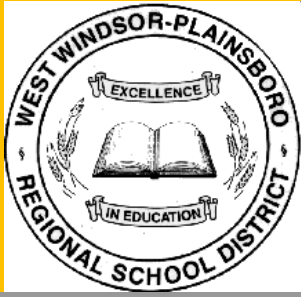


West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional School District Special Services Department NEWS!



Karen Slagle, Director of Special Services
Samantha Tognela, Supervisor PS-3
Karen Abrams, Supervisor 4-8
Melissa Levine, Asst. Principal/Secondary Supervisor 9-12

Fall 2020

Hello WW-P Parents & Guardians,

What a very long and unique Fall it has been! As a district, we have been able to continuously provide as an option in-person instruction to our students, and for this we are very, very grateful. Staff and students have been very cooperative in maintaining social-distancing, wearing masks and following good hand-washing protocols.



This newsletter will provide information about activities going on within the Special Service Department, and some classrooms across the district.

- ◆ **Sept. 8, 2020:** WW-P schools reopened providing the opportunity for all classified students with programming in Autism, LLD, BD and/or MD classes to return to in-person instruction 5 days each week, every week.
- ◆ **Nov. 9, 2020:** Resource students in 4th & 5th grades, and all 6-12th grade students whose programming included resource, ICR and ESL services were provided the opportunity to return to in-person instruction 5 days each week, every week.
- ◆ By now you have received a personal phone call from your child's case manager, and are familiar with his/her contact information. Please do not hesitate to contact your child's case manager with any question and/or concern.
- ◆ Our Instructional Assistants have been working diligently to learn and improve their technological skills to better enable them to assist our staff and students in the learning platforms being utilized. To this end, they have been provided professional development in the use of the many applications teachers are using in their instruction. We are very proud of the work our IAs are doing to support our students!
- ◆ **SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM REVIEW:** Consultants conducting the program review of the Special Education Department continue their work. Many of the components of the review that had been scheduled for March-June 2020 were cancelled due to the closing of schools caused by the pandemic. These components are being rescheduled in a virtual format.

Consultants have begun virtually observing many special education classrooms across the district. These observations are scheduled to continue throughout November and December. Other components of the program review that will be scheduled in upcoming weeks/months include meetings with parent focus groups, file reviews and staff interviews. Information about the focus groups will be shared once dates and times are available.
- ◆ **The After-School Special Education Supplementary Instruction Program** is currently in its pilot session. District special education staff are providing sixteen virtual, 45-minute instructional sessions in either reading/language or math to classified students who registered for the program. Staff, and parent feedback will be reviewed at the completion of the program to assess its success.
- ◆ **Screen-Free Wednesdays** were implemented for November and December for all students to provide a brief screen-time respite for students, and to provide an opportunity for staff to access additional professional development. On these days students receive all of their classes and therapies in the morning, and no additional classes or work in the afternoon.
- ◆ **Collaboration Portal:** The Collaboration Portal is a message delivery system we use that allows us to share documents related to your child's IEP. It is a service provided by Frontline Education, which is our IEP platform (IEP Direct).

This system allows us to obtain parental signatures when an IEP meeting was held virtually. If you receive an email message from the Collaboration Portal the subject line of the message will say, "Jennifer D'Errico shared a Collaboration Document with you." Jennifer D'Errico is one of our CST secretaries. Messages that are sent from the Collaboration Portal are sent by our CST secretaries. Please see list of our CST secretary's names below so that you are familiar with their names if they send you a message. Please know that these emails are **not** spam.

CST secretaries: Jackie Dzbenski: Wicoff, Hawk, HSS Jennifer D'Errico: HSN, TC, Grover

Annette Sherman: Millstone, Village, Dutch Neck

Kimberly Natoli: Community MS



The Job Skills Program @ HSN partnered with a company to teach real-life entrepreneurship skills to our students. The classes worked on a “Sales Project”, that had them create a variety of advertisements for “Popcorn for the People”, which is a non-profit organization that employs adults with Autism. Each student was responsible for creating a sales pitch, an advertisement, additional ways to market their product, developing a spreadsheet to keep track of their customers/sales and learning how to network/follow up with people to complete their sale.



We had an overwhelming response from both the district staff and community with this idea. We are going to continue picking a new company to spotlight each marking period to help, as well as, create new skills and opportunities for our students. As we are in unprecedented times, we needed to think of new ideas to help support the Job Skills Program, while still maintaining the Knights’ Armory <https://the-knights-armory-square.site/> and Lost and Found Website <https://sites.google.com/view/hsnlostfound/find-your-item>. Please visit our school store to see what we are working on.

