

The Peak to Peak Alumni Magazine

Piqued

/'pēkt/ (verb) to excite interest or curiosity, to arouse an emotion or provoke to action



RESONATE

Volume 6: Issue 1
December 2022

To reach students in meaningful ways and to evolve our educational approach requires constant examination of our curriculum, our processes, and our offerings. In this issue, we highlight the work we are doing to make programmatic adaptations that appeal to students' personal interests and emotional needs while still meeting the rigorous requirements of a college preparatory program.

In this issue:

- New Electric Bus Fleet
- Field Trips are Back!
- Accurate, Motivational, & Bias-Resistant Grading
- Combined Humanities
- Integrated Math Pathways

A Message from Ms. Klein

Executive Director of Education



Dear Peak to Peak alumni,

Taking the first steps into any new role is an exciting transition, and that's certainly true when you're starting out in leadership. You've worked hard to advance your career, and in turn you've been rewarded with the chance to lead a team, a department or an organization. You served yourself when you were working to advance your own career, now as a leader you are called to serve others.

As Peak to Peak's new Executive Director of Education, I am excited to serve this dedicated educational community. Peak to Peak is often described as a school that is both incredibly accomplished and one that possesses great potential. It's reasonable to ask, how can a school be both rooted in its mission and values while being committed to change? The simple answer is that Peak to Peak has always been driven to do what is best for its students and to prepare them for the world beyond our campus. As our student population continues to evolve, we have a duty to examine our current practices and adapt them in a manner that meets the needs of those we serve.

Our founders recognized years ago that there was a need for a school like Peak to Peak. One where students are seen as individuals, where diversity, equity, and inclusion matter, and where access to diverse perspectives would prepare students for college success in an increasingly diverse world. Peak to Peak has made an enduring commitment to implement research based best practices that serve the needs of our students and these practices are flexible enough to change as the need arises.

The school's vision challenges us to inspire students to fulfill their academic dreams for college. Our strategic plan supports us to inspire and prepare each of our students for success.

Our core areas of focus continue to be:

- NURTURE HUMANS
- COLLABORATE & ENGAGE
- EXPAND INNOVATION
- MAINTAIN EXCELLENCE
- SUPPORT MATURATION

A Peak to Peak education (past, present, and future) begins with educational excellence; we remain committed to developing an ongoing love of learning and responsible community members.

As a new leader at Peak to Peak, I am inspired not only by current Peak to Peak students but the school's alumni who are clearly shaping our world on a larger scale. Your stories and accomplishments, which appear throughout the magazine, are evidence that the value of a quality public charter education lasts a lifetime. I am grateful for the opportunity to lead a school that has been and continues to be a driving force for excellence in the world at large.

All my best,

Jennifer A. Klein

Jennie Klein
Executive Director of Education





On the cover: Students cheer for their classmate for answering a challenging or vulnerable question related to the ten executive functioning skills addressed in the 6th grade Transitions class.

Left: A high school student celebrates a team win during a lunchtime trivia challenge.

Above top: Middle school "tech buddies" worked with Kindergarten students to learn some of the features of our school Chromebooks.

Above: Seventh grade students pause for a team building moment during a walking field trip through downtown Lafayette.

Right: Elementary students use Peak to Peak's Learning Garden for numerous lessons in science and more.

News & Noteworthy

I imagine

"YOUR ART, YOUR VOICE" Yada Jaraschatrkaew (11th grade) won second place in the Colorado Art Education Association's Youth Art Month - Reimagine the Colorado Flag Art Contest. Her mixed piece, titled "Your Art, Your Voice," will be printed on a mug and was recognized for its innovative mark-making and design.



ART WITH PURPOSE

Ninth-grade student Isabel Swarr's art was selected by the city of Lafayette in the #whatmakeslafayettegreat call for pieces on sustainability. Her beautiful work "Sun" will be featured on recycling containers in Old Town Lafayette.



Connect

ROCKET SCIENCE

Peak to Peak students sent a project they designed on a United Launch Alliance's intern sport rocket. Philip Fischer (10th grade) and Calvin Johnson (10th grade) made improvements to a project they created last year for this summer's launch. They even had the opportunity to meet with the United Launch Alliance CEO to discuss their project.

[Click here to read the article.](#)

BRIAN WEE NAMED AMERICAN RHODES SCHOLAR

Brian Wee (Class of 2019) was selected as an American Rhodes Scholar for US Rhodes District 13. "The [Rhodes Scholarships](#) are the oldest and most celebrated international fellowship awards in the world. Each year 32 young students from the United States are selected as Rhodes Scholars, through a decentralized process representing the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. territories. Rhodes Scholars are chosen not only for their outstanding scholarly achievements, but for their character, commitment to others and to the common good, and for their potential for leadership in whatever domains their careers may lead." According to the [Harvard Gazette](#), while at Harvard "Wee has done research on the impact of COVID-19 on individuals with underlying health conditions. He also organized the World Pre-Health Conference, a gathering of medical students."

Brian will be attending Oxford University in the fall to pursue a Master of Science degree in International Health and Tropical Medicine and a Master of Science degree in Global Governance and Diplomacy. Following that, Brian plans to go on to medical school.

Empower

2022 OUTSTANDING YOUNG ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERS AWARD

Through Colorado's Excellence in Environmental Education program, Stella Corzine (10th grade), Abby Fitzgerald (10th grade), and Josie Karr (10th grade) won the Outstanding Young Environmental Leaders Award for 2022 for their work promoting sustainability, collaborating with teens around the world and showing how environmentalism intersects with careers. They created recycling and composting videos for the school, invented eco-innovations, led an international environmental discussion with One Voice for Change, and recently presented on the All-Careers initiative to local leadership. At the 26th Annual Awards for Excellence in Environmental Education, the students were honored at a special luncheon. [Click this link to read more about this award.](#)



