

# Words Worth



Fill your paper with the breathings of your heart. ~William Wordsworth

Moorestown Friends School, Moorestown, NJ

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## Erik Curtis Continues Woodworking on the Big Screen

By Charlotte Nesevich '25



Curtis and his co-stars on the set of Netflix's "Instant Dream Home." Photo credit to Paige Mobley.

"They found me on the internet and asked if I would try out for a quote 'home renovation show.' They wouldn't tell me the platform. They wouldn't tell me what the show was about. All they would tell me is that it's a home renovation short show for a big network. I was like, 'I mean, what do I have to lose?'"

The career change is extreme, to say the least. During his time at MFS, Curtis taught woodshop for all students in fifth through eighth grade, as well as Upper Schoolers who chose to pursue it. But now, he is completing home-renovations with impressive speed and a team of more than 200 professionals, often involving complex machinery, helicopters, cranes, and forklifts. Curtis mentioned that a skill he sees himself using in both the classroom and on set at his show has been the ability to "figure out the fastest solution to a complicated problem." (Scan the QR code to read the full story on our website.)



Two years ago, Erik Curtis was the woodshop teacher at MFS. Now, he's the carpenter in "Instant Dream Home," a new home renovation show on Netflix.

Netflix's "Instant Dream Home" was released on August 10th. The show follows "a team of rapid-fire renovators [that] take big risks and make painstaking plans to transform families' homes from top to bottom in just 12 hours," as Netflix describes it.

The "rapid-fire renovators" are led by their team leader, actress Danielle Brooks. How-

ever, the show has a consistent spotlight on four people, each specializing in a different area of the renovation—Paige, Special Projects; Nick, Exterior Design; Adair, Interior Design; and Erik, The Carpenter. Erik is Erik Curtis, former Moorestown Friends School woodshop teacher.

When Curtis began missing school just before the Covid-19 pandemic to fill his role in the show, students weren't aware of the new opportunities he was pursuing. Substitutes would fill in for his class while students

continued to work on their projects and were left wondering where Curtis was.

As Curtis described it, "I got a call, or, I got a DM through Instagram ... This was February of 2020, and I just got a random DM from a casting agent. There were a couple other television opportunities that didn't pan out, so I didn't think much of it. And then I actually got a call, like a callback ... they called me and asked if I could be on a plane to L.A. in two hours."

Curtis continued, "I was 20 minutes away

from home [at the school woodshop] and my home's 20 minutes from the airport. I'm covered in sweat and sawdust, and I was like, 'Yeah, dope, let's go.' So I hopped on a plane to L.A. on a Thursday evening. We didn't have school that Friday, so I flew out for a screen test and had a conversation with Adair and Paige and Nick and we just kind of [started talking] and immediately all got along really well."

Curtis was not given much information on the role and opportunity he was being offered:

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### GOT OPINIONS?



We want to hear from you! Read tips for writing effective Letters to the Editor.

## This Year's New Schedule: The Good and the Bad

By Daisy Maturo '25

The new daily schedule for the upcoming school year has left students with differing opinions on how the schedule will affect them.

The new daily schedule was emailed to students in early August by Associate Head of School and Academic Dean Meredith Godley. While some aspects of the schedule remain the same, such as the

two-week cycle of class schedules and same ending time, the changes that were made completely reconstruct the format of student and faculty life at MFS. The new changes include a 15-minute snack break, a first-period prep that pushes the start of the school day back by 15 minutes, varying times for class periods, and more.

