

Middle School Employees 2015-2016

Grade 4 Team

Meredith Gannon teaches Grade 4 humanities and homeroom. Prior to joining Nashoba Brooks School, Meredith taught fourth grade at North Shore Country Day School in Winnetka, Illinois. She earned a B.A. from Tufts University and an M.Ed. from Lesley University where she was a graduate intern at Buckingham Browne & Nichols.

Laura Lande teaches Grade 4 math, is the Lower School Math Specialist for Kindergarten and Grade 1, and is a Grade 4 co-homeroom teacher. Laura has two bachelor degrees, one from University of Guelph and one from Charles Sturt University. Laura has experience as a fourth grade teacher and a lower school resource teacher.

Mike Ackerman, LMSW, school counselor, holds a B.A. from Vassar College and an M.S.W. from Fordham University Graduate School. He has extensive experience working with elementary and middle school students in a variety of settings, including his recent work at the Parkside Elementary School in New York.

Catherine Bass is the Library Assistant, Instructional Technology Fellow, and Supervised Study Coordinator. She received a B.A. from the University of Texas at San Antonio and a M.Ed. in elementary education from Lesley University. She recently taught fourth grade at St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School in Watertown and completed her student teaching at Brookwood School.

Lisa Bennett is the Director of Academic Support. She develops and implements learning support plans for students, coordinates tutoring, and administers and interprets assessments. Lisa holds a B.A. in psychology from Brown University and an M.Ed. in reading, language and learning disabilities from Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Laura Canina, entering year 13 at Nashoba Brooks, teaches Grade 4 and 5 math and writing workshop. A certified learning specialist, she has tutored students and taught in a variety of settings. Laura has a B.A. from the University of Massachusetts and an M.Ed. from Lesley College.

Gretchen Herter, school counselor, holds a B.S. in counseling and an M.A. in clinical mental health counseling/school adjustment from Lesley University. In addition to working as an adjunct professor at Lesley University, Gretchen has worked as a school counselor at Milton Academy and Hillside School.

Christel Kendzia is the Middle School music teacher, teaching Grades 4 through 8. Christel graduated from the University of Maine and received a Master's Degree in music education from Boston University. She was the K-12 music teacher for five years in the Deer Isle-Stonington schools in Maine.

Guida Mattison teaches health and wellness to students in Grades 4 through 8 and is the coordinator of our Middle School before- and after-school programs. A graduate of Dana Hall School and Union College, Guida also holds an M.Ed. from Boston College in education administration. Guida also serves as a secondary school placement counselor.

Elaine Rabb teaches Grade 7 English, facilitates reading groups for students in Grades 4 and 5, and serves as a Grade 7 homeroom teacher. Elaine has spent the last 14 years teaching students in grades four through eight, as well as coaching speech and debate. Following the completion of her B.A. at Temple University, Elaine continued her graduate studies at the College of Notre Dame and Johns Hopkins University.

Amy Riddle teaches Spanish to students in Grades 2 through 5. Amy holds a bachelor's degree from Tufts University and a master's degree from the University of Massachusetts. Amy has taught Spanish at the preschool, elementary, and middle school levels and ran her own business teaching Spanish to children ages three through nine years old.

Lisa Stanley teaches art to students in Grades 4 through 8. Lisa has taught at Nashoba Brooks for 31 years. She received a B.F.A. from Massachusetts College of Art, and an M.Ed. from Lesley University.

Rachelle Vachon is the drama teacher in Grades 3 through 8. Before joining Nashoba Brooks, Rachelle taught at the Seven Hill Charter School and various children's theatre programs and camps. Rachelle has a B.A. in theatre arts from California State University at San Jose and an M.A. in theatre education from Emerson College.

Kelly Western teaches science to students in Kindergarten through Grade 4. Kelly began teaching science to elementary, middle school, and high school students in 2002, including six years at Milton Academy. Kelly is also a certified Hatha Yoga instructor, and ran her own yoga studio in Colorado, as well as a yoga camp for children.

Ryan Wonsor teaches Grades 3, 4, and 5 physical education classes and coaches athletic teams. Ryan holds a B.S. in kinesiology and physical education from the University of Maine with a concentration in teaching and coaching and outdoor leadership. Ryan has experience teaching and coaching students in a variety of settings, most recently at Greenwich Country Day School in Greenwich, CT.

Grade 5 Team

Lucy Douglass teaches physical education for students in Grades 6 through 8 and is the Grade 5 co-homeroom teacher. At Nashoba Brooks, Lucy has served as dean of students, taught humanities, coached and taught Fun and Fitness. Prior to joining Nashoba Brooks, Lucy taught at the Bement School and in the Belmont public school system. Lucy received a B.A. from St. Lawrence University and an M.Ed. from Lesley College.

Kristen Sheehan is the Grade 5 humanities and co-homeroom teacher as well as the team leader for Grades 4 and 5. Kristen's undergraduate degree is from Bowdoin where she majored in history. She has a Master's Degree from Lesley College in elementary education.

Mike Ackerman, LMSW, school counselor, holds a B.A. from Vassar College and an M.S.W. from Fordham University Graduate School. He has extensive experience working with elementary and middle school students in a variety of settings, including his recent work at the Parkside Elementary School in New York.

