- [McMichael Gallery](#)

Engagements with [EcoSpark](#) and [Relay Education](#) are coming soon. Plans are also underway for a winter outdoor education trip in partnership with [Alive Outdoors](#). Significant activity is focused on securing additional Learning Partners and services of interest for later this year and beyond. Future updates will share details on those.



## KCS SENIOR SCHOOL MOMENTS



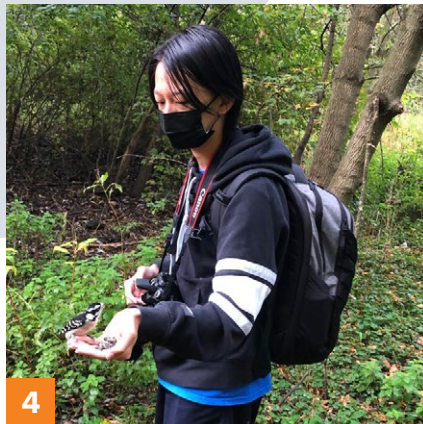
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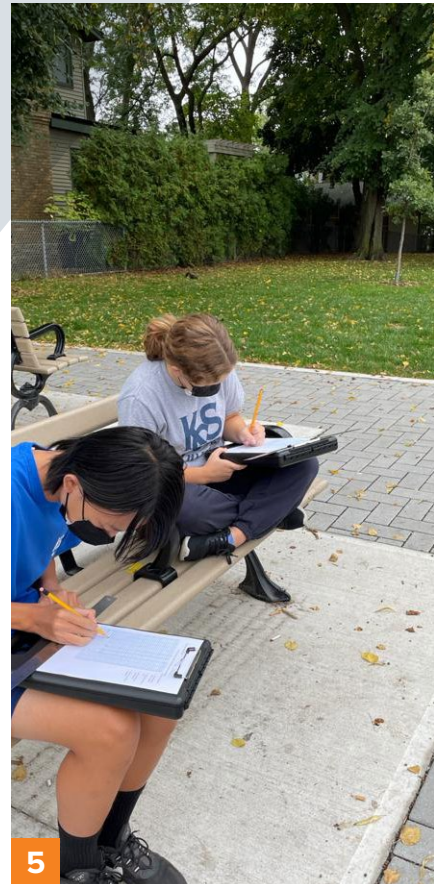
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**1:** Stage combat workshop; **2:** Humber River, Kleinburg; **3:** McMichael Gallery trip; **4:** High Park trip; **5:** Students learning outside.



## KCS PATH PROGRAM

The [KCS Path Program](#) is a unique opportunity to strengthen curiosity, intrinsic motivation, and the skills of lifelong learners.

Each Wednesday afternoon includes dedicated time where students assume a lead role in their learning. The program, spanning grades 9 to 12, will see students learning about their area of greatest interest from multiple perspectives as well as through an offsite learning experience, each year up to at least grade 11. This learning can connect to school assignments, when relevant. Students can also earn their community service hours while meeting their Path 'citizenship' expectations.

A number of activities helped us launch this new program. We watched Bill Stainton's

TEDxStanleyPark Talk, [How to be a More Creative Person](#). Next, students completed a personal inventory to support reflection in advance of choosing their topic. They also started brainstorming creative connections between their topic and our [Four Doors of academics, arts, athletics, and citizenship](#). And they've made their Path e-portfolios, a Google site where they'll add artifacts of their learning over the next years.

Thanks to Path and our students' initiative, it's a pleasure to welcome the following as added areas of learning at our school:

- Dance
- Design
- Filmmaking
- Flight
- Technology
- Video game creation
- Visual art

We've begun efforts to identify a Path Mentor for each. If you or an adult you know has a background that includes any of these topics, please let Rick Kunc know at [rkunc@kcs.on.ca](mailto:rkunc@kcs.on.ca). To learn more about KCS Learning Partners and the opportunity it brings to students and adults who want to make a difference, please visit the [Learning Community Program webpages](#).



## KCS BY DESIGN

**KCS By Design is our commitment to work with all Senior School students in building the Senior School experience.**

Given our small numbers, we're working as one group this year. Starting next year, all students, including this founding cohort, will meet with interested others on their choice of academic, artistic, athletic, citizenship, or spirit-raising initiatives. With at least one faculty member to support their efforts, all will follow a design thinking process so initiatives are as thoughtfully considered, developed and implemented as possible. *(continued on page 3)*

## CONSTRUCTION AT 2183 LAKE SHORE

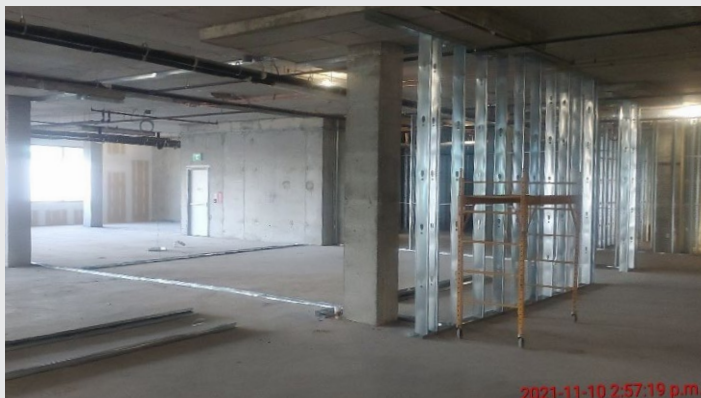
### KCS has hired TriAxis Construction Ltd. to oversee the construction of our permanent Senior School.

Rudy Tomaini, our Construction Project Manager, has worked on independent school projects for many years. A Design and Construction Committee, consisting of industry professionals, meets biweekly to provide support and oversight.