HS North LDT-C Rosalyn Washington, is Club Advisor for a newly formed group:

SHADES, the Black Student Union, at HSN was formed to give a diverse group of students a voice to advocate for students of color and bring awareness to the controversial issues that center around racial disparities. The club aims to inspire, educate, and encourage while promoting cultural diversity and peaceful coexistence within our community. We have one public meeting per month on issues that we think are relevant to the district. Recently we have had discussions about microaggressions and what it means to be an African American student in the WW-P School district, the importance of not using racial slurs in the classroom, and what it means to attend a Historical Black College/ University. In the future, we plan to hold discussions on how to be an ally, Kwanzaa, Racism in Healthcare, Colorism, and more. We have planned outreaches to the middle schools to ensure that younger students of color have a comfortable school experience, and we hope to hold fundraisers to support Black Lives Matter. We are always looking for new members and allies. Students can sign up via our Instagram page at <https://www.instagram.com/hsnshadesclub>



Town Center Speech:

Remote speech sessions have taken a new twist in Mrs. Cooke’s speech room. Students are able to practice their communication skills using some of their favorite in person games and toys virtually through the magic of green screen and virtual Zoom back-grounds. Potato Head, feed the bear and car wash are some of the most requested activities by Town Center students.

**On behalf of all Special Education staff & administrators,
we thank you for your
continuous support!**

In October, our theme was all about fall! Students completed a "scarecrow glyph."

Students responded to different types of fall questions and according to their answer, they colored each part of their scarecrow a certain color. This lesson integrated responding to questions, following directions, and fine motor skills all in one. My students had a great time making their very own scarecrow! Here are some examples.

Scarecrow Glyph Legend

Color of shirt: What is your favorite season?

Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall
Red	Green	Yellow	Orange

Color of overalls: Do you like to rake leaves?

Yes	No
Blue	Brown

Color of face: Have you gone on a hayrack ride?

Yes	No
Brown	Yellow

Color of hat: Do you like apple cider?

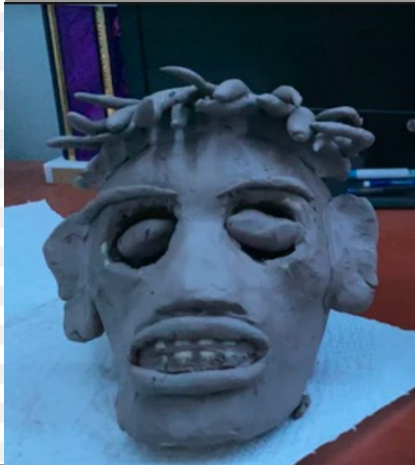
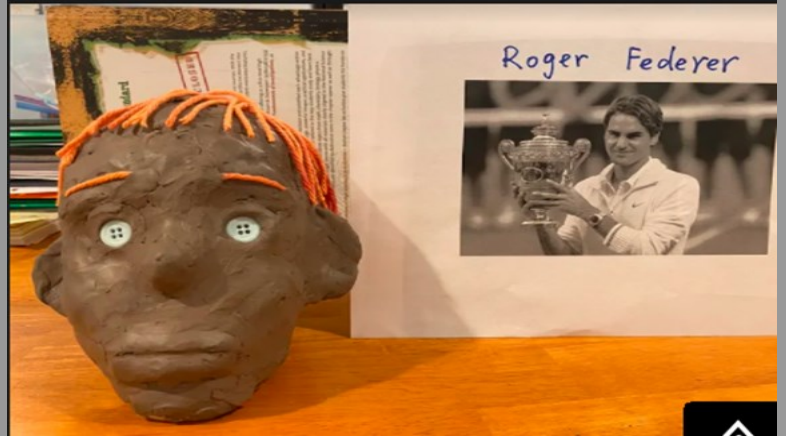
Yes	No
Brown	Yellow

Color of shoes: What is your favorite kind of apple?

Red apple	Yellow apple	Green apple
Red	Yellow	Green



HSN Forensic students in Mrs. Anita Stewart's class showed off their creativity in reconstructing faces following the same techniques utilized by law enforcement today. Working with plastic skulls, modeling clay, basic tools, and facial pictures of famous people, students "built" their faces up, layer upon layer, to show definition and to make the person come "alive." Here are some of their work products:



On behalf of all Special Education staff & administrators, we thank you for your continuous support!





Autism New Jersey is the largest statewide network of parents and professionals dedicated to improving lives of individuals with autism spectrum disorders. Self-advocates, families, the professionals who work with them, government officials, the media, and concerned state residents all turn to Autism New Jersey for information, compassionate support, and training. Our public policy work in Trenton, annual conferences, and information line (800.4.AUTISM) are just a few of the ways we make a difference for New Jersey's autism community. **Visit their website at: www.autismnj.org**

. WWP SEPTSA exists to support students and families of students with IEPs and 504 plans. Please join SEPTSA to be added to our mailing list and be sure to hear about upcoming events and speakers! Membership is open to all parents and families, older students (6th grade and above), and faculty and staff who support students with special needs. Visit <https://www.wwp-septsa.org/> for more information and the link to join online.



