



**Union County Educational Services Commission**  
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(Att. 2)

**Report of the Superintendent to the Board of Directors**  
**December 5, 2018**

**WESTLAKE:**

<b>Enrollment as of November 21, 2018</b> Actual: 67 Changes: Entered: 0 Exited: 1	<b>Referrals: 1</b> Intakes Scheduled: 1 Accepted: 1
Fire Drills: November 7, 2018	Emergency Drills: Bomb Threat
Suspensions: 0	November 13, 2018

**Language Arts:** In Language Arts, students are reading comprehension questions and underlining key ideas after listening to a story. Students have been working on increasing their knowledge of sight words using the Dolch sight word list. Individually, students continue to work on their specific programs which include, identifying community safety signs, utilizing the Edmark reading program, sight word recognition, and identifying emotions and actions. In reading groups, students review the key ideas expressed and demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives through reflection and paraphrasing. Students with beginner reading skills are practicing identifying known sight words and/or phrases in the texts we are reading.

**Math:** In math, students practice using money in naturally occurring situations (i.e. money ID, counting, addition, subtraction, using a register, and accounting). Individually, students continued to work on their specific programs such as: 1:1 correspondence, touch math, money skills, matching, and sorting.

**Science:** The students are very excited to start a Science unit discussing the Earth's Climate. Discussed were the differences of wet, cool, hot and dry. Students also participated in an interactive Smart board lesson on different types of climate. These include how the climate changes the Earth and how do scientists study those changes.

**Social Studies:** In social studies students learned about voting procedures and political parties since the elections were this month. They were asked to form their own opinions and participated in a mock vote. Many students are covering a unit on the holiday of Thanksgiving. A joint research project is under way where the students are broken up into groups collaborating what life was like for the first Pilgrims and how they learned to adapt to the new world.

**Life Skills:** In Life Skills, this year, the students worked on filling out birth certification forms when given a scenario. Some students were able to fill out all the questions by receiving pre-made answers. During this lesson, the students participated in a discussion about their birth information such as where they were born, what is their middle name, the name of the hospital and time they were born, etc.

**PE:** Students completed a unit on learning about the circuit. Students each took part in games and drills as well as calculating the amount of steps moved per class. Currently, students are enhancing their knowledge of throwing overhand and underhand while participating in games and activities that utilize these motor skills.

Some students remember how to throw and catch a ball while others have needed prompting to complete each skill. Mr. Moss's goals are to teach the students the how's and why's of movement and to expose them to sports they can play, watch, and enjoy with their friends and families.

**Health:** Health classes are learning why it is important to be 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 we then follow a stretching video to loosen the muscles and joints. He shows students interactive videos and worksheets which allow them to compare one category to the other. Through educational websites each student is completing a worksheet to assist their understanding about how and why it is necessary to practice good healthy hygiene habits.

**Vocational:** Sign Making/Engraving machine: Students continue to make custom signs using the engraving machine. It takes them time to identify the letters needed in making individual signs, secure them into place and learn the steps in order to make signs that are of quality standards for sale. All students are exposed to developing this skill and produce a product that is sold to employees at the commission and other businesses.

School Store: This month we have been busy revamping our school store. Students are now planning and executing a functional school store with regular daily business hours. Students have named the store the Westlake Wolves Den after our school mascot. This store has created valuable opportunities for students to practice a variety of skills across curriculum. It also provides opportunities for a variety of in school jobs and vocational training (i.e. housekeeping, general maintenance, stocking, organizing shelves, inventory, data entry, sales clerk, announcements, surveying student and staff demands, decorating, purchasing orders, accounting, shopping lists, and visiting other schools on a cart).

Horticulture: Students have been selling Tulip bulbs. They worked together and formed an assembly line to count out and package the tulips into bags to be sold. They did a great job working together. This week, students are planting Amaryllis bulbs and selling them at the holiday sale.

Print Shop: In the Print Shop students continue to photocopy flyers as a job from the main office and send them home to parents. Students continue to deliver mail to staff and peers, learning about jobs in a post office.

Sweet Shoppe: Students in the Sweet Shoppe produced candies and baked breads selling \$734.00 of products at Wagner Arboretum. The Sweet Shoppe will receive \$550.00 of the money made from the farm. They keep 25% for running the handicap garden and growing food for the Food Bank. The students also made beautiful chocolate crosses for a baby's christening. The students went to the Commission Office and sold \$100.00 worth of products. On November 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> the students baked cookies and apple cake for the PTO meeting. Students are currently getting ready for all the Christmas sales in December. One sale will be for Commission employees and the other sale is at Westlake for students to shop for their families. The students have also made the breads for the Thanksgiving baskets that are going home with several students next week.