SUGARY DRINKS

YOUTH STEERING

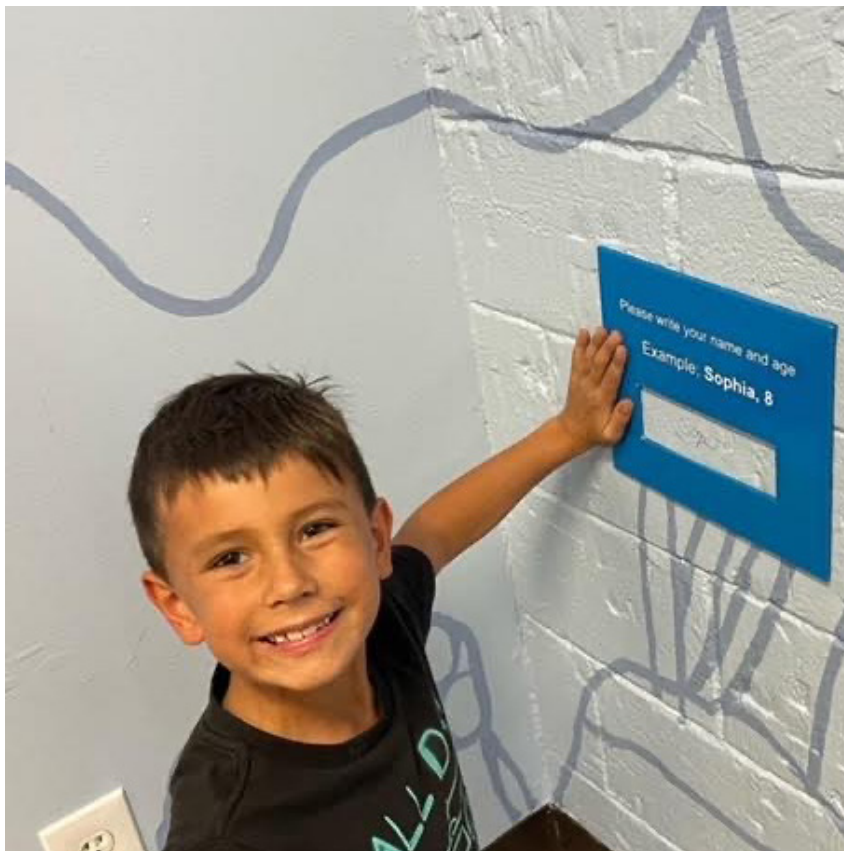
COMMITTEE Jacque Steven (9th grade) was selected to be a member of the Sugary Drinks Youth Steering Committee as a part of Boulder County Public Health. She will be using her previous national diabetes advocacy experience and efforts to create campaigns to reduce sugary drinks, speak at city council meetings, and support the passing of a policy to ensure healthy drinks in kids' meals.



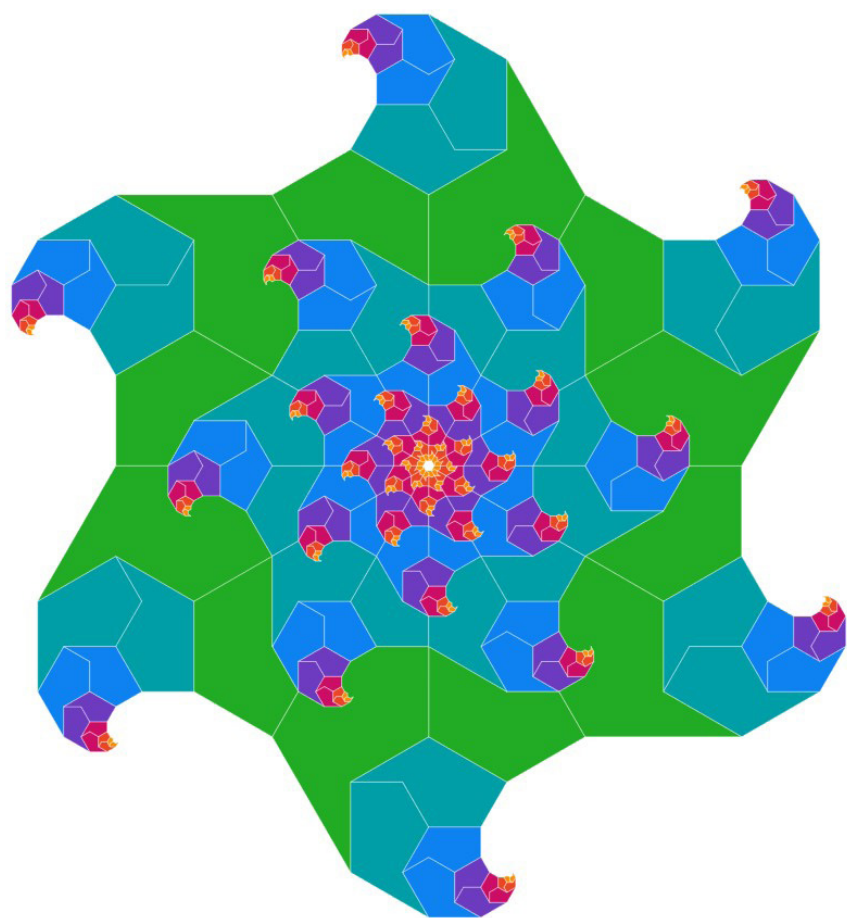
Grow

WOW DOODLE CONTEST WINNERS

The WOW Children's Museum in Lafayette welcomed the winners of the Doodle Contest. Student winners signed the museum's art on the wall and enjoyed milk and cookies at their art opening. We had many Peak to Peak Elementary artists chosen, and it is an honor that their artwork now adorns the walls of the museum. ▶



News & Noteworthy



POLYPAD ART CONTEST FINALIST

◀ Wyatt Harrison (7th grade) was a finalist in the worldwide math and art Polypad Art Contest sponsored by Mathigon. Students under the age of 18 were challenged to submit their best Polypad creations (artwork, games, puzzles, or anything created using the online tool.)

[Click this link to see the winning artwork.](#)

Shine

AUTHOR OF TOMORROW

Damian Gorsevski (7th grade) earned an honorable mention in The Author of Tomorrow contest. The annual contest, which attracts thousands of entries from preteens and teens across the nation, is designed to find the adventure writers of the future. An excerpt from Damian's work, The Prey in the Night, will be featured on the contest's website. [Click this link to learn more.](#)

RATHKE RECOGNIZED AS ATHLETE OF THE YEAR

Kourtney Rathke (11th grade) was named BoCo Preps Athlete of the Year. Kourtney had a stellar Track and Field season culminating with the state championship meet where she broke the State meet pole vault record and finished 1st place with a 12'11" jump. This was after the meet was delayed a day due to the late-May snowstorm, which resulted in her jumping at almost 11 pm in 38 degrees. Kourtney was also the state champion in the long jump (18'5"), finished 2nd in the 100m hurdles, and improved her personal best in the triple jump (37'3.25") to finish 3rd. Her performance led the Pumas to an overall 9th place team finish.

[Click here to read the BoCO Preps article.](#)

[Click here to watch a video of her winning pole vault.](#)

-
-





PEAK TO PEAK

School buses at Peak to Peak? Yes! And, it's not just one school bus, but a fleet of four new electric school buses! This fall, the school celebrated the launch of the transportation program with fanfare that included a visit from Colorado Governor Jared Polis. The governor recognized Peak to Peak as the first in Colorado with an all-electric school bus fleet. Despite the snowy weather, students, parents, staff members, and even the Puma turned out to mark the significance of the transportation solution at Peak to Peak.

"This is an exciting step toward Colorado's clean energy future, better air quality, and increased savings for Colorado schools," said Gov. Polis. "More and more schools are transitioning to electric buses to reduce costs so that money that would have gone to diesel fuel can instead go to better teacher pay and smaller class size. Peak to Peak is, once again, demonstrating leadership and excellence."