Work is currently focusing on plumbing, electrical, HVAC, and other core elements of our space. Attention is also focused on the opening for the internal staircase. Conduits embedded within the concrete to be removed are being rerouted. We look forward to the end of that task so we can enjoy an entrance that includes our two levels and light pouring in from both floors.

All interested in regular construction updates are encouraged to follow our Assistant Head of Senior School, [@RickKunc](#) to catch what are expected to be monthly vlogs from within 2183 Lake Shore.

Here are some recent photos showing our site and progress:



**Above:** View looking southeast on our main floor. Classrooms are being framed.

*(continued from page 2)*

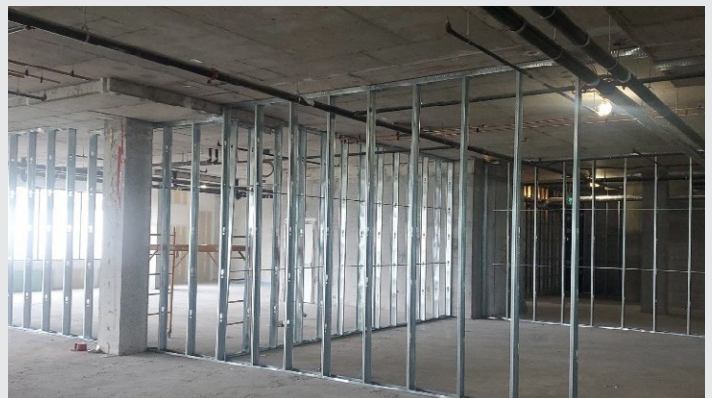
[Design thinking](#) is a proven process for addressing complex challenges. A favourite article that helps explain the potential, [Design for Action by Tim Brown and Roger Martin](#), describes how design thinking helped create a middle class in Peru! While its origins come from industry, progressive schools are embracing design thinking as a problem-solving process students can practice with great effect. KCS introduced [KCS By Design](#) in 2015 and it has since yielded some transformative initiatives in our Junior School, including the introduction of our [Go Ahead elective](#) which in turn helped us pilot our [Student Entrepreneurship Program](#). Once our students understand the process, they will be supported in any initiatives that follow it.

Our grade 9 students have identified **action to address water pollution** as an area of activity in the school they want to build. They've learned about the challenges posed by stormwater runoff, e-coli, plastics, garbage, and other toxins that threaten all lives that depend on clean water. They're brainstorming ways to take action and two are already underway:

**1** We have started supporting [Water First](#), which focuses on the need for clean water in Canada's Indigenous communities. Our Spirit Day donations will serve as sustained philanthropy supporting their efforts. We also look forward to the learning possibilities from our relationship with them.

**2** We are engaging in community initiatives to help address water pollution. Thanks to our partnership with Swim Drink Fish, our students began water sampling and contributing to databases that support research, decision-making, and advocacy. We also recently participated in a pollution and nurdle hunt along the shores of Humber Bay with the help of A Greener Future. Nurdles are small plastic pellets polluting water bodies around the world and being ingested by wildlife, to their peril. Evidence of their presence will contribute to the [Fidra](#) database, a global advocate for addressing the problem of microplastics.

Additional ideas include future clean-ups, education, advocacy, and even the creation of new tools to address the problem on a bigger scale. We're excited that the students chose water stewardship as a legacy project that will be pursued by all at the Senior School for years to come.







## OUR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

### The KCS Mission Statement has long made clear that learning is an ongoing expectation for our whole community, not just our students.

**1 Communication** is an area of activity that will remain a priority. This 'Stories from the Journey' is just the most recent example of how we're working to ensure all can follow our progress and see how their contributions are making a difference in students' lives.

**2** The new Student Information System (**PowerSchool**) and our new Learning Management System (**Schoology**) are powerful new tools we're working to master. Our Director of IT Curriculum, Stacy Marcynuk, and our Database Manager, Peggy McBean, in addition to external support, will help us learn about and increasingly use their features.

**3 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion** are topics embraced as a school-wide area of focus. These aren't new areas of attention. Our longstanding commitment to citizenship has included many efforts to support optimal community learning. Our November 11th Early Dismissal Day included a workshop on identity led by KCS Learning Partner Cora-Lee Conway from [High Resolves](#). Our engagement with Philip Cote and our new relationship with Water First also represent the start of our journey to better understand our responsibilities toward Indigenous

members of our community, the learning this undertaking will include, and the role we will play in honouring truth and reconciliation.

**4 Assessment** designed to best support student learning was chosen as an area of focus last spring. Supported by consultant Jason Smith, we've created tools and processes that align with Ministry guidelines and the [standards-based assessment](#) practices that contribute to student success. Our unique tool so impressed a Ministry official that she recommended we publish it.

**5** We have also been reviewing and updating our **student trip policies** to support our experiential secondary school program. We have engaged external consultant Ryan Howard and Alive Outdoors to support this exercise.

**6** Delivering our **experiential learning program** with students has included the launch of our staff's own experiential learning. Designing courses within our curriculum framework, engaging in assessment, building community, starting the KCS Path Program and KCS By Design, introducing clubs, working with Learning Partners and more all represent areas where we're learning by doing.

Of course, overseeing a school and a construction project during a pandemic has also made for unexpected learning in medicine, public health, and engineering. Throughout, we're grateful to have been supported by experts and our community as we build something special together.



I hope you've found this collection of updates as interesting as we've found the journey. Please email if you have any questions.

Kind regards,

**ANDREA**

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# KINGSWAY

## COLLEGE SCHOOL

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