



Connection

CARROLL SCHOOL MAGAZINE / 2025-2026 The Limitless Issue

Endless possibilities
start somewhere.

At Carroll, we're planning for a future
where the infinite potential of students
who think and learn differently is
recognized and realized.

CARROLL SCHOOL MAGAZINE / 2025-2026

The Limitless Issue



Endless possibilities
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CARROLL 2030

We will help shape a world that embraces difference and where students who think and learn differently have infinite potential.

Advance Teaching & Learning

Carroll will lead the future of educating students with language-based learning differences (LBLDs/dyslexia) by advancing evidence-based practices, driven by data and neuroscience, to ensure students' academic and social-emotional success.

Commitment to the Human Experience

Carroll will foster a culture of belonging, diversity, and equity by attracting and retaining mission-aligned students and adults across all dimensions, creating an inclusive community with competitive compensation and diverse representation.

Invest to Support Growth

Carroll will strategically invest in reimagining campus spaces and developing a financially responsible plan to support its mission, enabling enrollment growth and the achievement of strategic goals.

Expand Our Impact

Carroll will extend its expertise in educating students with language-based learning differences (LBLDs/dyslexia) through research, community partnerships, and educator training to improve academic outcomes beyond its campuses.

CARROLL



Learn more about how we're taking action on Carroll 2030.



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Our Mission

Carroll School empowers children with language-based learning differences, such as dyslexia, to become academically skilled students who are strong self-advocates and confident lifelong learners. Carroll is an inclusive community committed to embracing diverse strengths, identities, and lived experiences in order to give each child what they most need to thrive.

A Letter from Our Head of School

Envisioning A Future Without Limits

AT CARROLL SCHOOL, we believe in infinite potential—our students’ promise, our mission’s impact, and the possibilities ahead. This belief has always been at the heart of Carroll, a truth I was reminded of recently.

In January, I joined a cohort of heads from around the world at Teachers College at Columbia University. While there, I explored archival letters between pioneers in dyslexia education, including one of Carroll’s founders, Dr. Edwin Cole, as well as Dr. Samuel Orton (who discovered what we now know as dyslexia) and his wife, June Orton. In 1971, when Carroll moved to our Lincoln, Massachusetts campus, Dr. Cole hosted a meeting of dyslexia scholars, including June Orton. She opened the meeting in admiration of Dr. Cole, saying to the group:

“We all ‘have had a dream,’ a dream of schools like this to serve [dyslexic] children in our own communities and elsewhere, and now we can point to this achievement of yours and say: ‘What has been done, can be done.’”

That vision is alive every day at Carroll: In alumni sharing their journeys with our fourth and fifth graders, inspiring them with stories of how thinking differently has shaped their lives. In a packed room of educators, using cutting edge research to inspire instruction and build curricula that drives productive struggle.



In the Upper School community cheering on a student launching a rocket—an idea sparked in a student-driven Fab Lab lunch club.

As we look ahead with **Carroll 2030**, our strategic plan, we remain deeply rooted in our mission while embracing bold possibilities for the future. Our vision is clear: a world that sees, understands, and celebrates the infinite potential of students who learn differently.

In this issue of *Carroll Connection*, you’ll see that vision in action today—and our plan for tomorrow.

In partnership and joy,

DR. RENÉE GREENFIELD



My child is growing into a more confident student who participates meaningfully in class. The certainty his teachers have in his intelligence and capabilities is the secret sauce.

The Plante Family



In less than 3 months, our daughter has read more than 13 young adult novels. If not for Carroll, this would be a fantasy.

The Singh Family



I am developing into a better reader and writer. My teachers are helpful and teach me how to navigate the real world.

Naren Patel



My children are able to express and see the limitless potential in themselves and their abilities. Without Carroll they might have missed all the opportunities that they have experienced.

The Anderson Family



Our son's confidence builds each year. This year, he embraced the chance to be a leader in the classroom and challenged himself academically. You can't put a price on confidence and happiness.

The Ray Family



Because of Carroll, my child is developing into an interested, interesting, confident, social, fun, literate lifetime learner, friend, and human.

The Lang Family

My child is developing into her extraordinary, authentic self. Carroll has given her the tools and support to reach her highest potential in school and beyond.

The Suzuki Family



Carroll is transforming my son's confidence and his positive attitude toward school, where he now feels capable of developing new skills and strategies for success.

The Ortega Family



My child is developing into a confident learner. He is leaving behind negative and incorrect beliefs about his abilities, fear of reading, and embarrassment for learning differently.

The Araujo and Van Dam Family

Creating a culture where students recognize and reach their

POTENTIAL



Where the Wild Things Are

6th Graders Get Creative with Adaptations

A cactus with spikes living on Mars and snacking on mushrooms. A flying crocodile navigating a swamp world. No, this isn't the latest sci-fi blockbuster—it's a day in Greg Malley's 6th grade science class.

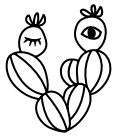
"In our biology unit, we learn about three types of animal adaptations: structural, behavioral, and physiological," explains Malley. "I wanted to give students a chance to showcase their learning and apply new vocabulary through a creative, hands-on project."