Prior to 2020, Peak to Peak had been renting Boulder Valley School District (BVSD) buses for student transportation needs. This included getting students to and from athletics and activities, as well as field trips and the long-standing and popular

Kindergarten swim program. Over the last three years, bus driver shortages have become increasingly prevalent not just in Colorado, but across the nation. BVSD had to make difficult decisions regarding the management of their transportation staff and resources, reducing schedules and eliminating the rental program. Unfortunately, this meant Peak to Peak would no longer have access to the district bus fleet for field trips, athletics, and student activities. For the last several years, the school has relied heavily on parents, guardians, and volunteers to drive to and from activities and events. Knowing that this was a temporary and inequitable solution, pivoting



to rent chartered commercial buses was also too pricey for Peak to Peak's lean budget. The school needed to find an affordable solution to ensure consistent and reliable student transportation. That is when school leaders began to explore the idea of investing in an on-site transportation program as an option.

Peak to Peak leaders engaged with Highland Electric Fleets as an affordable solution to provide transportation for student athletics and activities. Highland provides the school with full-service fleet electrification that includes financing and comprehensive services for a fixed annual fee over ten years with an option for a five-year extension.

This enabled Peak to Peak to avoid the high upfront cost of purchasing electric buses (typically \$350,000 each), and to provide clean, reliable transportation for its students at a manageable price. Highland also assisted in training the Peak to Peak's three new bus drivers and will cover bus and charger maintenance and electricity costs through a full-service agreement with the school. "Without the expertise of Highland, Peak to Peak would not have been able to build an electric bus fleet from the ground up," said Sam Todd, Executive Director of Operations. "Their knowledge of this new electric bus frontier and available grants make the program affordable."

Over the summer months, the school had the necessary electric vehicle charging stations and infrastructure installed. The buses arrived in late October and have been clocking road miles just about every day since then. In the first two weeks of operation, students traveled to six other schools for athletic events and there were 14 field trips spanning the K-12. Beginning in January, the school will be offering limited morning pick-up services in surrounding communities. So when you are out on the streets of Erie, Broomfield, Lafayette, and Louisville and you see the yellow buses with "Peak to Peak Charter School" written on the side, be sure to honk and wave!

Alumni Spotlight: Tay

Where are you now, and what are you up to?

I am currently living and working in the San Francisco Bay area as a Technical Director at Pixar Animation Studios doing character modeling and articulation. I have had the privilege to create characters for films like *Lightyear* and *Luca*.

Do you think your time at Peak to Peak helped you pursue this? If yes, how?

My time at Peak to Peak has undoubtedly helped me pursue a career in animation. In many ways, animation draws on the world around us; this is true in storytelling, character creation, lighting, movement, creating environments, texturing, FX, etc. I was trained as a generalist in college, teaching me how to work through the entire animation pipeline. While learning this, I continuously drew on information and concepts I was taught at Peak to Peak. Subjects ranging from anatomy and physics to theater and geometry, I have used it all during my time in animation. I think that being exposed to so many different ideas and subjects is one of the most significant gifts I was given at Peak to Peak. I believe that the better you understand and connect to the world around you, the better your art is. I have a continued curiosity in a range of subjects, and that curiosity was cultivated during my time there. Not to mention the fact that I dissected a cat in an anatomy class in high school came up during a job interview just before I graduated college and helped me land my first industry job doing medical animations for courtroom litigation.

Did you ever imagine doing this while you were at Peak to Peak?

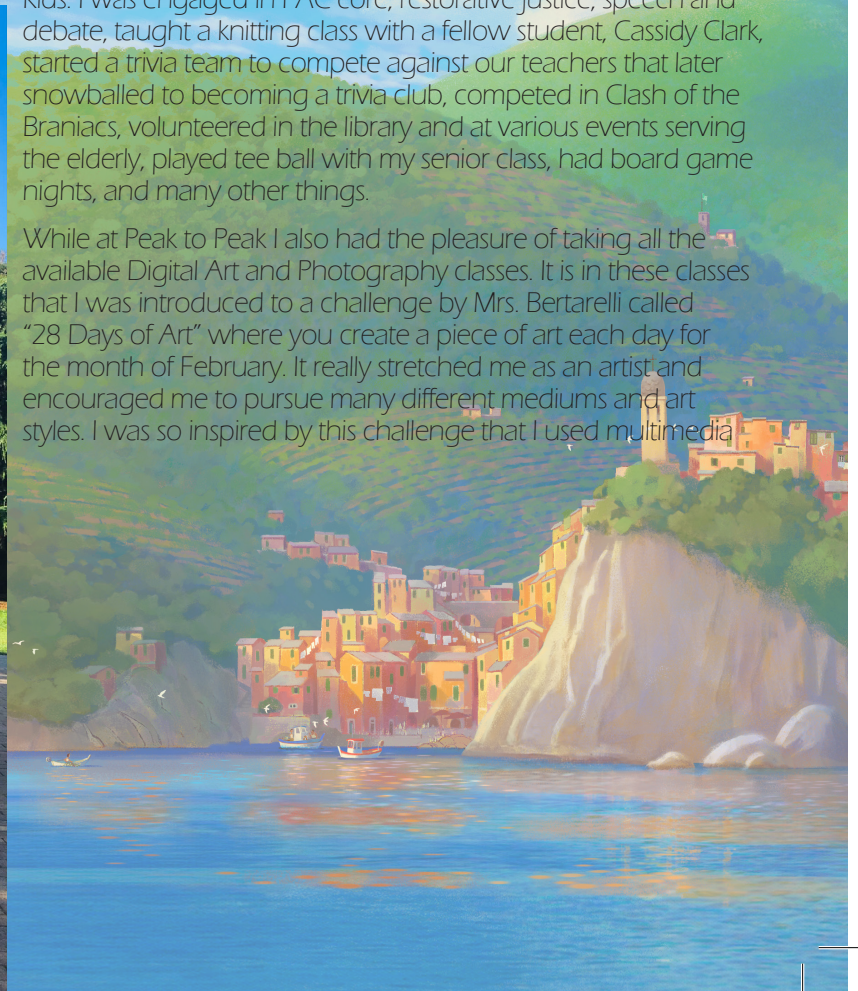
In middle school, I remember pouring over animated movies, trying to piece together how the films were made, and spending several summers in my basement trying my hand at stop-motion animation. I dreamed of being an artist but never thought I had the skill to pursue it reasonably. I had bought into the “starving artist” idea and didn’t see a way to be an artist and be successful. It wasn’t until I was in college studying math that my mentor gave me a book called ‘Art & Fear: Observations on the Perils (and Rewards) of Artmaking’ by David Bayles and Ted Orland that I decided to give myself a chance to become an artist. I remember thinking, “Someone gets paid to do this job; why not me?”

Did you participate in any out of the classroom experiences during your time at Peak to Peak that supported your interests, or what more could the school have offered you?

The best stories come from artists who create what is true to them. The more well rounded you are as a student, a person, and a community member, the better your art will be at spurring emotion and connection from people. You can’t tell stories that ring true to the human experience if you don’t go out and experience things yourself.

