

Mindfulness in the Classroom at Greenwood

The Wakefield Educational Foundation (WEF) recently awarded Greenwood School Principal Tiffany Back \$2100 for the “Mindfulness in the Classroom” project, providing staff with professional development and students with connected instruction. The ultimate goal is to create a school-wide toolbox of mindfulness strategies and common language, in order to increase self-awareness and self-management for all of learners.

The WPS Strategy for Social-Emotional Health & Learning’s objectives are to promote social-emotional and mental health, cultivate safe, welcoming, and healthy schools, and develop responsible and resilient students. In order for children to learn and grow throughout their school experiences, they must learn, develop, and practice the five social and emotional learning (SEL) competencies identified by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, responsible decision-making, and relationship skills.

The “Mindfulness in the Classroom” project focuses on self-awareness and self-management, the foundation for developing the other three competencies. In this project, a trained mindfulness instructor with an elementary teaching background will work with all classroom teachers to provide professional development about the connection between mindfulness and emotions, how mindfulness connects to increased self-awareness and self-management, and what it looks like to weave mindfulness throughout the school day into all areas. This instructor will also work in directly with students in all classrooms to teach strategies for dealing with emotions, increasing awareness and listening, and decreasing overall anxiety.



Morse’s first grade class, with (back row) Principal Back, Morse, mindfulness instructor/presenter Tracy Affonso, and ISP Angela Driggers.

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Ms. Back submitted a grant application through WEF's annual grant process. WEF continually encourages staff and PTO leaders to submit innovative enrichment projects for consideration.

To support the grant process, WEF conducts a series of fundraisers annually, such as: WEF's Wakefield Public Schools Calendar, showcasing student art; the S.T.A.R.S. program, recognizing exemplary WPS staff; Chocolate Roses; and the Adult Spelling Bee. In addition, WEF welcomes individual, business and community donations. WEF is awarding staff and PTO leaders just over \$30,000 for the 2018-2019 school-year and has awarded over \$350,000 to schools across the Wakefield Public Schools district since 1989. Learn more by following WEF on Twitter or Facebook, or go to www.WEF01880.org.