



**Union County Educational Services Commission**  
 45 Cardinal Drive • Westfield • New Jersey • 07090  
 (908) 233-9317 • FAX (908) 233-7432

(Att. 2)

**Report of the Superintendent to the Board of Directors**  
**February 7, 2018**

**WESTLAKE:**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Enrollment as of January 23, 2018</b><br>Actual: 76<br>Changes: Entered: 1 Exited: 0 | <b>Referrals: 4</b><br>Intakes Scheduled: 4<br>Accepted: 1 |
| Fire Drills: January 19, 2018<br>Suspensions: 0   | Emergency Drills: Shelter in Place<br>January 8, 2018      |

**Language Arts:** In Mrs. Porchetta’s class, students are making great progress with the Edmark Program. Word identification, comprehension, spelling and sentence building are some of the concepts reviewed on a daily basis. Mr. Carten’s students have been exploring the writing process working on sentence structure. The students are starting a new novel “When a Hero Dies” by Anne Schraff. The story involves a mystery where one of the main characters, Tony Gibbs, is hunting down the killer of his best friend in a very dangerous part of the city.

**Math:** In math the students are working on many different skills. Some of these are basic addition and subtraction, measuring, telling time to hour, and recognizing fractional parts. One student in Mrs. Attlessey’s class is working on solving multiplication and division word problems and finding equivalent fractions.

**Science:** The students in Mr. Carten’s class are covering a Science unit discussing the earth’s layers. The students are learning that geologists use a seismograph to measure earthquakes. The students viewed a video on how faults cause earthquakes. The students learned that no matter how small the movement of the layers of the earth is, it is recorded for geologists to study.

**Food Science:** The chocolate business has been very busy this year already. We had an order for 100 personalized oreos and also made 45 number 4’s for a birthday party. Students are now working on St. Valentine’s Day candies.

**Social Studies:** Mrs. Porchetta’s class discussed the legacy of Martin Luther King. Facts and opinions in regard to current events were also reviewed. Students are working toward completing their own opinion paragraph in response to a hot topic in the news.

During the month of January, Mrs. Convery’s class also studied the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Students read a short biographical book and completed a timeline of his life. Their current Time for Kids issue concerns volcanoes. Students read about the volcanoes, watched several videos and will be making a model together as a class. We continued our study of birds by reading the story of Pale Male, a hawk made famous by building his nest among the tall buildings of Manhattan.

**PE:** In Physical Education classes students completed a Hockey unit. Each student took part in games and drills, leading up to a split-class game; students versus students. Some classes progressed to a hockey game with students being the focal point and myself being faded out to allow them to be independent while other classes were taking part of a simulated and prompt-filled games.

Currently in Physical Education, we are enhancing student knowledge of the sport of hockey. Some of my students remembered how to hold a hockey stick while others are worked on their hand-eye coordination by passing and shooting a puck and/or hockey ball. The goal is to teach the students how to play and expose them to the sport of hockey in order for them to be given a chance to play, watch, and enjoy the game.

Every class, I start by providing students a welcoming conversation. With recently purchased pedometers (15), each student is given an opportunity to see how many steps they have moved in my class. Students are broken up into two teams and are given a pinnie to wear to play in our game. Each student is given an exit question about hockey pertaining to content knowledge of the sport. Questions vary and are differentiated.

**Health:** In health classes we are continuing our understanding of being active and healthy. Mr. Moss starts his lessons with different types of guided dances (Chicken Dance, Cha Cha Slide, etc.) on a website called, 'GoNoodle'. From the guided dances students then follow a stretching video to loosen the muscles and joints. Students follow interactive videos and worksheets which allow them to compare each type of food group.

Sign Making/Engraving machine: Students are introduced to the Scott engraving machine. The machine can make various types of signs. All students are exposed to the experience. Students are now working on the mechanics and measuring of the signs. Students continue to make key chains to sell for the upcoming Valentine's Day sale.

Horticulture: In horticulture, Mrs. Capizzi's class finished up with planting and selling Amaryllis. They began discussing what they wanted to plant next. Students are really excited for all the ideas they came up with. The class will start selling herbs and will begin to plant them hopefully by the end of this week or beginning of next. Then they will also sell some type of flower in the spring. Students will be learning about the different herbs and how they are used (cooking, etc.).

Post Office/Print Shop: Mrs. Roble's class took a CBI trip to the Kenilworth Post Office. The Post Mistress gave them a tour of the facility and explained the different services the post office offers and how a mail delivery route works. Students found it interesting to learn that in the bank, the vault held over \$100,000 worth of stamps! The Post Mistress did give books to the students – "Meet the Wonders of America", a book depicted special American features on postage stamps. Students are using the book for a Social Studies unit. Each student has chosen one 'wonder' and will be doing a report. So far the students have taken a book out of the library about their choice and have begun to fill out a book report template. The students have all sent at least one letter to another Westlake student and several students have received letters from other students. The class was pleased to have received a letter from Mrs. Tantilillo and we have been working on writing individual responses to some of the questions that she posed to us in her letter.

In the Print Shop, Mrs. Pajewski's students are exploring the jobs associated with the print shop (copying, collating, filing, laminating and more). They have completed laminating jobs for staff, and are receiving jobs from the main office (copies and mail delivery). This month they have also started to create a Mail Directory and mailing labels for students.

Sweet Shoppe: The Sweet Shop is so busy that Mrs. Palmer's class has to take reservations. The students are improving their skills when waiting on the tables. Students F.D. and D.Z. are talking more and taking orders correctly. Student T.B.K. is remembering more schedules and orders.

**Jewelry:** In the jewelry vocational workshop, students were able to choose from a variety of jewelry items to complete. They worked individually or in pairs with most students demonstrating greater independence in completing tasks. The students are eager to have finished jewelry products to sell.

**Fabrics Plus Shop:** In vocational class, Fabrics Plus Shop, the students started a new project for the Valentine's Day Sale. The students were introduced to recycling bottles into stylish and trendy home décor by following discussions on why recycling is important. After the discussions, the students sketched their designs on paper and then started decorating the bottles using twine and other decorative craft supplies to give an old bottle a new look and new life.

**Life Skills:** In Life Skills, the students started a new unit of how to get a job. The students were briefly given an overview of this unit such as how to obtain references, how to complete resumes, cover letters, and applications. Before they started writing their own resume, the students learned about two different types of resumes and they chose to write a chronological resume.

**Retail:** Students have been opening up the "Wolves" school store with specific set times. The store continues to be open for business 3 days a week on Wed., Thurs. and Fri.

**Therapies: Speech:** This month in speech the therapists conducted ADL groups targeting both expressive and receptive language skills through various activities: making play doh, obstacle courses and a following directions activity. We have worked closely with teachers to make materials needed in the classroom to assist with student communication (e.g. activity schedules, visual scripts, etc.). We have continued to work on SGO's and made any modifications necessary to ensure students are meeting their goals. As a department we discussed potential opportunities for future professional development and ways we can collaborate to better assist students with social skills.