During my time at Peak to Peak, I was heavily involved in theater on campus as the Thespian President my senior year and off campus as a production intern for Rocky Mountain Theater for Kids. I was engaged in PAC core, restorative justice, speech and debate, taught a knitting class with a fellow student, Cassidy Clark, started a trivia team to compete against our teachers that later snowballed to becoming a trivia club, competed in Clash of the Braniacs, volunteered in the library and at various events serving the elderly, played tee ball with my senior class, had board game nights, and many other things.

While at Peak to Peak I also had the pleasure of taking all the available Digital Art and Photography classes. It is in these classes that I was introduced to a challenge by Mrs. Bertarelli called “28 Days of Art” where you create a piece of art each day for the month of February. It really stretched me as an artist and encouraged me to pursue many different mediums and art styles. I was so inspired by this challenge that I used multimedia



aylor Schulze Class of 2014

heavily in my AP art portfolio. To this day I will give myself challenges like this to help me break out of artistic ruts.

I believe in exploring anything that interests you, regardless of skill level, prior experience, and what other people may think. I'm currently looking into learning tap dancing (something I first got the opportunity to try while in a production of Pippin at Peak to Peak), as well as pottery and rock climbing.

In my experience, nothing is better than hands-on learning, and nothing is more exciting than discovering a new interest or skill that you didn't know you had. Being curious and being willing to fail are learned traits that my time at Peak to Peak instilled in me.

If anything, I wish Peak had more opportunities in areas like sculpture, wood shop, and sewing classes to provide more opportunities for students to have access to try hands-on skill building.

What education have you pursued since high school?

I initially was studying Math and Theater at Knox College but ended up switching schools to CU Denver to pursue a degree in Digital Design with an emphasis in 3D Animation. It is a fitting shift as I see animation as a perfect halfway point between the technical and logical world of math and theater's artistic and storytelling world. I love that my journey has led me to combine both the creative and the technical every day at work.

Who was your favorite teacher, and why?

This is an almost impossible question for me to answer, as my teachers at Peak to Peak have collectively had such a lasting impact on how I see and interact with the world. For example, Mrs. Chakraborty-Spotts taught me that art and math combine in so many ways. Ms. Flanhofer led me to question where information comes from and who is telling it. Mrs. Bertarelli first exposed me to flash animation, where I created my first 2D animation (I think it was about Flying Wombats). Mrs. Campbell taught me confidence and leadership. Finally, Mrs. Weiss taught me attention to detail and how beautiful stories can both inspire and devastate.

Are you still friends with anybody you met at Peak to Peak?

Despite life scattering us across the country and world, I am still great friends with several Peak to Peak Alums. The friends I made are the kind where we can pick up right where we left off, even after months of not talking. I still love the friends I made in theater and those with whom I have spent hours playing board games, and I hope I get to see them again soon. Facetime and Zoom are excellent, but nothing beats the real deal.



What's the most influential class you've taken in college?

Life drawing was the most unexpectedly influential class I took in college outside of my 3D animation coursework. In this class, we often would warm up with 10-second sketches. Our job was to get the whole figure on paper in 10 seconds. Learning to work quickly from rough to fine and be open to feedback early on in the artistic process helped me not be precious about my work. There is a Stephen Sondheim quote that I have taken to heart that runs in the same vein: "Art is a craft, not inspiration." Art is something you work at, not something that simply happens. Working rough and getting feedback early is a practice that allows your work to get better faster and your ego to take a back seat. That life drawing class taught me to be open and iterative about my work, invite feedback, and not get hung up when it feels like inspiration isn't striking. Art is a craft, not inspiration.

What would you like to tell your fellow alumni?

If you find yourself thinking, "I can't," stop to ask yourself why you think that. The only true failure comes from a lack of trying.

Faculty Spotlight: And



At left: Peak to Peak students during a multi-day hike to an isolated community in Costa Rica, 2008

Below: Current Peak to Peak senior working on the cement and mortar mixture alongside Mayan hosts in the Guatemalan Highlands, 2022.



Then...



How long have you worked at Peak to Peak, and what classes have you taught?

This is my 20th year at Peak to Peak! I have taught 6th through 12th grade and every Spanish class in the World Languages Department except for Conversation and Heritage. I might be getting old enough to have my original students' kids in my classes pretty soon! Yikes!

How is the school (and/or students) different from when you first worked here?

I have really appreciated the efforts and initiatives that have taken place to help every student feel included. Through our Pumas Authentically Connecting program and affinity groups such as Latino Student Union, Asian Student Union, Black Student Union, and Allies, more students of various backgrounds have increasingly felt included, recognized, and celebrated. I also really appreciate the important work my colleagues are doing in helping all students to increasingly see themselves represented in our curriculum. Lastly, our honors societies, clubs, and service groups continue to grow and provide additional ways for students to develop, connect, and serve our school and community

What's the secret to a successful class?

The more students can see themselves as a vital part of a classroom community, the better they typically engage. It's really important for me to see each student as they are, learn about their life, and help them toward Spanish fluency at a level that may even exceed their own expectations. A community atmosphere based on common goals and the expectation that we all are helping and caring for each other can go a long way.

Tell us about your recent successes/adventures?

This past July, I went with a group of 19 local youth to the Guatemalan highlands. We worked with an amazing organization that is empowering indigenous women to fight for their rights and improve opportunities for their communities. We worked alongside Mayan families to build fuel-efficient stoves that don't emit smoke into the home, and given we had several Marshall fire victims on the trip, connected in profound ways with displaced communities.

Now!



dy Matthews

You are the driving force behind our first Peak Week. Can you tell us more about your past with experiential learning and why that's important to you?

I can point to the moment I knew I wanted to be a teacher. Shortly before starting law school, I was an Outward Bound instructor in Costa Rica, leading a group of students on a 30-day trek across the country from the Atlantic to the Pacific, oftentimes using machetes because there was hardly a trail, and carrying packs that were heavier than anything I've worn before or since. Witnessing the students' growth was transformative, particularly that of a student who had previously abused substances, eventually crying under a waterfall with pride and awe after accomplishing more than he thought possible. Learning through meaningful experiences is our most profound learning. These experiences can help shape who we are and what we want in life. Peak to Peak has grown throughout the years in its incorporation of experiential education in our curriculum, both on and off campus. Peak Week is a way to create time and space for initiatives that are already happening, and most importantly, guarantee every student has access to multiple opportunities that could shape their future and serve as some of their most memorable moments at our school.



What message would you like to leave for our Alumni?

We miss you! Every one of you has left your mark at our school and on all of us as your teachers. I am so glad I took this job 20 years ago and am grateful for all the unique and amazing individuals with whom I have been able to share life's path. You are always invited and welcomed to write to us or pay us a visit and update us on your life. It would be great to hear from you and see you!

What section of the bookstore would we find you in and why?

Travel! I would be reading sections of travel books, deciding where I want to go on a future adventure :). Another genre I enjoy is historical fiction or novels based on a true story. I always enjoy learning.



Above: Visit with Nobel Peace Laureate Rigoberta Menchú Tum, 2013

Top Right: Students listening to Rosario discuss Perú at her restaurant, 2022

Bottom Right: La Sociedad Honoraria Hispánica 2020



Field Trips are Back!