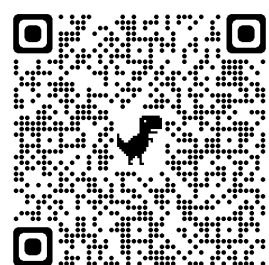
Godley, who

contributed to the changes in the new schedule, explained teachers' involvement in the planning process: "We tried to be as inclusive as possible; we had a survey that we sent out to faculty, we had listening sessions where we presented three different options of schedules to faculty and got their feedback ... I feel like we did a

MFS Moorestown Friends School Week 1 US DAILY SCHEDULE						MFS Moorestown Friends School Week 2 US DAILY SCHEDULE					
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY		MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	
7:45-8:30	7:45-8:30	7:45-8:30	7:45-8:30	7:45-8:30		7:45-8:30	7:45-8:30	7:45-8:30	7:45-8:30	7:45-8:30	
8:30-9:30	A	E	D	F	A	8:30-9:30	A	B	G	E	C
9:35-10:35	D	C	G	C	E	9:35-10:35	F	D	A	F	A
10:35-10:50	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	10:35-10:50	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK
10:50-11:50	F	G	B	D	US ASSEMBLY	10:50-11:50	C	E	F	D	G
11:55-12:40	US ADVISOR	A	US NEW	A	A	11:55-12:40	US ADVISOR	A	US NEW	A	US COMMUNITY
12:45-1:30	US LUNCH	US LUNCH	US LUNCH	US LUNCH	US LUNCH	12:45-1:30	US LUNCH	US LUNCH	US LUNCH	US LUNCH	US LUNCH
1:35-2:20	D	F	A	G	B	1:35-2:20	G	C	E	A	D
2:25-3:10	E	B	F	A	C	2:25-3:10	E	G	B	C	A

The new schedule, attached in an email sent by Meredith Godley.

good job trying to hear all of the perspectives and the priorities that different people had." (Scan the QR code to read the full story on our website.)



As MFS prepared for the return of students to campus for the 2022-2023 school year, a few new security measures were put in place around the school to ensure the safety of all students and faculty during school hours. These measures included new locks, notably on the Stokes Hall and Dining Hall doors; new ID badges for all students and faculty that will serve several purposes; and a new visitor-screening system at the Front Desk.



The new security buzzer and keypad at the Stokes Hall door. Photo by Dinah Megibow-Taylor '24.

- Sophia Lalani '25 and Alicia Leung '24

If you catch a glimpse of the lighting panels throughout the main building and have a keen eye for change, you might realize they look a bit different. That would be because of the new energy efficient L.E.D. lights installed in Middle and Upper School classrooms and the Stokes Hall lobby. WordsWorth sat down with Head of School Julia de la Torre to ask about the initiative as well as other long-term environmental sustainability goals. De la Torre explained that last spring, MFS started working with environmental consultant agency Boyer Sudduth to develop and achieve different sustainability goals. These goals will take a more solid shape over the course of the year, and when they are finalized, the community will be informed.

- Dinah Megibow-Taylor '24



Drone photo of campus taken by Director of Technology Steve Kolaris and Vikram Verma. Photo by Dinah Megibow-Taylor '24.

# While You Were Away

... enjoying your summer, campus underwent some substantial changes. Campus security was strengthened, lighting across the Main Building replaced, and the Fox Den's famous Red Oak was removed.

On August 29, members of the class of 2023 gathered to begin painting the Hippo. Senior class president Arjan Chhabra said the inspiration behind choosing the Magic School Bus theme was that the class "wanted to have a bright and colorful theme that the little kids would enjoy." (Photos by Julia Tourtellotte '23 and Emma Vernick '23.)



taken by  
eve  
na '25.  
-Taylor



In what was described as "the end of an era" for Moorestown Friends School, de la Torre announced via an email on August 18th that the red oak tree near the Fox Den needed to be removed after succumbing to bacterial leaf scorch. The school was able to preserve several branches from the tree and hopes to incorporate them into a memorializing art piece to honor the legacy of this campus staple for years to come.

- Luke Iacono '25



The Red Oak, June 2018.  
Photo by Andrew Rowan '19.

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## In Case You Missed It: Some Global Summer News

By Mason Levens '25

### Roe v. Wade

**Overtturn:** On June 24th, 2022, fifty years of federal abortion rights established by *Roe v. Wade* was overturned by the Supreme Court in a 6-3 decision. The federal court case that led to this decision was known as *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*.