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Sarah Cottrill is a graduate of Proctor Academy and Williams College. She will join Nashoba Brooks this fall as a science fellow, working closely with Stephanie Spurlock. Sarah has worked with children in a variety of educational settings including Tabor Academy Summer Program, an elementary school in Williamstown, MA, as well as in theater and outdoor education programs.

Gretchen Herter, school counselor, holds a B.S. in counseling and an M.A. in clinical mental health counseling/school adjustment from Lesley University. In addition to working as an adjunct professor at Lesley University, Gretchen has worked as a school counselor at Milton Academy and Hillside School.

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Stephanie Spurlock teaches science to students in Grades 5 and 8. A graduate of Western Kentucky University, Stephanie taught in Tennessee and Kentucky prior to coming to Nashoba Brooks. Stephanie also serves as the External Programs Coordinator.

Lisa Stanley teaches art to students in Grades 4 through 8. Lisa has taught at Nashoba Brooks for 31 years. She received a B.F.A. from Massachusetts College of Art, and an M.Ed. from Lesley University.

Kerry Stevens teaches math to Grades 5 and 8 students. Kerry received a B.S. from Boston College, and an M.Ed. from Wheelock College. In addition to teaching students, Kerry also serves as a mentor to her colleagues and serves as a coordinator of the math curriculum development for the Middle School.

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Grade 6 Team

Susan Lewis teaches Grades 6 and 7 science and is a Grade 6 co-homeroom teacher. Susan received a B.A. from Harvard University, and an M.Ed. from Lesley University. She worked for many years as a producer and senior editor of NOVA-WGBH, PBS. Susan has experience teaching in the Winchester Public Schools, Lexington Public Schools, and Shady Hill School.

Jaime Zuckerman is the Grade 6 humanities and co-homeroom teacher. A graduate of Brown University, Jamie earned an M.Ed. from Harvard Graduate School of Education in learning and teaching. Prior to joining Nashoba Brooks, Jamie designed curriculum and taught at Mother Caroline Academy in Boston.

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Mike Ackerman, LMSW, school counselor, holds a B.A. from Vassar College and an M.S.W. from Fordham University Graduate School. He has extensive experience working with elementary and middle school students in a variety of settings, including his recent work at the Parkside Elementary School in New York.

Mary Frances Bannard teaches Latin to students in Grades 6, 7, and 8. A graduate of the University of Virginia with a B.A. in classics and the recipient of a Master's Degree in classics from Bryn Mawr, Mary Frances previously taught Latin at The Agnes Irwin School in Philadelphia.

Catherine Bass is the Library Assistant, Instructional Technology Fellow, and Supervised Study Coordinator. She received a B.A. from the University of Texas at San Antonio and a M.Ed. in elementary education from Lesley University. She recently taught fourth grade at St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School in Watertown and completed her student teaching at Brookwood School.

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Alex Helm teaches Middle School math in Grades 6, 7, and 8 and coaches forensics. Alex holds a B.A. in political science and an M.Ed. in curriculum and instruction from Boston College, Lynch Graduate School of Education.

Gretchen Herter, school counselor, holds a B.S. in counseling and an M.A. in clinical mental health counseling/school adjustment from Lesley University. In addition to working as an adjunct professor at Lesley University, Gretchen has worked as a school counselor at Milton Academy and Hillside School.

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Andrés Méndez-Peñate teaches Spanish to students in Grades 6 through 8 and coaches soccer and tennis. He holds a B.A. from Wesleyan University and an M.S. from Pace University and has studied abroad in France and Spain. Andrés has been teaching Spanish for nine years, most recently at Brooks School in North Andover, MA.

Sarah Smith teaches Middle School math to students in Grades 6, 7, and 8, assists with the service learning program and coaches. Sarah holds a B.A. and an M.Ed. in curriculum and instruction from Boston College Lynch Graduate School of Education. Sarah has experience teaching, coaching, and advising in public, charter, and independent schools.

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Grade 7 Team

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Sarah Smith teaches Middle School math to students in Grades 6, 7, and 8, is a Grade 7 co-homeroom teacher, assists with the service learning program and coaches. Sarah holds a B.A. and an M.Ed. in curriculum and instruction from Boston College Lynch Graduate School of Education. Sarah has experience teaching, coaching, and advising in public, charter, and independent schools.

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Lauren Funk teaches Grades 7 and 8 social studies and serves as 6/7/8 team leader. Lauren is a graduate of American University and holds a Master of Arts in teaching: social studies education from Johns Hopkins University. She has a variety of teaching and tutoring experience, including working as an English teacher and humanities tutor at Lexington Prep School.

Alexander Helm (Alex) teaches Middle School math in Grades 6, 7, and 8 and coaches forensics. Alex holds a B.A. in political science and an M.Ed. in curriculum and instruction from Boston College Lynch Graduate School of Education.

Gretchen Herter, school counselor, holds a B.S. in counseling and an M.A. in clinical mental health counseling/school adjustment from Lesley University. In addition to working as an adjunct professor at Lesley University, Gretchen has worked as a school counselor at Milton Academy and Hillside School.

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Grade 8 Team

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Susan Cheever teaches Grade 8 English. With a B.A. from Northwestern University and a M.A.T. from University of Richmond, Susan started her career as a high school English teacher. She has taught a broad range of students in preschool through tenth grade, and has spent the last six years teaching at Nashoba Brooks.

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Visit our website to read more about our employees: [nashobabrooks.org/team/](https://www.nashobabrooks.org/team/)

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