For two and a half long years, field trips have been on hold. Closures due to the pandemic, social distancing restrictions, and a school bus driver shortage among other complications had contributed to a halt in what could arguably provide the most influential learning experiences of a student's elementary and secondary education - field trips! The 2022-23 school year has reignited

learning with a plethora of field trip opportunities. Even before the launch of the new electric bus fleet, teachers have been incorporating "walking field trips" into their instructional plans, visiting local parks, museums, historic markers, and ecological sites.

Of particular note, this fall, all middle school students participated in community-building field trips at the start of the school year. These tone-setting adventures have captured the spirit of Peak to Peak's small school environment.

Sixth-graders went to the Y of the Rockies for an inaugural overnight trip. The veteran sixth-grade teaching team, in partnership with key leadership and support staff, designed a 3-day, 2-night trip that included science and nature labs, low-ropes challenges, large group games, campfire skits, and other community-building opportunities. Seventh-graders participated in an all-day outdoor field trip to the Genesee Challenge Course, where they engaged in teamwork, problem solving, and healthy risk-taking through high- and low-ropes course challenges. The eighth-grade class also enjoyed an all-day field trip to the Genesee Challenge Course on a separate date and can claim to be the first students to use our new electric buses. This particular field trip for the eighth grade class was a recaptured opportunity due to COVID restrictions in place last year. We are proud of all of our students for participating in these field trip opportunities as a means to connect with each other as a graduating class and step outside of their own comfort zones as they continuously grow forward.

Be sure to check out the updates about the new Peak Week program! This year, for the first time ever, all high school students will complete a required one-week experiential learning course as a part of this new curricular program.

Experiential





It's not just the middle school students enjoying the return of field trips as a learning experience. Just look at this list from the fall semester alone:

- Kindergarten: Miller Farms
- 2nd grade: The Arvada Center
- 3rd grade: Skate City
- 4th grade: Skate City
- 6th grade: Lamont Does Park
- 6th grade: Y of the Rockies
- 7th grade: Genesee Ropes Course
- 8th grade: Genesee Ropes Course
- 10th grade: Community service in Lafayette (Rock Creek, Lafayette Elementary, WOW Museum, Josephine Commons, Waneka Farm)
- 11th grade: Miner's Museum
- 11th grade: Waneka Lake for outdoor team building activities
- 12th grade: Ninja Nation
- Combined Humanities students: Denver Art Museum
- Combined Humanities students: Center for Colorado Women's History at Byers-Evans House
- Combined Humanities students: Centennial Farms
- Combined Humanities students: The Counterterrorism Education Learning Lab (CELL)
- Spanish 40 students: Museum of Boulder
- Spanish 45 students: Museum of Boulder
- CHAEO students: Pioneer Elementary (each month)
- Heritage Speakers students: Museum of Boulder
- Biology students: Denver Zoo
- Biology students: Coal Creek Trail
- Sources of Strength members: BVSD Student Services
- PAC leaders: La Foret for leadership training
- AP Art and AP Art History students: Meow Wolf
- Theater students: ThesCon Denver

At Center: The High School Girls Cross Country team huddles before their end of season meet.

Clockwise from the top: Middle School's Nukumori members hoist the "House Cup" with a championship win this fall.

The front office staff show up in style for Halloween.

Middle school students stop to take in this public art message during a walking field trip in Lafayette.

The annual "Chuck the Chicken" event bonds the 9th grade class and heralds in the new school year.

On "Rainbow Colors Day," the 5th grade class shows their spirit by dressing in red.

Each year on College Day, high school students have the opportunity to meet and speak with dozens of college representatives from around the nation.

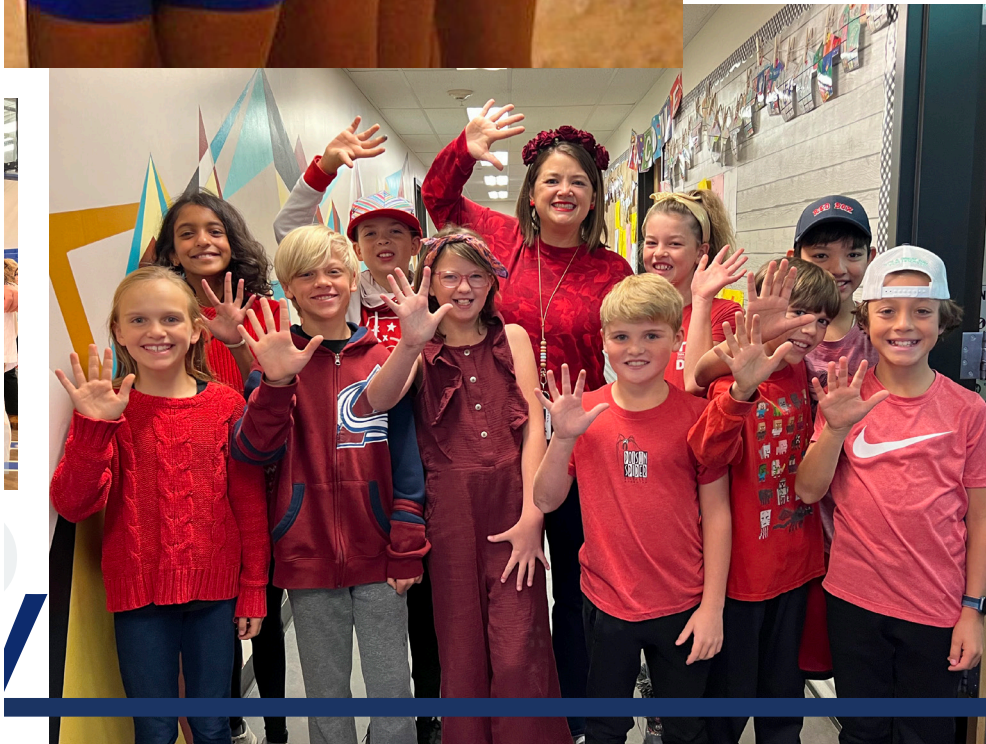
Our student leaders (PAC) give incoming 9th grade students a tour of the campus.

"Girls on the Run" is a popular, and evidence-based program where participants build confidence, kindness, and decision-making skills.



Relationships

Building Community



Accurate, Motivational, & Bias-Resistant Grading

Peak to Peak has incorporated Standards-Based Grading since 2011. Our intention is to maintain grading systems that are accurate, motivational, and bias-resistant. The research supporting this work is well grounded by established and respected educational practitioners including Robert Marzano and Rick Wormeli. The goal is to align grades with mastery of standards and benchmarks rather than grading behavior and also to support growth prior to the end of a given grading period. Marzano's research establishes that there is little evidence to support traditional grading practices (Marzano, 2000), and as Townsley and Buckmiller write "studies show standards-based teaching practices correlate to higher academic achievement" (Craig, 2011; Schoen, Cebulla, Finn, & Fi, 2003). Standards-based grading has long been the tradition at Peak to Peak as it is a research-based best practice that puts students in the driver's seat of their own learning.