**Physical Therapy:** This month Mrs. Feuerstein continues to use the iPad app called "Exercise Buddy" with some students. This app allows her to easily add video-modeling into PT sessions. In particular, she is using the video models of balancing on one leg and horizontal jumping with a group of students. Recorded data clearly shows improvement, especially with balance on one foot when using the video modeling. This app also offers features such as muscle/bone/body part identification, visual timers and pictures of many useful exercises. Mrs. Feuerstein has ordered a large color-coded muscle chart to allow students another way to identify muscles during exercise.

**Occupational Therapy:** The OT's continue to collaborate with the speech department to implement activities for the ADL support groups. Activities this month included cooking (playdoh, hot chocolate, toast and tortilla snowflakes), completing recipe reviews, reading and following written directions while completing a gross motor obstacle course and a scavenger hunt that incorporated directional and spatial concepts. The OT department also worked on fine motor activities. Mrs. Edelstein has put together materials for the jewelry lab. This includes visual designs/patterns to follow when making earrings, lanyards and eye glass chains, and organizing the materials needed for these items into individual kits. The materials are ready for students to make jewelry items.

**Social Work:** Most students have settled into their school routine since returning from winter break while some continue to require intermittent crisis counseling throughout the week. Social workers are working closely with behaviorists, teachers and administrators to develop and support interventions as well as implement creative strategies for student success. Parent meetings with our consultant psychiatrist have been invaluable in an effort to assist students who are emotionally involved.

Our Kean University intern is co-leading school-based counseling groups and maintaining a shared individual caseload in order to gain knowledge and experience. The intern is assisting with direct case

management involving parents and collateral agencies as well as attending IEP meetings and assisting our graduates with their transition needs.

ASL group is focused on learning words about their own feelings and emotions in an effort to be able to converse with one another using sign language. Grant materials have been highly useful and well received by all students.

Girl Scouts are selling their famous cookies during the school day while practicing social skills when approaching staff members. The Council is receptive to running two meetings at Westlake as well as provide off site trips this spring paid for with grant monies. The girls made woven bookmarks and reviewed the GS Law while practicing kindness to one another.

**Behaviorist:** This month, the behavior department has continued to have a heavy involvement responding to a high volume of incidents where crisis management procedures have been necessary. There were five students who needed frequent intervention this month. The behaviorist are continuing to consult with the teachers, observed and modeled strategies based on individual student behavior intervention plans, and conducted team meetings with staff who work with the students involved in these incidents to provide additional support and updates to behavior intervention plans.

Behavior Strategies have been written for D.R. and behaviorists have met with the teacher to review and model the strategies being implemented. In addition, due to the increase of incidents with M.F. which resulted in the need to use crisis management procedures, a specific protocol tailored to meet the student’s individual needs was written up to be implemented at the first signs of agitation. This protocol has been created in order to provide a more detailed explanation of de-escalation strategies outlined in the student’s behavior intervention plan in order to reduce the need for use of crisis management procedures.

A behavior management staff training has been scheduled for 1/23 in order to further train staff in implementing proactive de-escalation strategies, review crisis management protocol, and address staff questions related to behavior management . The first half of the Safety Care Training for the Paraprofessionals is also scheduled for February 9<sup>th</sup> (presented by C. Gewirtzman, D. Salvatore, and R. Peneno).

D. Salvatore has also accompanied A.R. on her first two trips to the Can Do Café. She attended in order to assist with a successful transition for the student and to train and model strategies outlined in the student’s behavior intervention plan.

**LAMBERTS MILL ACADEMY:**

|                                 |                        |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>As of January 25, 2018</b>   |                        |
| LMA Actual: 41                  | Fire Alarms: 0         |
| LMA District - Non-New Point:35 | Fire Drills: 1         |
| New Point Specialty at LMA: 6   | Security Drills (1): 1 |
| Changes: 3 Entered: 3           |                        |
| Pending: 1                      |                        |
| Exited: 1                       |                        |
| <b>Trinitas Hospital :</b>      |                        |
| Bedside Instruction: <b>34</b>  |                        |
| (inpatient)                     |                        |
| Day Program: <b>44</b>          |                        |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Approved-Agreement signed: <b>61</b><br>Classified: <b>37</b><br>Regular Ed: <b>24</b>                              |  |
| Referrals in January: 9<br>Intakes Scheduled: 8<br>Completed: 5<br>Accepted LMA placement: 1<br>Placement Pending : | Suspension out of school: 0<br>In School Suspension: 0<br>HIB: 0 |

### Administration

LMA is collaborating with the Jewish Family Services of Elizabeth to provide skilled and compassionate Social Services to our students that will follow them into their adult lives. They are a nonprofit, non-sectarian, health and social services agency, with offices in Elizabeth and Mountainside, New Jersey. JFS is working with our Seniors to encourage personal growth by helping them navigate through their transition goals and have success post graduation.

Teacher advocates are further opening the doors of communication between parent, teacher and therapist and building on student success in the classroom and the therapeutic setting. Calls are being made home from advocates to families on a weekly basis to share exciting news and student accomplishments. Advocates meet with their students and create academic goals with a ladder to success for each individual. Teachers meet daily during their common planning time to collaborate on ideas, strategies, and interventions to best support their students in reaching their individual goals.

This month's guest speaker was a Forensic Entomologist who helped students generalize their skills outside of their forensic class by building on what they have already learned to make new inferences as well as exploring the many exciting careers involved in forensics.

Our LMA Mosaic program is helping students to think about themselves as a contributor to a broader society. This has been fostered through our student government which was a byproduct of the mosaic curriculum. Student government is no longer just a participant in the LMA organization. They are now leaders in creating a positive school climate and culture.

### Academics

**English Language Arts & Literacy:** We began a new unit involving Narrative Reading and Writing. Students have pondered the essential question "What makes a text unique?". We began with close reading of details and the effects of word choice through comparing and contrasting various texts from Ernest Hemingway and published adolescent authors. The unit progressed with students writing and having grand discussions highlighting the unique narrative writing techniques including dialogue, tone, and sensory imaging. Several creative writing pieces were designed throughout this unit which were submitted to our annual Literary Magazine publication. Students also learned how to cite poems as they wrote how sensory images affect the meaning of writing. Students continue to gain various benefits from independent reading guidance, including most prominently their increased sustained reading periods. Students have been corresponding with peers nationally through the Global Read Aloud of the novel "A long Walk to Water". This experience is giving a greater purpose to their writing and a sense of comradery being a member of a national community of readers.

**Science:** Biology students are finishing up unit on Photosynthesis and have had some fun trying to name some foods that don't originate with a plant (spoiler alert: you can't!). We are hoping to do some hands on work with photosynthetic plants next week. Our environmental students are working on a project about natural resources. They picked a state or a country and are making a 3D project representing important resources from that state or country. Chemistry students have spent a couple weeks exploring atomic

structure with M&Ms. Informational and yummy! Forensics students are learning about forensic entomology and we have a board certified Forensic Entomologist from Rutgers speaking to us next week. We will also soon be receiving some live bugs to explore details about insect structure. We are also putting some plans in place for a science expo in the spring.