Using Carroll's makerspace in the Arts & Innovation Center, the class got to work designing 3D-printed organisms with unique adaptations and crafting shoebox ecosystems for them to live in. By incorporating its makerspace and inquiry-based learning approach, Carroll educators encourage students to explore, experiment, and engage deeply in subject matter—fostering creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills.

Let's see how it went ...



MAKERSPACE:
CARROLL'S
HANDS-ON
LAB ENVIRONMENT
WHERE STUDENTS
CAN DESIGN,
EXPERIMENT,
AND INVENT.



Organism name:
Spickatrus

Elsa DiGiusto

Tell us a bit about your organism.

I was really interested in how chameleons can camouflage. I wanted to create an organism that could blend in too, and for some reason, I thought of a cactus. Then I started thinking about how it could avoid predators. I decided it should have two heads, with one always staying awake to keep watch.

What was the design process like?

We started by describing our organism—its name and its structural, behavioral, and physiological adaptations. We also sketched out our ideas for our organism before heading to the Fab Lab. For my ecosystem, I imagined my organism living on Venus. I wanted it to be bright, so I made mountains, bamboo, and mushrooms using the 3D printer, which took a lot of trial and error. I colored the bamboo with markers and covered the mountains with clay.

What did you like about this project?

I love art and being creative, so designing the ecosystem was definitely my favorite part. I'm also really interested in earth science—why the Earth is the way it is. I like how Mr. Malley teaches because he lets us be really creative.



Organism name:
Nerazea

Alex Dunn

Tell us a bit about your organism.

My organism is a crocodile that got mutated by radio waves and UV rays. Now, it's a flying crocodile with fangs, lion claws, and a ginormous brain. It lives in a swamp and uses its rock-hard head to knock fruit off trees.

What was the design process like?

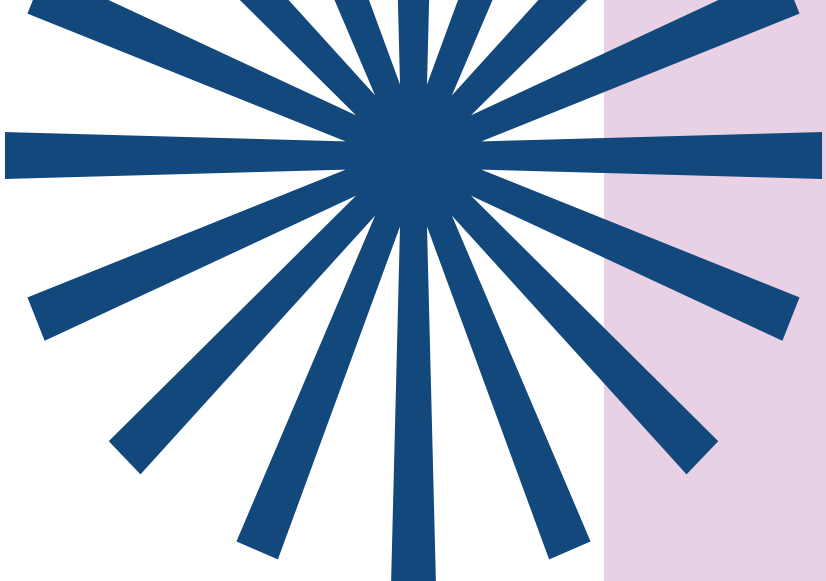
I spent two days in the Fab Lab. At first, my organism wouldn't print, which was frustrating. Then we realized I had accidentally duplicated the image inside itself.

After that, I worked on my ecosystem. I built a swamp with lots of trees. At first, I used tape to hold them up, but they kept falling over. So I grabbed real sticks from outside and used those for support. If I had more time, I would have added even more natural materials—sticks, rocks—to make it look more realistic. I learned a lot about making mistakes and how to keep trying.

What did you like about the project?

Definitely seeing the final product—especially my animal. I love how it turned out, and I liked that I got to use my imagination. The hardest part was the writing. Writing can be tough.

Learning on Every Level



Responsive Classroom Is Transforming Learning at Carroll

This year, Carroll School has made a significant investment in training educators in the Responsive Classroom approach.

Imagine stepping into a classroom where every student feels seen, valued, and ready to learn—academically, socially, and emotionally. This is the foundation of Responsive Classroom, an approach that Carroll School educators employ to build community and foster student success by intertwining social-emotional learning with academic instruction.

“Kids need to feel emotionally ready before they can feel academically ready,” says Katelyn Murphy, a third-grade teacher and Responsive

Classroom teacher lead at Carroll’s Lower School. This concept is particularly important at Carroll, where many students arrive each year having faced challenges in previous school environments. This model helps foster a sense of belonging, giving students the confidence to take academic risks and build relationships with teachers and peers.

One of the most visible aspects of this approach is the Morning Meeting. “It’s a structured time for students to greet each other, share thoughts, and engage in an activity that brings the class together,” explains Marissa Williams, a sixth-grade teacher. “The routine helps students feel grounded. When they know what to expect, they can focus on learning.”