The use of 1-4 point rubrics has been in place similarly for over a decade. The rubric scores are aligned with percentages in order to equate to a letter grade. We use rubrics to help all students know what is expected and how to achieve the learning goals they hope to achieve. We also use rubrics to help students see their growth over time and see that it's very possible to show mastery and earn 4's with hard work. A video recently produced for current families examines [student learning and rubrics](#), detailing how rubrics help our students target their own learning growth and how we communicate this information to students and families.

This year many of our eighth-grade classrooms and our 6-12 science classes are implementing a research-based full standards-based grading approach. Our [second informational video](#), explores what this might look like on a content area test for a student and how it might show up in Infinite Campus. As you will see

in the video, this more fully aligned standards-based grading model empowers a student with detailed feedback so that they can better understand the specific areas for growth and improvement.

All of our grading practices fall under the board-approved policies and include the expectation that all students will receive a letter grade and percentage grade for all classes at the secondary level. This is true of all secondary classes at Peak to Peak and there is no intention of changing this approach as it is valuable information that students need when applying to college and to measure their mastery of a subject. At the heart of our grading is the goal of providing students and families with a measurement that is accurate, bias-resistant, and motivational. This is grounded in our use of standards-based grading across secondary classrooms.

Below: After over twenty years, the trees on campus have matured and each year the leaves add to the fun on the playground.





• Combined Humanities

• In the fall of 2018, Peak to Peak introduced a new opportunity for students interested in taking both AP U.S. History and AP Language and Composition. These classes were combined into a single course to address the overlap between the shared content and desired skill development. Students greatly benefited from this approach and from the team-teaching model. The success of this approach appeared in performance data and in the overwhelmingly positive student feedback in favor of continuing this model. In turn, this prompted modifications to the school building and modifications to course offerings.

During the summer of 2021, the wall between rooms 175 and 185 on the first floor of the high school building was removed. This renovation created a team teaching space that could accommodate up to 64 students, providing the two required exits and including a movable wall to allow the flexibility of returning to two classrooms when needed. Merging these classrooms created the space needed to expand opportunities to more students.

This year, all junior level English and history sections are combined to use this collaborative teaching approach, regardless of AP enrollment, as a way to further explore whether the combined approach is working. Expanding this class provides each 11th grade student with exposure to the type of college-level skills and thinking that this combined experience offers. Students receive

separate grades for each course. The rigorous standards of both disciplines are retained, but student learning moves beyond the boundaries of isolated subjects, textbooks, and classroom walls. Student-centered, problem-based projects guide instruction designed around college-level reading, research, and critical thinking. High-level skill building provides the foundation for experiential learning trips, expert guest speakers, and high-stakes public writing assignments. The class includes ten off-site experiences ranging from visiting sites in Denver such as the Center for Colorado Women's History at Byers-Evans House and Blair-Caldwell African American Museum, to visiting local sites like the Lafayette Historical Society's Miner's Museum. These experiences take place during class time, leveraging Peak to Peak's unique double block scheduling which creates a three-hour class period for these courses.

Students taking both US History and Language and Composition are in one singular class with both instructors, allowing for truly unique experiences, collaborative opportunities, and a cohesion in instruction that was not possible with separate classes. Any student who wishes may enroll in the AP version of the Language and Composition class and/or the AP U.S. History class. The entire combined class is designed to be collegiate prep; however, students who opt to officially take one or both APs receive additional materials

and support throughout the year to prepare specifically for the AP test. These materials and support are available to non-AP enrolled students as extensions. Assessments and assignments for students officially enrolled in the AP version are intended as preparation for the AP exam in form and content. As expected in all of Peak to Peak's AP course offerings, students enrolled in one or both AP versions of the class are expected to take the corresponding AP exam.

Students previously referenced this course as APUSH ("A-Push"), but you may be curious to know how the students are referring to these combined courses, today. The HUMS (rhymes with "numbs") curriculum is challenging and academically invigorating, but also aims to be accessible to students of all learning styles and abilities willing to put in the work to grow and be successful in the class. Students who have chosen the challenge of enrolling in both AP Language and Composition and AP U.S. History, are affectionately referring to the combined course as APHU (pronounced "A-Poo").

Regardless of the name, students are presented with the opportunity to engage in an exciting, positive learning environment that stimulates thinking critically about themselves, American history and literature, our modern society, and the development of their own written and verbal skills.

Above: Library Teacher, Ace Engelmann, works with students in the combined humanities classroom.



Upcoming Events:

January 2023

1/11 5 PM Board of Directors meeting, CCC

1/19 5PM K-12 Spirit Night, Northeast gym

February 2023

2/8 5 PM Board of Directors meeting, CCC

2/9 7 PM Middle School Play, Auditeria

2/10 7 PM Middle School Play, Auditeria

2/11 2 PM & 7 PM Middle School Play, Auditeria

2/23 6 PM Gala Concert, Auditeria

March 2023

3/8 5 PM Board of Directors meeting, CCC

3/10 5:30 PM The Peak Gala, Omni Hotel

3/15 6:30 PM Community Q&A, Google Meet

April 2023

4/5 5 PM Board of Directors meeting, CCC

4/18 6 PM Band Concert, Auditeria

4/20 6 PM Orchestra Concert, Auditeria

4/24 6 PM Choir Concert, Auditeria

4/27 7 PM Middle School Play, Auditeria

4/28 7 PM Middle School Play, Auditeria

4/29 2 PM & 7 PM Middle School Play, Auditeria

May 2023

5/3 5 PM Board of Directors meeting, CCC

5/4 5:30 PM Secondary 1-Act Play, Auditeria

5/13 Thespian Performance

5/17 5 PM Board of Directors meeting, CCC

5/19 5 PM Senior Graduation, Northeast Gym

[Click here to see a calendar of Athletic Events](#)

Grow

Above: Elementary Students gather for a photo on a sunny fall day.

Below: Middle school "tech buddies" work with Kindergarten students to learn some of the features of our school Chromebooks.

Right top: On "Rainbow Colors Day," the 4th grade class shows their spirit by dressing in orange

Right bottom: Orchestra students work together to prepare for the end-of-semester concert.



Integrated Math Pathway

Peak to Peak students on the standard track will soon be learning mathematics through an integrated pathway. Starting in the fall of 2023, the traditional pathway of Algebra 1, Geometry, and Algebra 2 will be replaced with Integrated Math I, II, and III. Through these courses, students will develop and maintain a growth mindset as they learn math in a collaborative, collectivist model. Instead of working independently on numeric problems only, this approach encourages students to reflect on processes as they move along the curriculum. Anita Chakraborty-Spotts, a Middle and High School Math teacher, is teaching a pilot of the Integrated Math I class this year at the 9th grade level. She said, "The pathways we've created haven't changed; what we're allowing is 'spiralization' of ideas. Collaboration between students. Students talk a lot more in the classroom - we know if students are talking they retain more information!"