**Mathematics:** Students in Algebra courses began working with polynomials and how to simplify them. They were able to complete a poster project in which they outlined the steps of the FOIL system to break a larger problem down into smaller steps. With the use of the Smartboard students were able to complete slides in a presentation format reviewing how to FOIL and factor polynomials. Students working on Geometry began working with the Pythagorean Theorem and exclusively right triangles. Students tested the Pythagorean Theorem by constructing their own triangles out of construction paper. Once the triangle was complete they measured sides with rulers, and put the actual measurements into the Pythagorean Theorem to determine if in fact that triangle is 'square'. Students discussed the importance of a 'true right angle' triangle in everyday scenarios: carpentry, furniture, building construction and how it can be tested.

**History:** This month, students have been progressing as expected through their individual classroom curriculums.

Students in World History are starting the final section of river valley civilizations. Students picked up from last month by learning about ancient India and China. When learning about ancient India, the students first learned about the geography and its influence on India's isolation. They used evidence from text to develop theories on why the first Indian city, Harappa, disappeared. Students were also exposed to the religions of ancient India. Students discussed and interpreted quotes from the religious leaders, studied the symbolism in portraits of the Hindu gods and their meaning to the Hindu people. When studying ancient China we focused on analyzing the differences between the dynasties. Additionally, students utilized primary documents to evaluate and determine if key emperors were effective leaders. After the completion of this unit students will move on to study the classical civilizations.

Students in US1 have been studying causes of and key concepts of the American Revolutionary War. Students began their study by reviewing the French and Indian War and evaluating the problems that arose from the war. Students studied various taxes placed on the colonists and evaluated the impact on the colonists and their reactions to it via primary documentation and artwork, including the events of the Boston Massacre. They created a definition of a patriot and a loyalist and used their definitions to identify patriots and loyalists in case studies. Students are presently studying the 3 phases of the American Revolution. This includes critically analyzing the Declaration of Independence and Articles of Confederation through group analysis of their various parts. When finished, students will be moving into the Constitutional convention and the early years of the United States.

Students in USII have been studying lead up to and the key points of the first world war. Students learned the 'MAIN' mnemonic device to remember the key causes of the war. They have studied the alliance system, the powder keg, and the assassination of Franz Ferdinand through primary and secondary source analysis. When learning about the war itself, the students analyzed the use of trenches through diagrams, front line letters, and battlefield layouts. Students experienced the influence of wartime propaganda by reviewing various propaganda images and using their messages and imagery to determine their purpose. They analyzed Woodrow Wilson's speeches from before and after the American entrance into the war and explained how his perspective changed and why they believed his perspective changed. At present, students are studying the achievements of the homefront and their influence on the war effort. When finished, they will evaluate Wilson's 14 points and the actual Treaty of Versailles and discuss their similarities and differences. Upon completion students will move into the daily life of the roaring 20s, the Great Depression, and the global impact of the first world war.

**Physical Education and Health:** January was a busy month for the students at LMA in Health and Physical Education. We started the new year off with the Basketball Unit by practicing dribbling, shooting, passing, offensive and defensive schemes, and rules and regulations of the game. We followed these up by partaking in lead-up activities and playing in basketball games. We are now participating in the Badminton Unit for the remainder of the month. Badminton is an extremely popular activity for the students at LMA and at the end of the unit students will be participating in the 2nd Annual LMA Badminton Tournament. Last year's tournament was a great success and we hope to continue the tradition for this year.

For Health we have just started to begin the CPR/AED/First Aid Unit with the students. Students have been learning about the importance of knowing all the skills involved in CPR and being a first responder. We have covered the Good Samaritan Laws and also the universal precautions. We will soon be practicing actual CPR on a practice mannequin and using the AED to save lives.

**World Language:** This month students are finishing the unit Daily life: "*La Vida escolar y las Tracciones*" in Spanish class. Students took a summative assessment to measure what they have learned at the end of the unit to enhance students' learning. Through interdisciplinary instructional and activities, students have learned different ways to integrate social studies while role-playing "*El viaje alrededor del mundo*". Students were able to use a map to locate different countries and research about different traditions in Mexico, Ecuador and Spain. Students are able to engage in conversations, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions and compare and contrast different schools from the Spanish-speaking countries and American country. While using several videos and Power-Points, the teacher enables students to make comparisons between languages in both the grammar explanations, and in visual activities called "*mi mochila*". Students learned to look for language connections, to understand how language works and to integrate these new skills as they continue studying Spanish. In addition, students worked in different projects in which they have to create a well-organized research about "*Las Tradiciones*" in the school/ home in order to describe their favorite tradition in Spanish and then illustrate each tradition. Projects are posted on the bulletin board outside the Spanish room.

### **LMA Clinical Department**

January 2018 began with group discussions on setting goals and resolutions for the New Year. The groups covered topics of communication skills, decision making skills and conflict resolution. Each group facilitator used different styles and modalities to introduce the topics such as role plays, worksheets and group discussions. As these topics were discussed students were encouraged to view them in a larger scope i.e. job and community and they explored the need for such skills in various environments.

### **New Point**

Students looked at the life of Civil Rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. The students studied his struggles for the civil rights of African Americans in the deep South. His methods of non-violence were a reason for his success. King's hard work resulted in the passing of the Civil Rights Act/ voting Acts of 1964. Students participated in a Three Kings Day Celebration on January 15th. Three Kings day commemorates the visit of the Three Magi to the Christ newborn. We studied the importance of this feast and how it is very important to the Hispanic community of Elizabeth.

Students have been following IEP implemented classes and are completing their 2nd semester classes. Lastly, in Science, we looked at the trials and tribulations of Space Exploration. NASA's success has been tempered by the loss of nineteen astronauts. Apollo 1, The Space Shuttles Challenger and Columbia were studied by the students.

**Trinitas:** Special lessons this month have focused on honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Since our students range from K - 12th grade, materials on many levels were provided. Younger students read picture

books about his life. They completed a display in the hall. One young student wrote “My dream is for no wars, no fights, and for everyone to be peaceful.” Older students read an article in a Scholastic News Magazine (January 8, 2018) titled “He Had a Dream,” in which Dr. King’s daughter Bernice talks about his life and legacy. After reading his last speech, “I’ve Been to the Mountaintop,” students completed accompanying skills sheets that included Close-Reading Questions, Analyzing Quotations, and Analyzing Primary Sources.

**CROSSROADS:**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Enrollment as of<br>Actual: 47<br>Changes:0 Entered: 0<br>Exited:0 | Referrals: 1<br>Intakes Scheduled: Pending<br>Accepted: 0 |
| Fire Drills: 1/30/18   | Emergency Drills: 1/8/18                                  |

**School Accomplishments:**

Crossroads School staff and students kicked off the new year, in grand fashion! Crossroads staff enjoyed a “New Year Celebration,” with our parents and students by creating multiple art projects for our classroom hallways.