MORNING MEETING: A DAILY ACTIVITY ACROSS GRADE LEVELS THAT SETS A POSITIVE TONE FOR THE DAY.

At the middle school level, Responsive Classroom techniques help bridge the gap between structure and independence.

Nicole Jones, an eighth-grade teacher and the middle school’s Responsive Classroom teacher lead, emphasizes the approach’s role in behavior management. “It’s about helping students be more reflective. Instead of simply saying, ‘That’s disruptive,’ we ask, ‘Why was that disruptive? How did it impact your classmates?’” This self-awareness encourages students to take ownership of their actions and encourages accountability.

Another key component is building trust through the approach. “Trust allows students to take risks,” Williams says. Whether it’s participating in a class discussion or admitting they’re struggling with a concept, students need to feel safe before they can engage fully.



“Challenge by Choice” is one strategy that gives students agency—if they’re hesitant to participate in an activity, they’re encouraged to try, but not forced. Over time, even the most reserved students find themselves stepping outside their comfort zones.

The benefits extend beyond the student-teacher dynamic, impacting the entire school culture. “Through educator training, we create a common language and shared practices,” Jones explains. “Students know what to expect, no matter which teacher they’re with.”

As Carroll continues to deepen its commitment to Responsive Classroom, educators see its long-term impact on students’ confidence, collaboration, and willingness to engage. “Ultimately, we’re not just teaching content,” Murphy reflects. “We’re teaching kids how to be part of a community—how to listen, how to problem-solve, how to support each other. That’s what makes the real difference.”

GIFTT

Keeps on Giving

Expanding the
Reach and Impact of
Our Transformative
Literacy Instruction



GIFTT: ACCREDITED BY THE ACADEMY OF ORTON-GILLINGHAM PRACTITIONERS AND EDUCATORS (AOGPE), GIFTT IS SUPPORTED BY FIVE OG FELLOWS ON STAFF—AN EXCEPTIONAL DISTINCTION THAT REFLECTS THE INSTITUTE’S LEADERSHIP, INTEGRITY, AND GOLD-STANDARD INSTRUCTION.

For nearly 50 years, the Garside Institute for Teacher Training (GIFTT) at Carroll School has been equipping educators with the knowledge and tools to teach reading using the Orton-Gillingham (OG) approach. Step inside this one-of-a-kind learning institute with an impact far beyond the Carroll campus.

What is GIFTT?

Founded in 1975 and named in honor of Alice Garside—an OG fellow trained by approach co-creator Anna Gillingham—GIFTT has grown into a leading educator training institute. Today, it offers multiple levels of Orton-Gillingham instruction and certification, staying true to its mission: ensuring more students, both at Carroll and in schools across the region, receive high-quality, evidence-based literacy instruction.

GIFTT’s training goes beyond teaching a method—it cultivates a mindset. The OG approach is diagnostic and prescriptive, empowering educators to observe student errors, uncover their root causes, and adjust instruction to meet individual needs.

Since its inception, more than 3,500 educators have completed OG training through GIFTT. These alumni now serve in Carroll classrooms, in public and independent schools, and in private practice, bringing powerful literacy instruction to students throughout Massachusetts and beyond.



“Orton-Gillingham isn’t just a program—it’s a way of thinking about teaching and being highly responsive to a student’s needs.”

Heather Lufkin, Director of GIFTT and one of Carroll’s five OG Fellows

Training That Makes a Difference

At Carroll, the OG approach is woven into every discipline—from language arts to science and music. To ensure every student benefits from expert teaching, Carroll educators receive role-specific training. Many pursue advanced certification, working alongside clinical supervisors to refine their craft.

“The coaching and feedback are what make this training so impactful,” says Lufkin. “Teachers aren’t just learning theory—they’re implementing it in real time and sharpening their skills with expert support.”

Expanding Beyond Carroll: Partnering with Boston Public Schools

In addition to training educators within Carroll, GIFTT has a long history of outreach, helping bring evidence-based literacy instruction to a broader audience. Most recently, GIFTT launched a pilot project at Curtis Guild Elementary School in East Boston, where 90% of students are multilingual learners. Through this project, 12 dedicated educators are engaged in comprehensive OG training, weekly coaching, in-class observations, and ongoing professional learning. All of this is happening on-site, within their school context.

“This partnership isn’t just about training teachers—it’s about transforming literacy instruction in public schools,” Lufkin explains. “We know OG works, and we know that high-quality training makes a difference. By embedding OG principles into general education classrooms, we’re equipping teachers with diagnostic tools to truly understand and address their students’ reading challenges.”

Dinan Messiqua, a former Carroll educator and now clinical instructor with the project, shares, “This work is deeply rewarding. We’re not just helping students read—we’re giving teachers the tools and support to change lives.”

A Lasting Impact

Whether at Carroll or in classrooms across Massachusetts, GIFTT is ensuring that more educators have the skills to help students succeed. By training educators in the science of reading, GIFTT is shaping the future of literacy instruction—one educator, one student, and one classroom at a time.