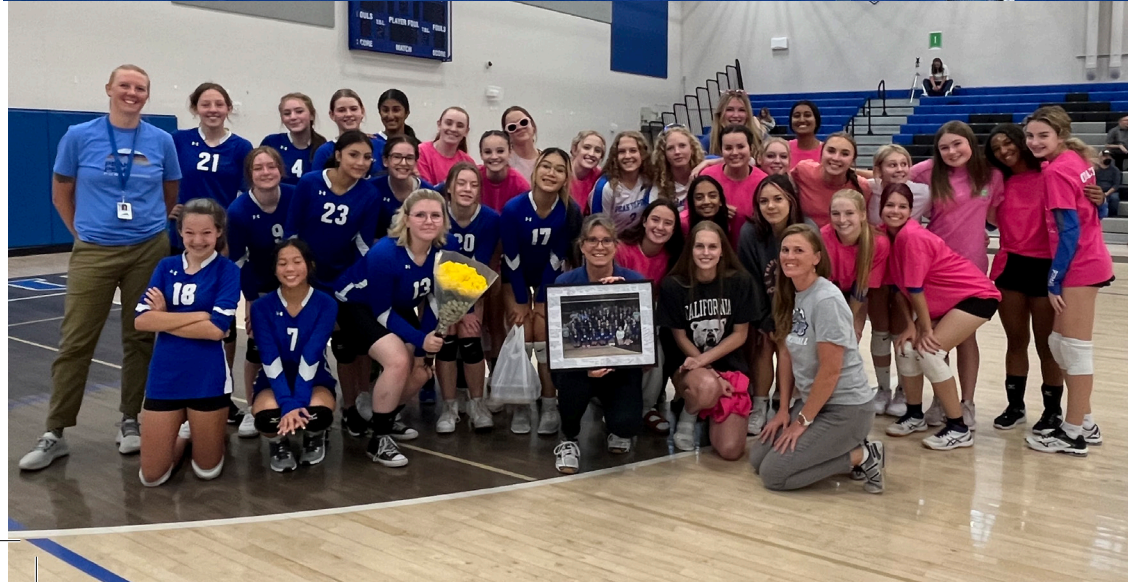
In Chakraborty-Spotts' pilot class, students are applying math concepts in real life situations. Recent projects have included mapping the Overland Trail, board game strategies, and even life budgeting to assess the difference in life styles afforded by varying levels of education attainment. Students are spending a lot more time building on what they know, building on their success.

Another aspect of the integrated math curriculum that prepares

students for the collegiate environment is the integration of writing into their math experience. This approach matches what college and university partners say best prepares students to be successful as they move onto college. It is our hope that the integrated math program meets the needs of all students, both college bound and those headed directly into the workforce. Focusing on real-world applications, students will be successful both at Peak to Peak and onto their next ascent.



Athletics



FALL
2022

BONUS: [Click this link](#) to read a local news article featuring a family of Peak to Peak athletes and team coaches.



Post-Season Success!

For the first time in Peak to Peak's history, all six fall high school sports posted winning seasons and advanced to the post-season play.

- It had been seventeen years since the Peak to Peak High School Boys Soccer team had played in the 3A State Championship game. Though the team walked away with a 2nd place trophy, the game was hard-fought and the players can be proud of their performance.
- After winning the regional tournament, the Softball team moved on to the state tournament for the second year in a row.
- The Boys Tennis team won the Longmont Invitational before heading to the state matches.
- Girls Volleyball had a strong showing at the state tournament against tough competition.
- The Boys Cross Country team placed 10th overall and the Girls team placed 8th in the state at the championship meet.
- Boys Golf finished in 6th place, with the promise that this young team will be back and stronger than ever next year.
- Peak to Peak athletes playing sports at other high schools advanced to win major championships. Monarch's Hockey team won the pre-season championship tournament.
- For the second year in a row the Broomfield High School's Girls Gymnastics team won the 5A State Championship. Several Peak to Peak students compete with the team.

Traditions Bring Us Together



her: Homecoming Tailgate

The Homecoming Tailgate Party has become an annual tradition that brings our community together to build school spirit, make new friends, and have a little fun. With lawn games, face-painting, food trucks, and two athletic events, there was something for everyone at this year's event. We even sang and shared cake for Puma Pete's birthday! With the support of our K-12 families in the stands to route them on, both the High School Girls Volleyball team and the High School Boys Soccer team had big wins.

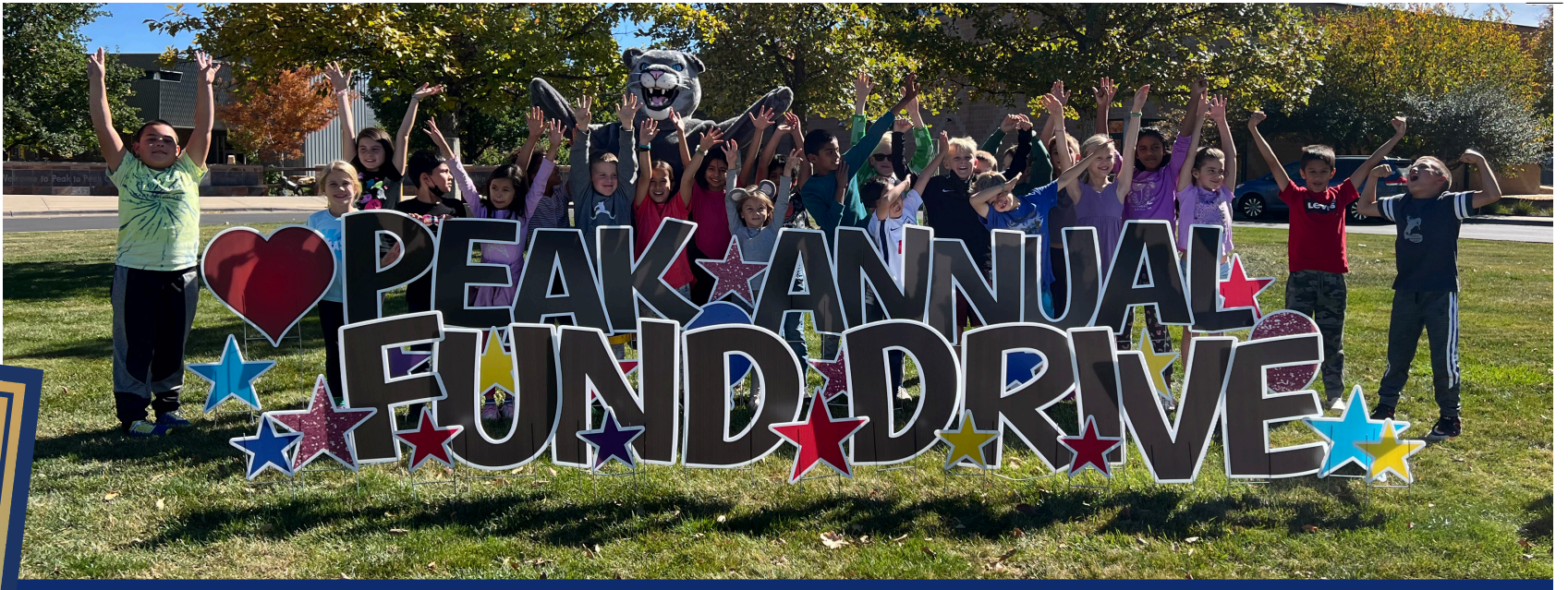




FRIENDS OF PEAK TO PEAK

Alumni students and families are invited with a special discounted "Alumni" ticket price to attend our annual gala on March 10th, 2023 at the Omni Hotel. We'd love to "Sea" you! Our gala committee is always looking for new items to include in our online auction. If you know of a business who may be interested in showcasing their business through our robust auction viewed by over 1,000 bidders, please [fill out our auction item form](#) or contact p2p.friends@bvsd.org. Thank you!