Jewelry: Students are making bracelets and necklaces, all of which are made using the same steps viewed by students using our video modeling program. They are working on many jewelry products for the upcoming holiday sales.

DecorDream Shop: In vocational class, the students worked on making some wooden signs for the Overlook Hospital gift shop to showcase their talents and see if the gift shop would be interested in selling some of the student made signs. Since the holidays are coming, many personal orders from the Westlake school staff are coming in for gift giving. The students were focused on learning the process of staining wood as a new skill this month.

**Retail:** In the Retail Center students have been taking orders for Thanksgiving napkin sets. We have received over 30 orders to date and are busy preparing them for delivery. In addition, we are making 7 sets to donate to the Thanksgiving baskets here at Westlake. Students are also busy making bows for our holiday items. We will begin making our holiday items as soon as all the napkin orders have been filled. We already have a tentative date for our annual holiday sale at PSE&G and the students are looking forward to selling the items they have prepared.

**Therapies: Speech:** This month we continued to assess student's speech and language skills for progress reports. We have written PLAAFPs and IEP goals for students' upcoming IEP meetings. We have programmed and backed up students' communication devices. We have trained classroom staff on how to target students' goals in the classroom. Therapists planned and implemented ADL and OT/Speech groups. Activities included: apartment tasks, carving pumpkins, making corn muffins, obstacle course, and scavenger hunts. We discussed the upcoming holiday of Thanksgiving and spelled autumn words on our speech room Scrabble board. We read stories and completed worksheets related to the holiday. We attended CBI trips, such as bowling and shopping at the supermarket, with several classes.

**Physical Therapy:** Currently we have two physical therapists working at Westlake School. One works three days a week and one works one day a week. There are 22 students receiving physical therapy (PT) services with a total of 32 individual treatment spots, two PT groups and two PT monthly consultations.

One of our weekly PT groups is doing great with Yoga. We meet every Tuesday for one hour (in combination with our OT). We work on motor planning and bilateral coordination as we perform various yoga sequences and practice breathing exercising. This group is a nice break for our students during their fast paced day.

We continue to take data and monitor our students' progress towards their PT IEP goals. A select group of students are being monitored on two formal balance assessment tools; the Timed-Up-and Go (TUG) test and the Pediatric Berg Balance Scale (PBBS). Baseline data has been recorded. In addition, some of our students are using video modeling during their sessions for balancing on one foot and broad jumping. A group of students are self-assessing by recording their long jumping distances on a log during their sessions.

**Occupational Therapy:** This month the OT Department continues to assess student's self-care skills, household skills, fine motor skills, computer skills and sensory needs to write IEP PLAAFP's, establish goals and objectives and baseline levels for SGO's. We are currently condensing the AFLS goal bank by choosing goals that are most appropriate to the needs of our students in which we will then input into their IEPs. We continue to use the AFLS task analysis to assess our students' performance and measure progress.

The Life Skills classes are going very well. This month we worked on upper body hygiene skills, apartment skills, carving pumpkins, made cornbread for Thanksgiving, and played a gross motor game. OT Ipad's have been programmed to go along with these activities, allowing the students to make choices, identify items used, and to communicate with their peers.

**Social Work:** Six pre-planning meetings were held to discuss student progress and possible readiness for SLE vocational opportunities. These meetings provide lively discussion between departments to better ascertain student academic, vocational and emotional needs prior to student IEP meetings. Five IEP meetings took place this month supported by information from pre-planning discussions.

Students were reminded to practice kindness with one another throughout the month. "Block out Negativity Day" on Nov. 7th, was reinforced during morning announcements to encourage students to be positive, especially when using social media.

An informative presentation by the HIB Specialist and Principal was given to all staff to define the current HIB policy. The presentation reiterated to staff their responsibility to report an incident to Specialist/Principal. Examples of incidents of HIB in communities throughout the State were shared with staff to heighten awareness and sensitivity to the issue as well as the ways schools are required to take action to stop bullying.

An interactive bulletin board was created at the Commission office to showcase the “acts of kindness” performed by several students currently taught by Lauren Fernandez. The board encouraged people to “Toss Kindness Like Confetti” and glue a metallic colored paper onto the bulletin board for each kind act shown to someone else. Students from vocational classes worked together to punch out the paper shapes in a timely manner for the important project.

Speaker, Chet Miros, PhD., from Guardianship Services of NJ presented a workshop about acquiring guardianship of special needs adults. The presentation was well attended by parents of special needs adolescents, support care coordinators and Child Study Team members.

Contact is on-going with DDD intake coordinators and parents to assist with transition needs and ensure 2019 graduates will be eligible for “over 21” services by June. Only a few Districts have Transition Coordinators and Cs look to the “out of district” Westlake case manager to oversee the transition process for the parent.