Community, Culture, and Dungeons & Dragons

Creating Meaningful Student Experiences at the Upper School

This year, Carroll Upper School introduced the role of Student Life Coordinator to strengthen community and connection among students. Let’s hear how it’s going in conversation with the inaugural title holder, Carroll math educator Sierra Thibodeau.



The Role of a Student Life Coordinator

The newly established role may be evolving, but its core mission is clear: to foster a positive, inclusive environment where students feel a strong sense of belonging. Sierra helps facilitate several key student life initiatives.

Community Time is a weekly anchor in the Upper School experience. “Sometimes we bring in guest speakers like Urban Improv, SpeakOUT Boston, or a Holocaust survivor. Other times, we focus on activities like scavenger hunts, trivia, and special projects like our Black History Month presentations.”

COMMUNITY TIME: A WEEKLY OPPORTUNITY FOR STUDENTS TO ENGAGE IN ACTIVITIES THAT FOSTER CONNECTION AND COMMUNITY.

Sierra also implements the school’s restorative justice practices, using talk circles to strengthen relationships and build community. “Students discuss friendship, traditions, and their dyslexic experiences,” says Sierra. “It’s a great way to connect.”

Fostering an Inclusive Student Culture

Understanding the needs of students—many of whom are new to Carroll in eighth grade—is key to nurturing a community of belonging. Sierra identifies student interests before they arrive, then designs lunch clubs to match.

“We offer a variety of clubs and see what sticks,” Sierra explains. “Some years, students prefer foursquare or basketball; other years, Dungeons & Dragons, games, or pottery clubs take off.” This year, volleyball became particularly popular. “At one point, half the school was playing,” she recalls with a laugh.

Developing New Mentorship Models

One of Sierra’s proudest projects is a mentorship program established with Maley Parilla, Lower School counselor, that connects ninth graders with younger students.

“Our ninth graders applied to be mentors, and we started with *Helping Hands*, a community service club,” she says. “They helped with a talent show and now run weekly social lunch groups for second- and third-graders.”

Despite giving up their own lunch and Flex time, students are eager to continue. “I like building relationships with kids who are the future of Carroll,” says Allie Darrish, an Upper School mentor.

Creating a Supportive Environment

Sierra ensures that the HAWKS framework—Honesty, Accountability, Work ethic, Kindness, and Safety—is front and center. At the start of the year, students sign agreements reinforcing these values and posters hang in each classroom.



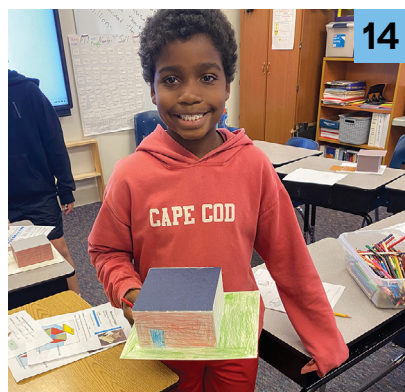
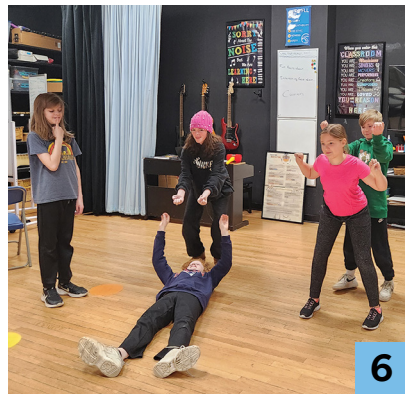
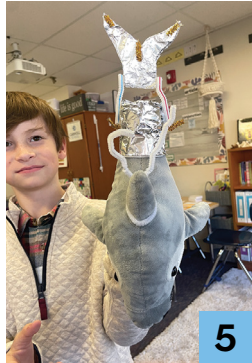
Educators also aligned on classroom expectations. “I encouraged teachers to create classroom contracts alongside students,” Sierra explains. “When students help set expectations, they’re more invested in upholding them. Students want to feel heard.”

The Impact on School Culture

“Students come in with all sorts of feelings about being at Carroll. Our goal is to create an environment where they feel connected—to their teachers, peers, and the community.”

Through mentorship, leadership opportunities, restorative practices, and creative programming, Sierra Thibodeau is helping shape a vibrant school culture—one where students feel supported, valued, and inspired to engage.