The entire Crossroads School community would like to formally thank Mrs. Foppert, Mr. Kowalski, the Union County Educational Services Board of Education and the Union County Educational Services Foundation for supporting our new and exciting Music Program. The program began this January. Our students are enjoying the music and rhythm activities.

**Community Based Field Trips:**

Middle School classes attended community based field trips to Clark Gym, Clark Commons, Westlake, the Clark Library, the Westfield Recycling Center and the Clark Gym during the month of January. These experiences assist our children in practicing valuable life skills in the community. Students work on specific skills in the classroom to help ensure successful community experiences.

**Classroom Accomplishments:**

**Kristina Cassidy’s class:** Sebastian G., is our student of the month. He is doing much better staying focused to complete his independent activity schedules in class. Sebastian will initiate morning greetings with staff and continues to be full of smiles and very lovable. He has made progress adding with TouchPoints and is doing a nice job increasing his sight word repertoire using Edmark. He likes to demonstrate comprehension by matching the pictures to the words.

**Stephen Goham’s class:** The Thematic Unit this month included states of matter. The students identified and observed water in a solid, liquid, and gaseous state. Vocabulary associated with these concepts were freezing point, boiling point, melting point, heating, cooling, temperature, thermometer, etc., as well as mathematical concepts, such as degrees.

Academic areas of instruction include, phonics reading (short vowel sounds), reading fluency & spelling, reading comprehension, and dolch sight word recognition. Students continuously review prepositions, actions and verbs, story sequencing, and word/object associations.



In the area of VBMAPP, students participate in manding (requesting items/object), tacting (labeling people, actions, objects), visual perception (sorting categories and/or matching associations), and building 3D structures.

Review and reinforcement of math concepts included identifying touchpoints, one-to-one correspondence, place value, addition/subtraction, fractions, time, problem solving, and money skills.

**Kristen Fisco's class:** The Thematic Unit Monthly Theme was Martin Luther King Jr. For our supporting activity, students were exposed to diversity. They first attended to "Little Blue Little Yellow" by Leo Lionni. Each student selected a favorite color of paint. They mixed their paint with another student's paint and a new color was created. Colors created were colors that other students had selected as their favorite. Students learned that although we may have differences in our looks, when we come together, we discover similarities in one another. For a different supporting activity, students recalled information about Martin Luther King Jr. and identified synonyms. They alternated reading a Martin Luther King Jr. emergent reader. Next, students matched words to break down the meaning of the words in Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have A Dream" speech. Finally, they completed a web by copying and pasting PECS cards to create a list of adjectives that describe Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

**Natalia Amador's middle school class:** This month, the class learned about Martin Luther King, Jr. Students explored this topic by reading books, watching videos, and working on different projects. The class continued to work on strengthening their pre-vocational jobs by completing the many tasks here at Crossroads and by attending community based instruction. So far, students have worked on completing Ellison orders, sorting magazines, doing laundry, collecting recyclables, taking utensil orders and kitchen inventory. They are currently working on office supply orders and restocking the soda machine.

All students continue to work on their direct instruction and VB-MAPP goals. Josh has shown progress with his WH questions and subtraction with regrouping. Aiden is working on DLS and a new reading program called Reading Mastery. Jefferson is working on strengthening his study skills by using a Venn diagram to compare and contrast different text and learning how to plot points on a coordinate plane. Uthmaan is working on his money skills and sight word reading. Cristian is learning how to use flashcards as a study method for multiplication and definitions. He is also working on reading comprehension and fluency.

**Christina Witte's middle school class:** One of the theme-based science lessons had a focus on good cold-weather hygiene. During the middle school science lessons, students learned through hands on experiments how germs spread and how to protect us from them. Using different color glitter for each child and hand lotion, the children were able to track their germs, identifying the color of the person they originated from and see how germs transfer from person to surface to person without even touching other people. They conducted experiments on how to wash their hands correctly so that all the germs come off- using different water temperatures, washing techniques, soap and no soap, etc. They also went on a scavenger hunt around the school and classroom to find "germs" on common germ surfaces.

Students have been working on different skills related to community-based instruction in the classroom, as they relate to navigating the supermarket successfully. These skills include classifying grocery store items into grocery store categories (e.g. butter = dairy; pretzels = snacks), learning grocery store specific vocabulary and phrases, reading signs and labels, shelving items, etc. During the community-based instruction trip to ShopRite this month, the students were able to practice these skills in the real world. Although integrating these different skill sets in the real world is often very challenging, the students are demonstrating meaningful progress and some parents even report the same at home. Elaina stands out in particular, as she has been working on paying attention to people around her, while attending to her shopping task at hand. She has been working on identifying strangers, friends and community-helpers as they relate

into our Circles Social Skills curriculum and was able to independently identify strangers and the appropriate actions to display (e.g. red circle = strangers = don't talk to strangers).

**Allison Gebler's middle school class:** Students created New Years Resolution booklets via writing and selection of PECs to answer various questions: How can I be a better student, Who in my class would I like to learn more about, What would I like to do less of this year? Students took turns sorting a collection of winter clothing pictures by color throughout the month and reviewed winter weather patterns, temperatures, and vocabulary (both in writing and images).

The pre-vocational jobs this month included: laundry, scholastic magazines, and ellison cut outs. Students interacted with other classrooms in the school to collect orders for the ellison machine cut outs, to collect laundry to be cleaned, and to distribute scholastic magazines. Students also sorted magazines, by cover photo, prior to distribution and practiced visual perception skills regarding colors, letters, and shapes, while filling ellison orders. Students continued to develop their functional household skills during laundry duty: sorting clothing by color, operating the washing / drying machine, and folding clothing.

**Speech Department:** There have been many specific student accomplishments since arriving back to school in the New Year. Fernando is now set up with Proloquo2Go on his classroom iPad. He is learning to request, label, comment and socialize using the application. Kairo has demonstrated decreased echolalia; he is consistently able to answer "what?" questions about common objects. Kevin has become an active participant in speech group and is verbalizing more words each week during speech group.

The middle school students have been going to Tinker Tuesdays with their teachers and Hope Weinstein, speech therapist. The students enjoy learning how to build things and are proud of the work they accomplish at the Clark Library during Tinker Tuesdays.

The speech department is always running awesome speech groups. Ms. Weinstein made "Hoppin' John" with her middle school students; not only was it a healthy recipe, it is also said to bring good luck in the new year! Students also incorporated both movement and language into her speech groups this month. In other speech groups students worked on winter themes by making snowflakes out of doilies and snowman using cookies.

