

DAY SCHOOL HAPPENINGS

A MESSAGE FROM THE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM

BY BECKY KAUFMAN, SENIOR PROGRAM SUPERVISOR - ELEMENTARY

Words of Encouragement

One of the things that I love most about working at Giant Steps is that our staff are so genuinely passionate about serving our children and families. It is our joy to help support our students and strive towards our mission of **“equipping and empowering students to be academically successful and to independently participate in their community to the fullest extent possible both now and in adulthood.”**

This holiday season, one of the most encouraging things you could do is take a minute to write a note of appreciation to your child’s team. This could be as simple as sending an email that could be forwarded to the team, or writing individual notes. Hearing stories of how we are accomplishing our mission, even in small ways, is what keeps us recharged as we head into the new year!

WE NEED YOUR HELP! CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATORS!

WE NEED YOUR HELP TO PROACTIVELY PROTECT OUR CHILDREN BY IMMEDIATELY CONTACTING YOUR STATE LEGISLATORS TO ASK THEM TO:

- 1. PASS HB3973 ALLOWING NON-PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO GO BACK TO PRE-BILLING**
- 2. MODIFY HB3975 AND SB2315 TO INCLUDE AN EXCEPTION TO NEW ITO AND RESTRAINT RULES FOR THERAPEUTIC SCHOOLS SUCH AS GIANT STEPS**

IT IS SUGGESTED THAT SUPPORTERS SHOULD NOT ONLY CALL YOUR LEGISLATORS, BUT ALSO EMAIL THE JCAR COMMITTEE MEMBERS FIRST AT THIS EMAIL: JCAR@ILGA.GOV AND COPY ISBE AT: RULES@ISBE.NET.

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IS YOUR CHILD UNABLE TO COME TO SCHOOL TODAY?

Please call our student absence hotline if your child will miss school, **630-864-3800 x 3.**

Calling prior to 8am significantly helps us plan our staffing for the day!

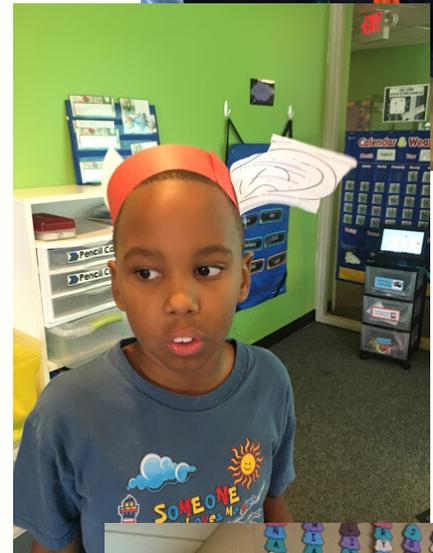
When leaving a message please leave your child's name, your child's teacher/classroom, as well as the reason for their absence.

Thank you!

ELEMENTARY SPOTLIGHT: CLASSROOM C

BY KATIE KRUG, CLASSROOM C TEACHER

Things are really moving in Classroom C! Our year started with our students learning about whole body listening and how all parts of our bodies are used to learn. Classroom C students have been so proud of being independent when they are participating in stations to learn letters, sounds, and reading skills. Other students are learning what it means to rhyme, answer comprehension questions, and read independently with their peers. In Math, students are learning how to sort and classify and other students are learning how to add using multiple strategies to get to the sum quickly. Students have done a great job working together to solve challenging problems! The class was so proud of our friends who were voted Homecoming Prince and Princess Ian and Zuri! Our students had a great time at their annual Thanksgiving Feast on Friday November 22nd, where they brought in favorite food items that are a part of family traditions!



SECONDARY/TRANSITION SPOTLIGHT: CLASSROOM UNION

BY LORI MALAWSKI

Union students have been busy this fall! Our science unit has consisted of learning about extreme weather such as hurricanes, tornadoes, and flooding. Students have conducted a variety of experiments after learning about each type of weather. Some experiments have consisted of making a tornado in a jar and making a rain cloud using shaving cream and food coloring. In addition, students have gone to a variety of places during Community Based Instruction such as a pumpkin patch, Walmart, The Dollar Tree, Morton Arboretum, and Butterfield's Restaurant. We had a blast during our Halloween Party where we were wrapped up like a Mummy, tried to pick up spiders in a web and went trick or treating in the administration hallway.