Carroll without limits



- Activity Day:** Students learned about the Lower School ERIK values: Empathy, Respect, Inclusion, Kindness.
- Physics:** Our 9th grade students designed, built, and tested projects demonstrating physics concepts like inertia and Bernoulli's principle.
- Whaling Town:** Third grade students created a detailed replica of a colonial-era whaling town, complete with period-specific shops and buildings.
- BombAntillana:** Middle School students were introduced to the music, rhythm, and culture of Boriken, the island currently known as Puerto Rico.
- Animal Prosthetics:** Injured (stuffed) animals were fitted with 5th grade student-designed prosthetics combining science, creativity, and empathy.
- Improv:** Middle-schoolers honed creativity and quick-thinking skills through improvisational acting.
- Day of Service:** Inspired by Dr. King, Upper School students volunteered at local organizations, giving back to the community.
- Math Hopscotch:** For our 4th grade students, math skills came to life in a fun, multisensory way through movement and play.
- Urban Improv:** Using improv, Upper School students explored the topic of microaggressions—how to recognize, respond to, and create inclusive spaces.
- Leadership:** Middle School student council candidates displayed their leadership skills—running positive campaigns with meaningful, achievable goals.
- Immigration:** Students in 8th grade researched immigrant experiences, conducted interviews, and crafted meaningful artifacts in the makerspace.
- Newspaper Fashion Show:** In this HAWKS Nest team-building activity, Middle School students worked together to design newspaper outfits.
- Elephant Toothpaste:** In this fun and foamy science experiment, 7th grade students investigated chemical reactions.
- Blockhouse Project:** Students in 4th grade explored volume by building, measuring, and calculating in this hands-on math project.
- A Walk in the Woods:** Upper School students explored Walden Pond and Bounders Woods, deepening their connection with nature and each other.
- Focus Area:** Students in 7th grade strengthened their Orton-Gillingham skills in a lively game of Ending Grid Bingo.

Discover more stories on Instagram @carrollschool



The RIPPLE EFFECT

A Conversation on Giving Back



For Shradha Patel, giving back to Carroll School isn't just about gratitude—it's about community, access, and making a difference. As a parent, educator, and advocate, she shares her unique perspective on why supporting Carroll, in any form, is so important.

A Journey to Carroll

Shradha's connection to Carroll began long before her son, Naren, enrolled as a fifth grader. As a former principal at Roxbury Prep High School, she placed students at Summer@Carroll and witnessed firsthand its transformative impact. But when her son struggled to unlock his full potential in reading, she found herself on the other side of the equation.

"The support at Carroll was beyond what I could have imagined," she says. "It wasn't just about teaching phonics—it was about giving him the confidence and skills to own his learning."

Exploring Financial Assistance

As a single-income household, affording tuition was a challenge. Shradha was candid with the admissions team: "I told them, 'I'll give my time, my talent—I just can't write the full check.'" Through financial assistance, she was able to make it work, and she credits Carroll's approach for removing any stigma around the process.

"There's often a sense of shame around financial aid, but Carroll makes sure families feel valued and included," she explains. "Every year, Naren writes a thank you note to the financial assistance and business office teams, because I want him to understand that people's generosity makes his education possible."

Giving Back in Meaningful Ways

For Shradha, giving back isn't just financial—it's about showing up. "There's no judgment on how people give," she says. "Some give by getting their kids to school on time. Some give by spreading the word about Carroll. Everyone gives in their own way."

She has volunteered as a tour guide for prospective families, bringing her dual perspective as both an educator and a parent. "I want people to understand that Carroll's approach isn't just feel-good—it's deeply rooted in research and outcomes," she explains.

She currently chairs the IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity Alliance) Committee, helping to support equity work at Carroll. "The work of equity and access shouldn't fall on just one or two people," she says. "It's something we all need to be part of."

"At Carroll, Naren has been seen and heard as a scholar first. For young students of color, you may have countless attributes, but being emboldened in scholarship is a big part of his identity."

Shradha Patel



Acknowledging Every Contribution

Shradha recalls a conversation with Head of School Renée Greenfield that shifted her perspective on giving. "I told her, 'I'll always give, but I can't give big amounts,' and she said, 'Every gift matters.' That stayed with me."

To Shradha, giving is a responsibility and a privilege. "Carroll has given us so much, and being part of a community comes with the responsibility to contribute in whatever way we can to help it thrive."

What is her message to others considering ways to support Carroll? "Ask, 'What can I do to be helpful?' There's always something you can give—your time, your voice, your presence. And every bit makes a difference."

CARROLL 2030

Commitment
to the Human
Experience

Trial & DARE

Carroll’s Music and Art Spaces Inspire Innovation and Risk-Taking



“You’re not competing with anyone. It’s about where you are and how you grow.”

Diane Francis

The Middle School Art Studio A Place for Experimentation and Growth

Walking into Diane Francis’ art studio, you immediately sense the energy of possibility. Meticulously organized to ensure that students can find their materials easily and jump into their projects without hesitation, the studio is designed for exploration.

“I want students to feel independent,” Diane explains. “They should be able to walk in, know where their work is, grab what they need, and get started.” This setup supports executive functioning skills and empowers students to take ownership of their creative process.

The studio is always in flux. Diane adjusts the room’s layout based on what students are working on, making space for painting one day and sculpture the next. She introduces new materials

regularly—paint, recycled jewelry, charcoal, mosaic glass, clay—sparking curiosity and fresh ideas. Because she knows that many students fear making mistakes, Diane’s classroom emphasizes risk-taking and normalizes the messy, iterative nature of art.

In the art studio, mistakes aren’t failures—they’re opportunities. “If something doesn’t turn out how you expected, great! What can you turn it into instead?” By fostering this mindset, Diane helps students build confidence in their ability to problem-solve, adapt, and create. Over her 23 years at Carroll School, Diane’s deep experience shines through in the way she empowers students to take creative risks and see challenges as part of the artistic journey.