**Occupation Therapy Department:** During the month of January we saw progress in Manny's ability to stay within the lines (using Handwriting Without Tears paper) when making developmental lines and shapes. This occurs following a sensory prep time during his treatment sessions. Gatik is now positioning himself into the cuddle swing and accepting vestibular input for short periods of time. Following this he is more cooperative for the remainder of the therapy session. Rashid is typing his first and last name on the keyboard from a visual model. Cairo starting pre-writing skills after intense sensory input was provided.

The Clark Library trip with room 109 was productive. Dina assisted 2 students locate "call numbers" on the books. Kim was instrumental in calming Justin during a trip to Westlake.

Fine motor strengthening and mobility was worked on during the development of a snowman. All students assisted in making the snowman and it is now on display in Crossroads School front foyer.

An Occupational Therapy intern began her 3 month term at Crossroads. Alex Crandall is a graduate of Seton Hall University.

**Physical Therapy:** Our students are continuing to progress nicely with their PT goals and objectives. This month Gautham began receiving PT and has adapted very well to his new environment. He really enjoys the motor room and will enthusiastically participate throughout the entirety of his sessions. Osazuwa "Lucky" has demonstrated outstanding progress on the stairs in both control and safety. We look

forward to nicer weather when we can carry over these skills on the new playground. In addition, he continues to practice riding an adaptive tricycle which is a brand new skill. Danyael is becoming more engaged when practicing catching and throwing a ball.

Each student continues to track their progress on their individual picture based “progress trackers.” This allows students to self assess and monitor their progress with specific PT IEP goals. The students enjoy giving themselves stickers as they progress with items on their charts. It is also a useful way to visually track our students’ progress.

**Professional Development Opportunities:**

The Crossroads School administrative and behavioral teams met with our paraprofessionals to discuss Safety Care techniques and best practices on January 9th. A collaborative and professional discussion occurred and our staff asked questions regarding specific scenarios that happen in our classrooms. We were able to provide them with immediate feedback and guidance at this meeting. At the conclusion of the meeting, our staff were given post it notes to detail other scenarios in which they were seeking guidance which will ensure helpful conversations will continue throughout the remainder of the 2017-2018 school year.

**HILLCREST SOUTH:**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>Enrollment as of 01/29/18<br/>         Actual: 105<br/>         Changes: 9 Entered: 4 Exited: 5. 2 moved out of state. 2 for aggression towards staff/ violation of contracts. 1 to pursue GED.<br/>         Suspensions: 9. 4 for aggression towards staff , 3 for willful disobedience/ disrupting the educational environment/ contract violations, 1 for possession of CDS/ aggression, and 1 for possession of a concealed weapon (mace).</p> | <p>Intakes<br/>         Pending: 2<br/>         Reg. Ed.<br/>         Waiting List: 0<br/>         Reg. Ed.: 0<br/>         Sp. Ed.: 0</p> |
|---|--|

The students at Hillcrest Academy South Campus (HAS) completed the Union County College (UCC) Math Boot Camp provided by UCC and then retook the Accuplacer. Of the 37 students that took both the Pre-Test and Post-Test: 51% (19) of scores increased, 43% (16) of scores decreased, and 5% (2) of scores remained the same. These results will be greatly beneficial for those students who did well, as they may be exempt from taking remedial courses and placed directly in college-level, credit-bearing courses in college. Ms. Mendo also continued to meet with students to create their FSA ID and begin working on their FAFSA.

State testing is approaching and the PARCC roster was updated with several new students that started at HAS and the roster for those that will be taking the New Jersey Student Learning Assessment – Science was developed. Students continued working on the Credit Retrieval program. In conjunction with the Social Worker, Ms. Mendo determined students that were not making significant progress in their credit retrieval course, and met with the students to review their graduation status.

The seniors are hard at work with the HAS Community Service program (HASCSP) to satisfy their required community service hours through working on the Freerice program and many other community outreach activities. The HASCSP honored the memory of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. through participating in a Week of Service. During the week, Dr. King’s most famous quotes were read, allowing students to reflect on their significance in their lives today. Students continued to reflect on Dr. King’s commitment to serving others by hosting fundraisers to benefit the Community Food Bank of NJ. The week’s activities culminated with students visiting the food bank for a service day in order to help families in need throughout Union County.

Ms. Gilchrist, School Social Worker, continued to supervise the Rutgers Social Work Intern, Ms. Shirley Rosas. The student focused on Spirit Days with an attempt to improve student culture, morale, increase grades, academic, and behaviors. These thematic days included College Day, Team Spirit Day, Pajamas Day, Twin Day, and this month's highly anticipated "Mac and Cheese Cook off." Ms. Gilchrist met with Dr. Glickman, UCESC's School Psychiatrist to go over scale results and to implement treatment plans. Ms. Gilchrist met with a representative from the Jets and Devils to discuss their Anti-Bullying Program with additional details to follow. The Social Worker also assisted the School Guidance Counselor in auditing the Credit Retrieval Program and identified students who were in danger of not completing their assigned subject. Those students are prioritized for HAS's After School Tutoring Program.

In Ms. Duarte's U.S. History II courses students explored the origins of World War I (WWI) by studying the growth of militarism, alliances, imperialism, and nationalism. This knowledge was then applied as students made their case for which reason they felt was the strongest force in the onset of the war. Students then began to explore the war itself by reading and viewing scenes from *All Quiet on the Western Front* and studied primary sources that detailed trench warfare. This information was all applied as students wrote firsthand accounts detailing their experiences on the front lines during the First World War. In Economics students learned the components of a business and what makes a product successful through various classroom activities that exposed them to ideas such as supply and demand, competition, opportunity cost, target markets, sole proprietorship, partnership, and corporation. Through exposure to the television show *Shark Tank*, students were well equipped to begin developing ideas for a product they want to create which will culminate with business proposal projects.

Ms. Wrzesinski's U.S. History I classes demonstrated critical thinking and analytical skills by looking at primary and secondary sources, note taking and graphic organizer skills, and analyzing various texts and maps. The topics covered this month were the thirteen original colonies, their society, life, and government. Specifically this included significant key individuals that established their town/ colony, relationship/ difficulties with England, social classes, natives, African American slaves, triangular trade, mercantilism, Amistad, and farming communities in the south vs the industrial north and finally finishing up with a Thirteen colonies. Students also looked at current event articles that were aligned with the common core standards and answered questions plaguing our country today. Modern World History concluded the Portuguese and Spanish explorers, the 3 G's (god, glory and gold), and overall trends of European countries during the time of expansion and exploration. The next unit started was the Industrial Revolution. Thus far, students have looked at why England was the place of industrialization due to their resources, the impact of farming to factories, social issues, disease in new cities, factory conditions, child labor, the role of women, and the impact of urbanization. Students also looked at current event articles that were aligned with the common core standards and answered questions plaguing our country today.

