



# North Cross School

## **For Immediate Release**

For more information, contact:  
Whitney Aldridge  
Media Relations, North Cross School  
540-989-6641 ext. 303  
[waldridge@northcross.org](mailto:waldridge@northcross.org)

### **North Cross School Announces Expansion of the CrossWalk Program: *Empowering students with language-based learning differences***

March 21, 2014 (ROANOKE, VA) - North Cross School in Roanoke, VA announced earlier this month the expansion of the School's CrossWalk Program. This dynamic program, based on the Orton-Gillingham instruction model, began at North Cross in 2012 to assist several lower school students diagnosed with language-based learning differences, such as dyslexia and dysgraphia. With the completion of nearly two years, children enrolled in the North Cross program have clearly benefited from effective teaching by CrossWalk faculty and volunteers. This past year, the Board of Trustees at North Cross School conducted extensive research and discovered a greater need for a program like this in Western Virginia. Board members visited and explored other successful programs in North Carolina before making the decision to expand CrossWalk. The Board believes the CrossWalk Program is an essential part of the School's core mission, to provide students "the personal and intellectual skills to lead full and meaningful lives."

The expanded North Cross School program is for students in ECP Level 3 (kindergarten) -5<sup>th</sup> grade who have diagnosed language-based learning differences. Orton-Gillingham instruction uses a hands-on, multisensory approach that is tailored to the individual needs of each student. Students in the program spend part of their day in lower school classrooms, and the other part of their day is spent with CrossWalk teachers focused on one-on-one instruction in language and mathematics.

"The mission of the program is to empower students with language-based learning differences and help them develop academically, socially, and emotionally," says Kit Prillaman, CrossWalk Program Director. "The goal is to detect these issues early on and, after two or three years in the CrossWalk Program, have the student mainstream back into a regular classroom by the sixth grade."

Prillaman explained that with intense, structured, individualized remediation, these bright students will learn more than just how to read and write. They will learn skills to compensate and self-advocate to be self-confident and successful in school. These students, when properly instructed, will not just reach minimum benchmarks, but will learn to maximize their unique strengths to become successful independent learners.

The expansion of this program will allow the program to fully enroll 12 students, add two full-time faculty members, and create a new space for the program which will consist of six classrooms. These classrooms will be equipped with the latest technology: Promethean interactive white boards, a Promethean interactive table, as well as iPads, and laptops. Construction for the new CrossWalk space will begin this summer and will be ready for the 2014-15 school year.

On April 3, 2014, the current CrossWalk students are taking a field trip to Eric Fitzpatrick's art studio. Fitzpatrick is a very successful local artist, who is dyslexic. When asked if he would be interested in sharing his story with the CrossWalk students he agreed because he was excited and hopeful that his experience could help others.

“I’m hopeful that a visit to my studio can show students with learning differences that systems of organization can be learned to help them cope with their gift, but more important than that is the opportunity for all of us to talk about learning challenges openly, and to remove any stigma that they might feel for being different.”

Eric continued, “In hindsight, my dyslexia has not held me back, but actually helped me in my career, as I ended up being a very successful one man business, and even teaching on the University level. If I can show them that the barriers they face can be overcome, then hopefully it will help each one of them ‘reframe’ the condition of their learning differences, and see them as opportunities instead.”

To learn more about the CrossWalk Program on the campus of North Cross School and to see if this would be a good fit for your child, please contact the Kit Prillaman, or the Admission Office at North Cross School, at 540-989-6641.

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### **About the CrossWalk Program on the Campus of North Cross School**

*The CrossWalk Program provides specialized instruction and support for bright students with language-based learning differences. The mission is to provide remediation of language skills for students with dyslexia and similar language-based learning differences in grades ECP Level 3 (Kindergarten) through 5th grade with the goal of returning the student to mainstream education fully prepared to realize their highest potential by 6th grade. For more information, visit [www.northcross.org/crosswalk](http://www.northcross.org/crosswalk).*

### **About North Cross School**

*North Cross School is a college-preparatory day school grounded in a strong liberal arts and science curriculum combined with exceptional co-curricular programs. The academic program, from junior kindergarten through twelfth grade, prepares students to become responsible, successful citizens by encouraging them to explore their interests and develop their talents. The School is located at 4254 Colonial Avenue, Roanoke, VA, 24018. For more information, visit [www.northcross.org](http://www.northcross.org).*