The Lower School Music Room A Space for Sound, Movement, and Improvisation

Pat Pate’s music room is designed for more than just playing notes—it’s a multisensory, movement-rich environment where students engage with music in a way that feels natural and fun. “Drums and percussion instruments are front and center, inviting students to jump in and play,” Pat says.

Movement is a key part of his teaching approach. “Sitting all day can be tough for kids with dyslexia and ADHD,” he explains. “Music requires joint attention—staying in sync with others—which can be challenging. Movement breaks help students reset and stay engaged.”

Technology is another powerful tool in Pat’s classroom. Starting in third grade, students learn basic music production, using their Chromebooks to create beats and songs. “I want them to see their devices as tools for creativity, not just academics,” he says. By bridging the gap between the music they love outside of school and what they learn in class, he makes the subject more relevant and engaging.

Risk-taking plays a major role in his teaching philosophy. “In improvisation, mistakes aren’t really mistakes—they’re discoveries,” he says. “If you play a note you didn’t intend, that’s just part of the musical conversation.” Like the art studios, the music room is a space where students feel safe to experiment, fail, and try again. By creating a culture of support and curiosity, Pat ensures that even the most hesitant learners find a way to engage with music on their own terms.



“Your comfort zone is either shrinking or expanding. If you take risks, you grow.”

Pat Pate



Creativity + Safety

Confidence

BOTH DIANE AND PAT AGREE:

When students feel empowered in creative spaces, that confidence spills over into other areas of their education. In a school designed for dyslexic learners, that self-assurance can make all the difference.

CARROLL 2030

Invest to Support Growth

Rooted in Belonging, Powered by Community

Carroll Volunteers Help Lead a Transformative AISNE DEI Conference

This year, Carroll School had the honor of serving as the lead school for the Association of Independent Schools of New England (AISNE) Middle School Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Conference.

With the theme of *Belonging & Becoming*, we set the vision for the event, organized keynotes and workshops, and facilitated affinity groups for students in grades 5-9 from independent schools across New England. Powering our impact was overwhelming support from the Carroll community in the form of 30+ educators, staff, and family volunteers.

Osa Osagie, Carroll’s Director of Diversity & Inclusion, says, “The commitment was above and beyond. People spent their entire Saturday—7:30 AM to 4:00 PM—just to be there and support this work. That’s incredible and the true power of our community.”

From welcoming attendees to leading workshops and facilitating discussions, the volunteers’ presence was felt in every aspect of the conference. Educators like Chris Craig-Comin and John Walton stepped up to lead workshops on allyship in sports, giving students the tools to intervene when they witness discrimination.

“A lot of our students think these kinds of conversations are just ‘Carroll things,’” Craig-Comin noted. “But being in this broader space showed them—no, these conversations are happening everywhere. This is the world we live in.” “It was amazing to see students take these strategies to heart,” Walton shared. “You could see the quiet kids nodding, realizing that they don’t have to be the loudest voice in the room to make a difference.”

“To be able to have these conversations, to lead impactful workshops, and be part of helping students develop into their whole, true selves ... that matters.”

Allie O’Hara, Middle School Teacher

“Introducing Rosetta was kind of nerve wracking, and also so much fun. After, she congratulated me on being a student leader. That was awesome.”

Jayla May, 9th Grader



Carroll’s leadership allowed the conference to focus explicitly on dyslexia as a dimension of diversity. Volunteers helped create spaces where Carroll students could share their experiences. Ninth-grader Jayla May, who introduced keynote speaker Rosetta Lee, was especially inspired when Lee revealed her own dyslexia. “We don’t always get to see dyslexic speakers or people with different learning identities on stage. It was really cool to hear her story.”

Throughout the day, Carroll volunteers ensured that every student felt welcomed and included. From educators to family members, their presence sent a powerful message—that creating a more inclusive world is a collective effort.

For Carroll, leading this conference was more than just an opportunity to organize an event—it was a chance to showcase what makes our community so special. Thanks to the dedication of our volunteers, the 2025 AISNE conference didn’t just discuss belonging—it embodied it.

For many volunteers, the experience was deeply personal. Middle School educator Allie O’Hara co-led a workshop on identity and self-expression with Sammantha LaRoche, which culminated in students creating self-portraits. One student’s collage simply featured the word *Finally*. “That moment will stay with me forever,” O’Hara reflected. “We all deserve to finally feel like we can be our true selves.”

Community SPOTLIGHT



Dave Barkin
Associate Director
of Admission &
Financial Assistance

STAFF

How did your path lead to Carroll?
After college, I started teaching at The Windward School (NY), which, like Carroll, specializes in working with students with language-based learning differences. I later earned my master’s degree in school psychology and worked in that field before moving to the Boston area—where I found Carroll.

Though I initially joined as the Director of Assessment, overseeing testing and data gathering, my love of connecting with people eventually led me to Admissions work. My background in reading neuropsychological reports and school testing allows me to dive deeper into applications and determine whether a student will thrive here.