STAR STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



VOYAGERS STAR STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Ali - Classroom Voyagers
 Ali was nominated for demonstrating the ability to follow spoken directions/written directions from multiple people, beginning to advocate for his needs safely, engaging in leisure activities for up to 15 minutes, and developing ability to participate appropriately in groups of 5+ peers!



INTERMEDIATE STAR STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Jonah - Classroom G
 Jonah was nominated for demonstrating an ability to consistently participate safely in groups of 5+, following spoken directions from multiple people, safely engaging in leisure activities for up to 10 minutes, and increased accuracy using a functional communication system!



SECONDARY/ TRANSITION STAR STUDENT SPOTLIGHT:

Jacob -Classroom Stevenson
 Jacob was nominated for continuing to increase his independence throughout the day and demonstrating all fifteen of the essential skills!



Jamie - Classroom Union
 Jamie was nominated for continuing to utilize a reliable and spontaneous communication method and advocating for himself!

BUILDING ESSENTIAL SKILLS

Essential Skills

1. Possesses and utilizes an identified **reliable, spontaneous communication** method
2. Demonstrates **self-management** of behavior
3. Safely **participates in groups** of 5+ individuals
4. Completes **personal care** routines independently (e.g., clean hands/ face, brushes teeth, hair combed/brushed, etc.)
5. **Follows spoken and visual direction**
6. Respects and maintains **appropriate boundaries** of self and others (physical and otherwise)
7. **Follows directions from multiple people**
8. **Manages bodily functions** independently (e.g., toileting, wiping nose, covering cough, etc.)
9. Demonstrates **choice-making**
10. **Waits appropriately** for 10 minutes
11. Possesses and utilizes skills/strategies to **manage emotions and/or sensory needs**
12. Demonstrates **problem solving**
13. Safely **engages in a recreational/leisure** activity for 15 minutes
14. **Reads and writes functionally**
15. **Advocates for him/herself**

COMMUNICATION SKILLS OF THE MONTH

CORE WORDS: IN & OUT

SOCIAL LANGUAGE SKILL: IN & OUT OF THE GROUP



BODY IN THE GROUP



BODY OUT OF THE GROUP

REMINDERS

NURSE'S CORNER

BY: JILLIAN HILDEBRAND, RN

With the official start of the holiday season we want our families to know that December is designated National Safe Toys and Gifts Month by the group Prevent Blindness America. This organization “encourages everyone to consider if the toys they wish to give suits the age and individual skills and abilities of the individual child who will receive it...” Below are some tips from Prevent Blindness America when considering toys for the children in our lives:

- Inspect all toys before purchasing. Avoid those that shoot or include parts that fly off. The toy should have no sharp edges or points and should be sturdy enough to withstand impact without breaking, being crushed, or being pulled apart easily.
- When purchasing toys for children with special needs try to: Choose toys that may appeal to different senses such as sound, movement, and texture; consider interactive toys to allow the child to play with others; and think about the size of the toy and the position a child would need to be in to play with it.
- Be diligent about inspecting toys your child has received. Check them for age, skill level, and developmental appropriateness before allowing them to be played with.
- Gifts of sports equipment should always be accompanied by protective gear (give a helmet with the skateboard)
- Do NOT give crayons and markers unless they are labeled “nontoxic”.
- Do NOT give toys with ropes and cords or heating elements.

For more information please visit <https://www.preventblindness.org/safe-toy-checklist>

DATES TO REMEMBER

Parents Club Meeting: 12/4

Early Release (1:40): 12/4

Parent Training Event: 12/4

Elementary Winter Assembly: 12/20

Winter Break: 12/23 - 1/3

Early Release (1:40): 1/8

DONATIONS NEEDED

GIANT STEPS IS LOOKING FOR THE FOLLOWING:

If you have any gently used male clothing (pants, shirts, shorts, socks) that your children have outgrown, we would love to take them!
(Size 6 through adult)

FREE TRAINING EVENT FOR PARENTS & CAREGIVERS

DECEMBER 4, 6:00 -8:00 PM
GIANT STEPS, 2500 CABOT DRIVE, LISLE, IL 60532

Join us for an opportunity for all families with children with Autism who want to learn more about adult planning, safety at home, and special needs legal planning.