Visit <https://dsacnj.shutterfly.com/>
The Down Syndrome Association of Central New Jersey (DSACNJ) is a non-profit parent support group. Visit the website for information and resources for activities and parents. Established to assist families of children and adults with Down syndrome (i.e., Trisomy 21).

Planning for Adult Life is a statewide project funded by the NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) to assist young adults (between the ages of 16-21) with developmental disabilities and their families in charting a life course for adulthood. They offer a variety of resources including Informational sessions, webinars, and resource guides/materials.
 Visit <http://planningforadulthood.org/>
The Arc of New Jersey website, for information on their many

Is your special needs child interested in working with a Girl Scout on a STEM Lego robotics activity? We will provide the materials and then work with your child(ren) over Zoom. Siblings, including those not on an IEP, are also welcome to be involved. You must be a SEPTSA member to participate in this program. Contact Kathleen Moriarty at wwpseptsa@yahoo.com for more information.



Special Education Parent Advisory Group (S.E.P.A.G.)

To support parents of students with an IEP or 504 plan, and to provide input to the district on special education issues, the WWP SEPAG meets regularly throughout the school year. Additionally, SEPTSA/SEPAG hosts monthly "office hours" (now virtual!) for informal conversation and advice regarding issues around IEPs/504 plans. Upcoming dates include:

- November 22
- December 20
- January 24
- February 21
- March 21
- April 18
- May 23

All times are Sundays from 4-6 pm. Please contact Jennifer Riccards at jenballen@yahoo.com for more information or to receive the Zoom link. (If you cannot make one of these times and would like support or to connect with other families dealing with similar situations, please feel free to contact Jennifer at any time.)

Autism New Jersey's:



Questions? Visit our FAQs, email

conference@autismnj.org or call 609.588.8200 x10013.

Important Information for Parents: Regarding the Special Education Medicaid Initiative (S.E.M.I.)

The SEMI program reimburses school districts for funds the district has expended providing health-related services (i.e. speech, occupational and/or physical therapy, CST evaluations, nursing services, etc.) to students who are receiving special education services and who are also eligible to receive health benefits under Medicaid. Upon initial classification, and then annually, parents will be asked by CST case managers for consent so that the district can seek reimbursement from Medicaid for any health-related services the district has provided to student who meet the SEMI criteria noted above. We must have parental consent before we can seek reimbursement from Medicaid. No information will be submitted without parental consent and this program does not affect a family's insurance benefits. Parents of special education students who receive benefits under the Medicaid program are encouraged to provide consent for the district to seek this reimbursement. Please speak with your child's CST case manager, Special Services Supervisor and/or Director for additional information or to receive additional information.

Thank you!

Sensory-friendly places to go and things to do in the area

Air Trampoline

111 Route 35, Aberdeen
732-583-3000
Airtrampolinesports.com
First Sunday of the month at 10:00 AM

American Museum of Natural History

Central Park West at 79th Street,
Manhattan, NY 212-769-5100
Amnh.org
Discovery Squad from 9:00-10:00 am on
select Saturday mornings

AMC Theaters

Freehold, Hamilton, New Brunswick
Amctheatres.com
Second and fourth Saturday

Bowlero

1 Carolier Lane, North Brunswick
732-846-2424
Bowlero.com
Autismspeaks.org

Slocum's Bowling Center Ewing ~ Family Event

for Special Needs Children ~ ALL AGES welcome
Call to ask about special needs dates
609-799-0909 x1719

Diggerland

100 Pinedge Dr. West Berling NJ
856-768-1100
diggerlandusa.com

The Intrepid

12th Avenue at 46th Str on Pier 86
Manhattan 212-245-0072

Intrepidmuseum.org

Contact for info on special sensory
friendly events

Metropolitan Museum of Art

100 Fifth Avenue at East 82nd St,
Manhattan
212-535-7710

Metmuseum.org

Sensory map to indicate quiet or lower

light areas

Paper Mill Playhouse

22 Brookside Dr, Millburn, NJ
973-376-4343
Papermill.org

POAC Autism Services

1989 Rt 88, Brick NJ
732-785-1099
Poac.net

Raritan Valley Community College Plan- etarium

118 Lamington Road, Branchburg, NJ
908-526-1200 Raritanval.edu

Sahara Sam's

536 Route 73, West Berlin, NJ
856-767-7580
Sahasasams.com
Special needs nights at the indoor water
park—call for dates

Sky Zone

600 Hadley Road, South Plainfield, NJ
Skyzone.com

State Theatre

151 Livingston Avenue, New Brunswick NJ
732-246-7469

Statetheatrenj.org

Union County Arts Center

1601 Irving St, Rahway NJ

732-499-8226

Upac.org

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Brunswick NJ

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Union County Arts Center
1601 Irving St, Rahway NJ
732-499-8226

Upac.org

**William Paterson University,
Shea Center for the Per-
forming Arts** 300
Pompton Road, Wayne, NJ
973-720-3178 Wpunj.edu