What does an Associate Director of Admission & Financial Assistance do?
My role is all about helping families—from their first inquiry to their first day at Carroll. I read a lot of applications, primarily for the Upper School. When I see a student who aligns with our learning profile, I invite them and their family to visit campus so they can experience our community firsthand and so I can get to know the student to ensure we have the right cohort for them.

On the financial assistance side, I educate families about our program, guide them through the application process, and work closely with the Financial Assistance Committee to allocate funds. Advocating for a family and making it possible for their child to attend Carroll is an incredible feeling—especially when I see how much that student grows and thrives here.

What do you love about your work?
I think a lot about literacy and how a student’s self-esteem can suffer when they struggle in school. Helping kids find a place where they can feel confident again—and helping families who otherwise couldn’t afford Carroll—is what drives me. The best part? Hearing from alumni and their families about how Carroll changed their lives.

“Every teacher, administrator, and staff member is committed to the mission—that’s what makes Carroll so special and a great place to work.”
Dave Barkin

David Bamforth ’11

President & CEO, Rennscot Manufacturing and Garage 42

What are you doing now?
I run two companies: Rennscot Manufacturing focuses on aerospace and defense manufacturing, while Garage 42 is a collector car storage and management business. Outside of work, my big passion is racing. I compete in time attack racing with the Gridlife series.

How has dyslexia shaped your approach to work and problem-solving?
My brain works in a very visual and problem-solving-oriented way. I naturally break down complex challenges into smaller, manageable parts (similar to the Orton-Gillingham approach taught at Carroll). In manufacturing, that means finding innovative ways to optimize production or identify efficiencies others might miss. This ability to see patterns and connections helps me approach challenges creatively and efficiently.

How does thinking differently give you a unique advantage at work?
My ability to pull and retain specific knowledge gives me a distinct advantage, especially in customer interactions. It allows me to engage with clients in a way that goes beyond simple transactions, fostering a sense of true partnership.

What advice would you give to current Carroll students?
Lean into your interests. Dyslexia doesn’t mean you can’t excel; it just means you might approach things differently. Whether it’s technology, design, business, or racing—there’s always a way to apply your strengths. Carroll gives you the tools; it’s up to you to explore and find what excites you.

“Carroll taught me that being dyslexic isn’t a disadvantage—it’s just a different way of thinking.”
David Bamforth



GARAGE 42:
ACTON, MA
RENNSCOT MANUFACTURING:
WOBURN, MA

ALUMNI

From Lessons to Liftoff

AT CARROLL

Students learn that thinking differently isn't a challenge—it's a strength. As our alumni move into the world, here's what they have to say about how their dyslexic minds have shaped their careers and lives.



"You don't realize that you think differently until you leave Carroll. When I left, and especially in my professional life, I immediately recognized solutions that no one else in the room saw. I bring something new to the table."

AMELIA LUDWICK '20
Global Marketing Specialist
Whole Foods Market

"Persistence is my superpower. On a film set, everything can go wrong—weather delays, lost equipment—but I find a way to make it work. Carroll taught me how to push through challenges."

DAVID SABOT '14
Freelance Filmmaker



"Carroll taught me that intelligence comes in many forms—first as an athlete, and now as a leader guiding teams of 40 to 100 people toward a common goal."

SHAYMUS COLMAN '09
Digital Account Executive
ServiceNow



"I quickly realized that I struggled with reading and writing, but when it came to drawing, problem-solving, and using my observational skills, I thrived. That realization shaped my career as a Bounders teacher, where I use my skills to give students the experiences I cherished at Carroll."

WILL CLOSE '12
Bounders Educator
Carroll Middle School



"Dyslexia has taught me about struggling. Learning how to work through difficulties—whether it's problem-solving or running the Boston Marathon—has shaped how I approach everything in life."

MICHAEL FINN-HENRY '14
President and Co-Founder
EndoShunt



"A sign at Carroll read, 'Children with dyslexia see the world differently—isn't the world lucky?' That message stuck with me as an inspiration and sense of responsibility. Many of the things we use in the world today were created by dyslexic thinkers just like us."

BRYAN PERLA '14
Founder & CEO
Little ELF Products, Inc.



"Thinking differently led me to start The NextGen Innovators, a nonprofit that teaches kids in low-income communities about investing, coding, and technology—because everyone deserves access to the skills that shape the future."

NOAH RUBIN '23
Student at Gann Academy
Founder, The NextGen Innovators



Carroll at
a Glance

111

Middle & Upper
School Graduates

Our 111 graduates are heading to 52 different independent and public schools—each one the perfect fit for their journey.

300+

Educator
Recommendations

250

Applications
Submitted

81%

Acceptance Rate

Graduation Class of 2025

Where will Carroll students
be next year?