Starting at 6:00 PM join us to hear from Benjamin Rubin Esq., to hear about "A Sibling Perspective".

Then at 7:00 join one of the breakout groups that will focus on the following topics:

- Crisis Management/Safety at Home: Tara Oetting
- Transition Planning: Kaitlin Smith, LSW, Type 73
- Legal Planning: Benjamin Rubin., Esq.

Free child care provided for Giant Steps students/Canopy participants and their siblings.

Max 10 participants; first come, first served. Drop-in not accepted.

To RSVP or for more details, visit www.mygiantsteps.org

or contact Tara Oetting at toetting@mygiantsteps.org

WINTER BREAK CAMP 2019!

WHAT? REC CENTER CAMP

WHEN? MON, TH, FRI 12/23, 26, 27, 30, 1/2, 3 9 AM - 3 PM

WHERE? START/END AT GIANT STEPS

DAILY ACTIVITIES?

12/23 - CUPCAKEOLOGIST

12/26 - PAJAMAS, NETFLIX, & PIZZA DAY

12/27 - CHICK-FIL-A

12/30 - 2 TOOTS TRAIN WHISTLE GRILL

1/2 - DANCE PARTY

1/3 - MOVIES

WHO? GIANT STEPS STUDENTS AND PARTICIPANTS

HOW TO REGISTER? SEE BELOW!

Registration information was sent home via email from

Karoline Kordalewski!

Registration and Full Payment for Winter Camp 2019 is due Friday December 6th,

Previous Rec Center Balances paid/account current - contact Jenneane Timreck at jtimmer@mygiantsteps.org

Your student must be registered for Rec Center through Infinite Campus, fill out the Thanksgiving Camp 2019 registration form and return with payment (or pay online) by November 8th.

For NEW Rec Center registrations you will need to turn in the 2019-2020 Rec Center Registration + Policies and Procedures with the Christmas Camp Registration

Questions? Looking for the registration forms?

Please Contact Karoline Kordalewski - kkordalewski@mygiantsteps.org

WAYS TO GIVE BACK

THERE IS STILL TIME TO ORDER FROM SCRIP!

ORDERS DUE 12/17/19

For seasoned Scrip shoppers: just log into your account and place your order.

For new to Scrip shoppers:

1. Go to shopwithscrip.com
2. Register or join
3. Enter school code: E39FBA1255962
4. Create your account
5. Shop away!

You can also pay by check (made out to Giant Steps) by filling out a paper form and returning both to Julie Zajac.

SHOPAROO!

When you are out running your Holiday Errands don't forget to take a picture of your receipt in the Shoparoo App and Giant Steps will earn points that will add up to dollars for the organization!

If you are an android user:

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=infoscout.shoparoo&hl=en_US

If you are an Iphone user:

<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/shoparoo-fundraising/id549616361>

You can also send your receipts into Julie Zajac (they cannot be more than 14 days old) and we will download the receipts for you and then return them!

Questions or Concerns:

contact.jzajac@mygiantsteps.org



**Giant Steps
Parents Club**
COFFEE Talk

Educate • Communicate • Participate

BY JULIE ZAJAC

SAVE THE DATE!

Join us on December 4th at 9:15 AM in the Gator Galley for the next Parent's Club Meeting!

Meeting Topics:

Music Therapy Presentation by Meredith Powers, MT-BC, Neurologic Music Therapist-Fellow and Kate Rathgeber, Music Therapist Intern

Updates From Yesenia

*Spirit Wear Update

*Topics you would like to discuss for future meetings

Updates from Holly:

*Facebook parent group

*Fundraising - My Thirty-One, 50/50 fundraiser

Updates from Julie:

*Scrip

*Shoparoo

*Canopy Cookbook

*Gala Update

Zoom option to join the meeting via computer will be sent out to those who cannot make it.

Questions? Contact:

Julie Zajac at jzajac@mygiantsteps.org