Mr. Sobieniak's students in Trigonometry classes learned about radian measure. They learned to solve math problems with right-angled triangles and utilized the laws of sines and cosines while using radian measure. They practiced applying their knowledge in real life applications. Students in Probability and Statistics classes learned how to use tree diagrams to calculate probabilities. They also learned how to draw histograms and properties of histograms and frequency polygons. They also practiced applying their knowledge in real life applications. The Success Seminar students focused on learning more about grit and mindset. They reviewed the decision making process and about making impulsive and rational decisions. Students also learned to predict the short and long-term consequences of good and poor decision making on themselves, friends, family, and others. Students of all mathematics classes used Khan Academy to improve their algebraic skills on Fridays.

Ms. Ferrari stated that the benefits of a smaller class size and working with the students for five months has allowed her to provide individualized student instruction. The students have made efforts to get their Do

Nows, notes, and accompanying worksheets completed. The teacher conducted assessments to determine who required extensions and who needed remediation. The Algebra II students worked extensively with polynomials as well as simplifying, factoring, finding zeros, and graphing polynomials. They have also worked on synthetic division and complex numbers. The Geometry class worked extensively on postulates and theorems on triangle congruence and have researched Angle Side Angle, Side Angle Side, Angle Angle Side, Side Side Side, isosceles, equilateral, right triangles, and sum of triangles angles. The students used the postulates and theorems to complete two column proofs to prove triangles congruent. The Math Strategies students have worked extensively on solving equations using rational numbers specifically positive and negative fractions. They also began a unit on percents, in which they will apply the percent proportion to solve real world problems. The Success Seminar students completed a unit on embracing failure and how to build self-esteem.

Ms. Cioffi's English courses continued to follow the projected map from the English curriculum. Before beginning Unit 2 of the projected Map, students have practiced and reviewed basic skills taught from the beginning of the year that will be built upon in the unit. Classes have read a number of fictional and informational texts from Appendix B of the Common Core Standards and practiced identifying theme, character traits, central idea, and citing textual evidence as well as using their own analysis in support of answers. Students focused on text structure and author's choice. Students also practiced analyzing word choices, sentence structure, literary devices, along with the use of time, pacing, and description. Students then determined how they shaped or influenced a text. Once students gained a mastery of text structure and these skills, they demonstrated their knowledge by writing a narrative using these various elements of text structure.

In Ms. Holden's classes students read and analyzed excerpts from *The Kiss* by Kate Chopin and *A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens. In commemoration of Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday, students also read and analyzed his famous speech *I Have A Dream*. In conjunction with the above readings, students viewed a video of Dr. King delivering his historical speech. In addition, students wrote their own *I Have A Dream* speech. In addition, using Chromebooks, students completed a webquest on the life of Dr. Mark Luther King.

Mr. Grez's Biology and Marine Biology classes continued their discovery of challenging content. Biology students explored complex predator/prey relationships and analyzed the impacts that a loss of either would have on their respective habitats. Marine Biology students studied and discovered the wonders of marine invertebrates and their crucial role in ocean ecosystems. All students will finish the semester by wrapping up their Student Growth Objectives assessments and taking their final exams.

In Mr. Sternberg's Chemistry classes students reviewed the Periodic Table. Not only did they learn about the historical significance of this invaluable chemistry tool, but with the help of a multitude of technological resources, created their own color-coded Periodic table flush with data, nomenclature, and atomic trends. Moreover, they were able to explain how the modern Periodic Table was set up and how chemical information can be gleaned from an element's location within its rows and columns. The students will soon learn about valence electrons and how they enable all the matter we experience in the universe to form from individual constituents. In the Forensic Science classes focused on the science of heredity and individualization, covering the use of blood as evidence for analysis. After learning the biological significance and spatter anatomy, students began learning about DNA and its relevance in solving crime. They studied the DNA's structure and procedural uses. Soon, the students will observe the true story of a man who was exonerated by DNA evidence after 18 years in prison. From this project, students will garner a glimpse of how the justice system can be flawed, needing rectification. Students will then choose an exonerated, innocent person from the multitude that had been wrongly incarcerated. From their research, they will present a slideshow to the class, showcasing the victims' fights and eventual liberation from unjust incarceration.

Ms. Scheetz’s Art classes focused on three dimensional design. The students worked on two projects; a three dimensional mask design and one point perspective. The mask project was based on the concept of *what mask do you show to the world?* People wear different masks depending on their social interactions. They show one face to the world while there is a personality that is hidden. Students were presented with an article about soldiers coming back from their tours with brain injury which physically, was not visible but had changed their personality and lives. These soldiers created masks about the pain and suffering they were experiencing or had endured, which was undetectable just by looking at the person. Students were presented with identical paper masks which they transformed into a design that expressed a part of themselves they either show the world or they keep hidden. Students used clay to enhance features and could make other alterations such as cutting holes or adding found objects. Students also learned about one point perspective; a drawing formula which created a three dimensional feel on a three dimensional plane. Students learned about horizon lines and vanishing points and were able to apply it to real life scenes and situations. They began slowly, putting boxes in perspective, graduated to letters, simple furniture, and finally created a room based on a their own business and design.

The students in Mr. Barone’s Physical Education classes were introduced to a unit on volleyball. In the first class, Mr. Barone explained and demonstrated the correct ways to perform the underhand and overhand serve, forearm bump, and set. Each student practiced each aspect of the game prior to game play. In addition, all rules of the game were explained. When in the Fitness Center, students have continued using the fitness equipment and continued with billiards and ping-pong tournaments. In Health, the students have gone into more detail with their unit on alcohol. Some of the topics included, the influence alcohol use, advertising techniques, the law, and the many impacts of alcohol abuse. In addition, students were able to utilize the “Drunk Goggles” which we were able to get from a UCESF grant. This allowed the students to wear the goggles and truly demonstrate how everyday tasks were extremely difficult when someone was impaired. Although some of the students found it funny, all classes saw first hand that impairment makes everyday tasks difficult.

Ms. Rubin, the School Nurse, made calls to all of the absent students’ parents each day. The nurse has been assisting with morning entry procedures, including bag searches and supervising the halls during the afternoon dismissal. The nurse has seen an average of 15-16 students per day. Two students were sent home ill. The nurse filed the annual TB report and the annual Immunization report with the Board of Health. The nurse participated in a re-entry meeting for a student and met with a new student regarding health information during an intake. The HAS nurse covered Westlake School four times this month when the Westlake nurse was absent and there was no substitute available. She also assisted at Westlake School during several medical emergencies.

In health classes, the students learned about Alcohol and its effects on the body. The students were able to use the “drunk goggles” that were received from the Commission Grant to better understand and visualize the consequences of being drunk. We will continue learning about alcohol and its addictive properties, as well as recovery from alcoholism.

**HILLCREST/NORTH:**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Enrollment as of:</b> 1/26/18<br/> <b>Actual:</b> 93<br/> <b>Referrals :</b> 2 pending<br/> <b>Changes:</b> Entered: 0 Exited: 3(attendance)</p> | <p><b>Drills:</b> 1/26/18- Fire drill<br/> 1/26/18- Lockdown drill<br/> <b>OSS Suspensions:</b>3<br/> Substance abuse/ Physical altercation</p> |
|--|---|

In English, students have been tracking their lexile level weekly using an online reading assessment. Students are learning skills that “good readers” use to approach texts such as annotating and context clues.