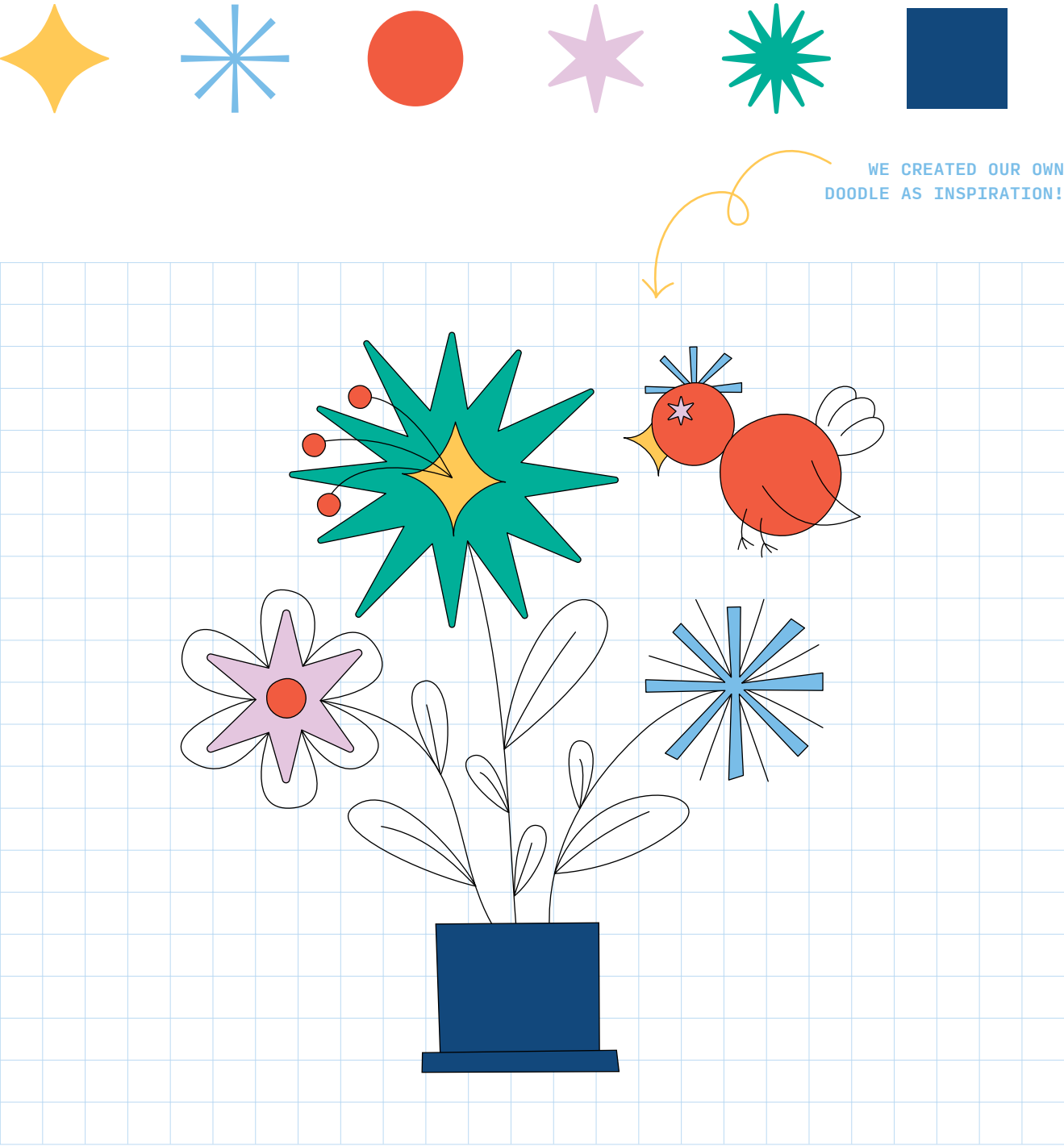
Acton-Boxborough High School	Medway High School
Arlington Catholic School	Milton High School
Arlington High School	Natick High School
Bancroft School	Needham High School
Beaver Country Day School	Newman School
Bedford High School	Newton Country Day School
Belmont High School	Newton North High School
Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School	Newton South High School
Boston College High School	Norfolk County Agricultural High School
Brewster Academy	Notre Dame Academy
Brookline High School	Pingree School
Cambridge Rindge & Latin	Proctor Academy
Cambridge School of Weston	Skaneateles High School
Carroll Upper School	St. Andrew's School
Catholic Memorial School	St. Sebastian's School
Chapel-Hill Chauncy Hall	Tabor Academy
Concord Academy	Thayer Academy
Concord-Carlisle High School	Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical High School
Cushing Academy	Watertown High School
Eagle Hill School	Wayland High School
Gann Academy	Wellesley High School
Holliston Public Schools	Westwood High School
Kent School	Wheeler School
Landmark School	Williston Northampton School
Lawrence Academy	Windham Woods School
Lexington High School	Wooster School
Lincoln-Sudbury High School	

“To my amazement, my child was able to clearly articulate what they really needed and wanted from their next school. Their ability to self-advocate genuinely impressed me — it helped me step back, listen, and trust the process.”

Parent of a Carroll Alum

Six shapes.
Endless possibilities.

Grab a blank sheet of paper and let these simple shapes spark your imagination. Where will your creativity take you?





45 Waltham Road
Wayland, MA 01778



Spark possibility.

Gifts to the Annual Fund support Carroll educators as they help students explore what thinking differently makes possible.

Support from our community shows that you believe in the possibilities a Carroll education can spark.



Scan here
to give!