### Mar-a-Lago

**Investigation:** A criminal investigation into violations of the Espionage Act and destruction of public records was launched in April of this year against Donald Trump. On August 8th, 2022, a search warrant was executed by federal agents at Mar-a-Lago, a resort owned by Trump in Florida.

### Flooding in

**Pakistan:** Since a monsoon began in June of this year, Pakistan has experienced disastrous flooding that has affected over thirty million individuals within the nation. The immediate cause of the floods is extreme rainfall and melting glaciers, with Pakistan experiencing rain 780% greater than

average levels; these circumstances are due to the effects of climate change.

### The Swearing in of Ketanji Brown

**Jackson:** On June 30th, 2022, Jackson was sworn in as the first African American female justice on the United States Supreme Court. She became the 116th member on the nation's highest

court and was confirmed by a Senate vote of 53-47.

**Brittney Griner:** On August 4th, WNBA star Griner was sentenced to nine years in prison in Russia on counts of illegal smuggling of narcotics. Her attorneys have appealed her conviction.

### Mississippi Water

**Crisis:** Beginning in late August, the city of Jackson, Mississippi, has not had access to clean, safe drinking water due to severe flooding that disabled water treatment plants. Water is being imported into the city, and Mississippi National Guard troops are being sent to water distribution sites.

## Meet the Founder of Harmony Juice

By Sophia Lalani '25, Hannah Puc '24, and Elina Shah '24



Monika Kobak, the founder and owner of Harmony Juice. Photo by Hannah Puc '24.

This past spring, Moorestown's Main Street welcomed a new business. The Starbucks across the street from the Hartman Hall and Van Meter Hall portion of campus, a spot frequented by both students and faculty, was replaced by Harmony Juice, a juice bar that preaches the importance of organic

ingredients and sustainable agriculture.

Harmony Juice was founded by Monika Kobak: a wife, mother of two, and a full time employee for a pharmaceutical company. She currently works at both Harmony Juice and her pharmaceutical job. Kobak talked about

how her job in the pharmaceutical industry was her inspiration for founding Harmony Juice: "I started to realize that while there is still space for pharmaceuticals and for all of the medical inventions, we still have to invest in maintaining our health, so I wanted to invest my time and

energy into actually helping people stay healthy."

Harmony Juice's ingredients are all sourced from local farms like Blue Moon Acres Farm, located in Pennington, NJ. Kobak emphasized the importance of selling farm-to-hand products to customers:

"Supporting local farmers is crucial for the well-being of our planet and well-being of our local community and local food security," she commented. Kobak talked about why Blue Moon Acres is so special: "They are not only organic, but also origin regenerative. What that means is that they take care of the soil health, so they don't use any fertilizers... everything is natural, they compost, and they use compost as a natural fertilizer."

Regenerative farming is important to Kobak, and is a significant part of the nutrition at Harmony Juice. In fact, the

documentary *Kiss the Ground* inspired Kobak to support regenerative farming. The documentary taught her that we only have "60 years of harvest left on earth," and that pushed her to open Harmony Juice and share the importance of regenerative farming with others.

Harmony Juice provides customers with healthy and nutritious food, including juices, salads, smoothies, açai bowls, and more. All of the products at the juicery are made from organic ingredients and are both gluten-free and vegan. Due to customer feedback, Harmony Juice plans to introduce some vegetarian choices as well. Some of the bestsellers at Harmony Juice are the Berry Bliss smoothie and the Açai Bowl, according to Kobak.

Kobak also commented on the legacy she knows her company is replacing: "I want to

acknowledge what Starbucks meant to so many people for 20 years here ... so that's why we also [want to] continue having coffee here. It's organic, but it's coffee."

Kobak also noted that she "wanted to make sure that the [interior] is beautiful, inviting, [and] a very cool hangout spot," as well as "maintain the same legacy that Starbucks created as a kind, friendly environment."

Harmony Juice's summer hours were 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., but it will be open from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. once the school year begins to accommodate students who may wish to visit the juicery before or after school hours. This change accompanies a new limited-time back-to-school offer for all high schoolers in Moorestown—bring a friend and both students get 20% off along with free mason jars. This offer runs throughout September.

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