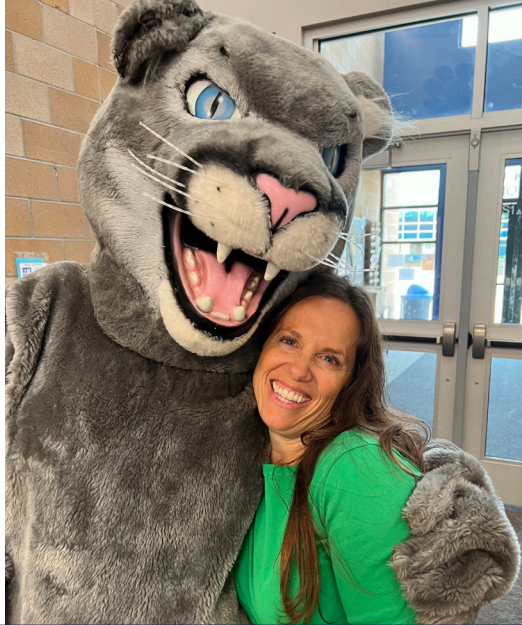




In town Thursday, January 19th?
Come cheer on our High School
Girls and Boys Basketball teams as
they play Colorado Academy on our
special Spirit Night at Peak to Peak!
Games run from 4-8pm.

Grandparents & Special Friends Day





Boomerang Pumas: Alumni on Staff

Kaylee (Hall) Stone, Class of 2018
High School Learning Services Para

Abbey Yaron, Class of 2009
Middle School Counselor





Clockwise starting from the top left:

Students gather on the newly remodeled playground early in the school year.

Hot air balloons that frequently fill the skies over Lafayette drift close to the campus, providing a picturesque morning start to the school day.

Students visit with representatives from colleges, universities, and military branches on College Day, 2022.

Students in the Guitar Lab course find a spot on campus where they can practice together.

Students in the Hack Club puzzle through challenges during an after school gathering. Middle School Counselor, Andrea Salvo, pauses for a photo with the Puma mascot.



Alumni Updates

Class of 2011

Kyle Archer

Current City: Longmont, CO
Graduations: A.A.S. Network and Server Administration, Kirkwood Community College, 2019
Current Job: Lumen Technologies

Class of 2013

Isaac Friesen

Current City: Redondo Beach, CA
Graduations: B.A. Economics, University of Hawaii at Manoa, 2017
Current Job: General Manager, SoCal Shepherds Collegiate Baseball Ministry
Marriages: Heather Friesen, 2018

Class of 2017

Cambria Pilger

Current City: Broomfield, CO
Graduations: B.A. Journalism & Mass Media Communication, Whitworth University, 2020
Current Job: Environmental Educator, Eco-Cycle

Class of 2018

Diego Olaya

Current City: Lafayette, CO
Graduations: B.S. Physics, California Institute of Technology, 2022;
PhD, Physics, University of Colorado Boulder, TBD

Class of 2021

Dannica Sims

Current City: Lafayette, CO
Graduations: Undergraduate, Mechanical Engineering, Johns Hopkins University
Current Job: Manufacturing Lab Student Worker, WSE Manufacturing Lab

Alumni:

We want to hear from you!

As our school matures, our alumni community grows. Stay connected with us so that you can participate in alumni events and opportunities. Use the links on the opposite page to send us your contact information and updates, join our LinkedIn community, or follow us on Facebook.

**Once a Puma,
Always a Puma!**

Peak to Peak is Hiring!

[Click this link](#)

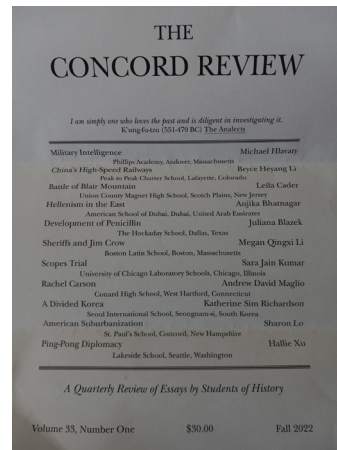
to see our current openings.
Please consider applying and share these opportunities with your networks.

Below: School principals and other administrators came in full costume on Halloween. Alumni, we welcome you back to Oz whenever you are in town!






Aidan Stevens, Class of 2020, is a current Montana State Architecture student. He visited Peak to Peak's architecture class to share a studio project that he recently completed for a museum proposal. In turn, students showed him their SketchUp models for a class design project.



Bryce Li, Class of 2022, had his senior Humanities Research Capstone work "China's High-Speed Railways" was recently accepted for publication in the Concord Review's fall edition. The Concord Review is one of the only quarterly journals in the world to publish the academic research papers of secondary students and is highly selective in its publication process.



Inspiring all students to reach their peak potential

Looking for a meaningful and impactful way to recognize your time at Peak to Peak and/or honor a teacher, counselor, or coach who had a significant positive impact on you?


Consider a gift in their honor to the Peak to Peak Scholarship Fund. This is an easy way to thank someone who has made a difference in your life while leaving a legacy to support future Pumas.

Please [click HERE](#) to make your gift and honorary designation. The honoree will be notified of your contribution to support the Peak to Peak Scholarship Fund which each year benefits four Peak to Peak seniors who need additional funding to continue their education.

Thank you.

for more information please visit

GIVE.PEAKTOPEAK.ORG



Artists on the Back Cover:



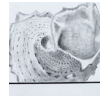
Sydney Cusack
10th grade



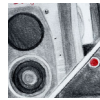
Suntali Donahue
12th grade



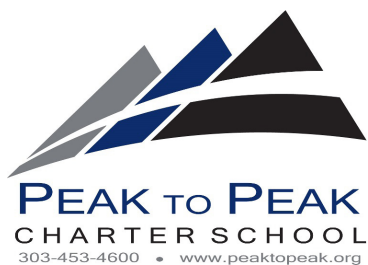
Nora Kliebenstein
11th grade



Mia Ritchie
12th grade



Gabi Drozdewicz
10th grade



Stay Connected

Fill out [this form](#)



Join our [LinkedIn page](#)



Like our [Facebook page](#)