Students practice these skills that increase vocabulary and enhance reading comprehension. Students have also learned about identifying the mood and tone of a literary work through close reading and identification of positive and negative terms. Students have been practicing the process of analyzing literary works such as poems and short stories. Most recently, students have learned about literary devices and figurative language, and why authors include these elements in their works.

In Creative Writing, students have been learning how honesty and patience can help with their writing. They have also looked closely at how imagery can add to that honesty and patience. Students are using all aspects of the writing process to create a descriptive essay/poem that describes a food without ever once naming the food.

In Shakespeare, students have continued to analyze the two funeral speeches (*Julius Caesar*) to evaluate why one is more effective than the other. Students watched *10 Things I Hate About You* and are analyzing the characters, their conflicts, their tragic flaw and how they change throughout the movie.

The health office is running smoothly. The nurse continues the challenge of obtaining health records from EHS for several of our students. The nurse attended a webinar for the new NJIIS (Immunization State Registry) website expected to go live at the end of January. In Health class this month, the students finished the Human Sexuality unit. The last topic covered was Abusive Head Trauma (used to be known as Shaken Baby Syndrome). The students completed notes on the consequences of AHT and watched a video called "Forever Shaken". Physical Education classes continue to meet their goals and benchmarks in physical fitness and nutrition.

This month, the students at Hillcrest Academy North completed the UCC Math Boot Camp program. For six weeks students worked arduously on the ALEKS math enrichment program provided to HAN by Union County College. The students then re-took the Accuplacer. Over 63% of students increased their scores on the test. Scores improved by as much as 45 points and one student even achieved a perfect score. These results will be greatly beneficial for students, as they may be exempt from taking remedial courses and be placed directly in college-level, credit-bearing courses in college.

We are off to an exciting start to 2018 in the social work office. Mrs. Karen Mitchell has returned to Hillcrest Academy North for her second year internship for her MSW program. She will continue to play an active role in our Attendance Ambassador program and has worked closely with Mrs. Mannino and our student ambassadors to keep the program active. On January 17, we had a student advocate meeting in which each student met with their advocate and reviewed their second marking period grades and attendance for the year. Students have the opportunity over the next two weeks to meet with teachers and improve their grades for semester 1.

On January 16, we had our 3rd Music for all Seasons program for the year with Lou Watson, a pianist who engaged our students for an hour long program. As always, this program was a great success.

The Trigonometry classes are working on the unit circle, radian measure and reference angles. While working with the trig ratios that are actually fractions, they are reviewing basic skills. Working with fractions without calculators is part of our fluency building goal for the department. Finding the reference angles without calculators is reinforcing our addition and subtraction skills.

The Statistics classes have completed the unit on box and whiskers graphs. This leads us into standard deviation and the normal distribution curve. Beyond the skills of drawing these graphs, the students are required to draw conclusions and make decisions based on the spread of the data.

The attendance committee is continuing to encourage students to improve their attendance. Perfect attendance for each month is recognized and celebrated. Noting that one of the reasons for poor attendance is lack of sleep or poor habits and schedules, the committee is working on a presentation. They are researching the effects of lack of sleep in teenagers and what can be done to improve their situations. The aim is to enlighten those students with strategies for a better routine. The next step will be to present this information as a support to parents of the most at risk students.

This month, Mrs. Machado guided her Algebra students to tackle real-life PARCC-like tasks. Working through the chapter of Systems of Linear Equations gave a lot of opportunity to solve realistic word problems and truly prevent a customer from being taken advantage of. Together as a class they explored when is best to use specific coupons, how many tickets need to be sold for fundraisers and much more. The students used hand-made graphs, graphing calculators and Desmos.com to represent each situation graphically. Every graph was worth 1,000 words, providing enough information to be analyzed for the best calculated decision making.

The Math Strategies elective class has shifted to become an online-like course. Mrs. Machado wants students to have everyday interaction with technology in order to best prepare them for technology-centered college courses and computer-based standardized tests. Khan Academy is accessible to all students and Mrs. Machado will begin to monitor their progress and assign tasks according to their skills that need improvement. The immediate feedback from each skill will give students an honest perspective of their understanding of various high school math subjects.

In the month of January the Social Studies Department at Hillcrest Academy North focused on the importance of knowing your rights and civil liberties in the United States. Students illustrated the 10 Amendments of the Bill of Rights and completed writing activities that imagined an America without these rights. Afterwards, students created a “checklist” for them to follow in the event that someone in a position of power tries to violate their rights. This will help them apply what they’ve learned to their everyday lives.

### **NONPUBLIC:**

Non-Public Department Teachers, Nurses, Speech Therapists, Child Study Team, Tutors, and Paraprofessionals provide educational, nursing and therapy services to 53 schools in the following districts: Clark, Cranford, Elizabeth, Hillside, Kenilworth, Linden, Mountainside, New Providence, Plainfield, Rahway, Roselle, Scotch Plains, Springfield, Summit, Union, and Westfield.

Non-Public High School teachers are working in conjunction with the individual Non-Public school teachers to prepare students for midterm examinations. Non-Public teachers are developing study guides, and providing online resources such as, quizlet activities, in order to meet the individual service plan needs of their students.

Non-Public teachers K – 12 are integrating IXL learning, which is an on-line educational software tool for Language Arts and Mathematics, including curriculum standards, to assist in building well-designed and engaging hands-on educational activities to improve student learning and self-confidence within the learning environments.

The Supervisor of Non-Public Services is currently completing unannounced observations for the Non-Public teachers and conducting collaborative conversations regarding the Danielson Framework and meeting with Non-Public school nurses.



The Non-Public Schools are continuing to receive textbooks and novels, which are aligned with curriculum and instruction. Schools have purchased with technology allocations laptops, chromebooks, iPads, and printers to improve the educational technology curriculum within the learning environments for our students. The layering of school security purchases assist our Non-Public Principals with improving safety and security for students, staff and visitors in the following areas:

- The Perimeter of the School: Parent and Visitors Signs
- The School Building: Access and Identification procedures to the school
- The Classrooms: Variety of ways to lock classroom doors in an emergency
- The Students and Staff: Student and Staff Identification

The Non-Public School Teaching Team will be meeting this month to discuss strategies and practices used while working within their individual/grade level to reduce student stress and anxiety within the learning environment.

The Child Study Team members are working collaboratively with Mrs. Kristin Quigley-Russell, Case Manager, to improve the work flow and ensure services are provided in a timely manner.

### **TRANSITION SERVICES:**

Work Readiness Academy Individual Student Enrollments: 13

Project SEARCH-Overlook Medical Center Enrollment: 8 (1 terminated)

Westlake School (Job Academy): 12

Lamberts Mill Academy (Job Academy): 2

District Direct Programs: 2 (Plainfield & Elizabeth)

The Work Readiness Academy is in its second year of operation at maximum capacity with 13 students enrolled in the program (12 full-time students, and 1 afternoon shared-time student). Students participate in internships at various local businesses with support from our program staff. The classroom portion of the program is focused on teaching the students critical skills for employment including digital literacy.

Instructional topics covered this month included:

**Using gmail and email etiquette:** Students practiced using the various options gmail offers. They practiced answering emails using proper email etiquette and replying to the sender, to all, and forwarding an email to classmates.

**Making and Taking Reservations, and Ordering Food:** Through the use of role play, students practiced calling a “restaurant” where a host asked them for various information they needed to supply. Students then had the opportunity to practice ordering food while using a menu.

**Students continued to answer the essential question of, “How can planning for your future lead to success?”:** The Google group completed their post secondary goals and actions steps needed to achieve these goals. They then used Google Slides to present this information to their peers and instructor. The Apple Group continues to pinpoint the action steps needed to achieve their post secondary goals.

**Creating Google Sites:** The Google Group continued to work as 2 teams to complete a Google Sites on various topics. The students completed these sites, shared them with the instructor, and presented them to their peers and instructor.

**Identifying Strengths, Preferences, Interests, and Needs:** As the students progress in their community based work experience, they are able to identify specific strengths that they have; preferences as to where, when, and what they would like to do; interests they have; and needs they have to help them succeed at the work sites such as a smartphone to help with time management [Setting alarms to remember break/lunch times], keeping track of their work schedule, texting their supervisor if they are going to be late; step by step instructions, and transportation.

Other highlights from this month included:

**Baking Elective:** The students enjoyed making French Silk Mini Crescent Pies and Savory Popcorn (vanilla oreo, ranch, caramel, and chili lime flavored)

**Working out at the Strength and Fitness Club in Cranford, NJ**

Learning the names of the major muscle groups in the upper and lower body  
Concentrating on correct lifting techniques

**Field Trip to FLIK Hospitality at Merck (Kenilworth):** Students were exposed to the Hospitality Department at the Merck facility. Observing and learning about the various jobs within that department.

*The Work Readiness Academy targets students with disabilities (ages 17-to-21) who are in need to a comprehensive transition program with a significant focus on community-based work-learning. Students are referred from sending school districts across Union County.*

The Project SEARCH-Overlook Medical Center program is in its second year with a full class of nine students. The students spent this month participating in their first internship rotations. The departments hosting student interns during the first rotation include:

- Food Services
- Dietary Services
- Infection Control
- Information Technology
- Environmental Services
- Materials Management
- Emergency Services (Expedited Care Unit)
- Overlook Foundation
- Mail Room

Each morning the students spend 60 minutes in the on-site program classroom at Overlook receiving instruction in employability skills.

Instructional topics covered this month in the Project SEARCH at Overlook Medical Program included:

- Communication (Verbal and Nonverbal messages)
- Setting SMART goals
- Healthy Habits (Physical and Mental)
- Resume Writing
- Workplace Rights and Responsibilities

Other highlights from this month included:

Family Information Session about transitioning to Adult Services through Project Hire  
Chair Yoga class led by Ashrams for Autism in Morristown

Sharon Kelly from CONCERN presented on meditation for stress relief

*Project SEARCH is a collaborative effort between UCESC, Overlook Medical Center (part of Atlantic Health System), the NJ Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, the Arc of New Jersey, the NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities, and NJTIP at Rutgers, Project SEARCH*

## **TECHNOLOGY:**

The IT Department has successfully outfitted our network with remote access software for our PC environment.

We have completed a total audit to our phone systems. Documentation is excellent, providing unprecedented sight into this critical system. Providing this to a phone vendor will reduce time and costs when looking to upgrade the aging infrastructure. We are currently working with a vendor who will be presenting a new system to us shortly.

New Era Technology will begin installation of the new sound system at 1571 Lamberts Mill Road on the second week of February. The estimated time of completion is one week with no interruption to the students' normal activities.

We are continuing to virtualize our older servers to prolong the life of our systems.

The Technology Department is working with Hillcrest Academy North to complete the first stage of a data migration. Working closely with John Marquet, we have decided to push all personal data to the cloud but administrative shares will still reside onsite in the new server.

The promotion of the new domain controller at 1571 has been a success. We will begin a data migration at this location at a later time now that the infrastructure is stable.

We are working with our E-Rate funds to increase our internet bandwidth since the pricing is excellent. The Technology Department has posted our form 470 and is working with multiple vendors to determine the best candidate for the task.

We have continued to push Office 365 throughout the network. This is free software and enables us to obtain the Microsoft Office suite for all employees. We will continue to deploy paid versions as the license is perpetual and not dependent on login information.

45 Cardinal Drive suffered a power loss and I am happy to report that the technology equipment we have in place to protect vital systems such as the firewall, virtual storage and hosts and switches performed perfectly. Once power was restored to the property the Technology Department ran health checks on all systems and discovered no damage was reported. We are working to improve redundancies to better serve HAN and 1571's internet connectivity during future outages.

Working with Atlantic, we are currently auditing and reviewing the printer environment to see how we can make improvements and continue to grow this infrastructure. Our review is scheduled for February.

As we continue to move forward we are still investigating portions of the network that no documentation was provided for. Currently we are auditing the script repository that forces a multitude of shared drives to be mapped for particular users. We cannot move forward with data migrations until all data is accounted for so this project is essential.

Edumet has continued to work with us to improve security. Along with SSL protecting our login portal we have now provided a secure direct access for our vendor in case of attack or the need for regular maintenance.

### **TRANSPORTATION:**

The estimate of total yearly contract payments will be distributed to the bus companies holding contracts with the Commission on February 8, 2018. It will be included with their paychecks. This is a report similar to the one distributed to the participating districts and serves the same purpose for the bus companies.

The cold winter thus far has resulted in only one day of closing and a few days of delayed openings and early dismissals. Nonetheless, much of the winter season remains so there is still time for weather related disruptions to occur.

This year is another busy one for the Transportation Department. Maintaining last year's pace in revenue, the department is trying hard to keep up with the demand. Many of our contractors are already working at full capacity and with the critical shortage of drivers still having a major impact, obtaining quotes on new routes is becoming more difficult with longer lag times between submission of requests and implementation of transportation. Nonetheless, no students are yet without transportation.

On February 9, 2018, the Transportation Department is hosting a seminar entitled "Situational Awareness and Security for School Bus Personnel" to be presented by the New Jersey Department of Education's Office of School Preparedness and Emergency Planning. School buses are considered "soft", i.e., easy, targets by law enforcement and security personnel for those wishing to do harm for any reason. Registration is open to everyone with an interest in school bus safety, including all of our transportation vendors, member and non-member school districts.

**cc: Robert A. Behot, Business Administrator/Board Secretary**