Several students have needed additional individual counseling sessions this month with the anticipation of upcoming holidays and the change in school calendar and routine. For many students the upcoming holidays bring about a mixture of emotions. At Westlake, we strive to create a school environment that is sensitive to the needs of students by communicating with one another and adapting to the situation at hand.

**Behaviorist:** Behaviorists continue to monitor, collect, and analyze behavioral data in order to systematically increase time on task by decreasing the target behaviors outlined in the student’s behavior intervention plan.

Behaviorists have continued to utilize a shared system on the Google drive which includes staff access to any updates or changes in a student’s program. Team Communication logs have been shared digitally as well as housed in each student individual portfolio binders to provide an open line of communication between all staff working with the student. Additionally, data sheets, Behavior Intervention Plans and Behavioral Strategies have been shared with staff through the Google Drive.

**LAMBERTS MILL ACADEMY:**

<p><b>As of November, 2018</b>  LMA Actual: 34  LMA District - Non-New Point: 31  New Point Specialty at LMA: 3  Changes: ____ Entered:  Pending: ___1_  Exited:  <b>Trinitas Hospital :</b>  Bedside Instruction: 36  (inpatient)  Day Program: 47  Approved-Agreement signed: 63  Classified: 31  Regular Ed: 32</p>	<p>Fire Alarms: 0  Fire Drills: 1    Security Drills (1): 1</p>
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Referrals in November: __4_ Intakes Scheduled:4 Completed: 4 Acceptance Letter Sent: 4 Sending District Accepted LMA placement: 2 Placement Pending : 0	Suspension out of school: 1 In School Suspension: 1 HIB: 0
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### **Administration**

The NJ Vietnam Veterans visited Lamberts Mill Academy and shared many stories of overcoming the many challenges of returning from war and living with those memories. The students were able to ask clarifying questions and compare fictional stories of Vietnam to the factual stories from the men who lived through the conflict. The students were engaged, and time flew by as they were all engrossed with the question and answer session. The assembly emotionally carried our students past that day and they were more responsive and respectful to each other in a mindful way. It was an impactful assembly for the students of LMA.

The veterans returned a week later and surprised our students with turkeys and trimmings so that they could have a great Thanksgiving dinner with their families. A big thank you to our Veterans!

The school also participated in the 3rd Annual Lamberts Mill Academy Turkey Trot. The 5K has become a hit and the students and staff all love to be a part in the activity. Students walked/ran 5 kilometers around the parking lot the morning before Thanksgiving while listening to music and having fun with all staff and students. We even had visitors from other Commission schools join us for the walk. The event was a great success.

We are pleased to welcome Ms. Corbin as our new Supervisor of Instruction. She was a Crisis Intervention Teacher/Dean of Students who made impactful impression on students with challenges. Many families have embraced Ms. Corbin and her approach to changing behaviors as well as increasing student achievement. She will be orientated to Lamberts Mill Academy this month and begin to support LMA's project based learning, STEAM, and Social Emotional Learning/Character Development.

### **Academics**

**Career and Technical Education:** Students have been working on Problem Solving in the Computer Science class. The unit focuses on how computers process information to help solve problems. We previously looked at how apps help to solve problems by taking inputs and processing them to create useful outputs. Students work in groups to reach amicable solutions while hearing each others' points of views.

We are also researching job openings, career descriptions and the skills needed to enter their dream profession. Students have been examining concepts of passion and profit by reading success stories from experienced self-starters in order to consider their own true calling. We are now in the stage of fact finding to create resumes for our 11th and 12 graders.

Students continue to share their valuable time with the residents of Clark Nursing Home. Each Thursday the residents look forward to our visit in great anticipation. As we walked in last week Thursday one of the residents remarked "It is Thursday, the students are here!"

**English Language Arts & Literacy:** Students worked on their social and emotional skills; reinforcing responsibility, teamwork and communication.

For over a decade, the local Veterans donate Turkeys and fixings to make an entire meal. Students collaboratively, updated our annual “How to Cook Tom the Turkey” pamphlets. They were then given to all the students who won a Turkey dinner donated by the Veterans. In support of the LMA Turkey Trot by Mr. Peters, students created motivating signs to encourage us to complete the 5k.

We embraced National Family Literacy Day by spreading it through the month of November. with a variety of student driven choices. Some students read their favorite childhood books to their families or young siblings. We collaboratively learned how family literacy looks culturally in all our different home environments from magazine reading, Sunday papers, ebooks, journals and instagram following. Artistically inclined students designed their own dream library for their homes.

Social Studies: Social Studies continues to explore our historical roots. US History I has reviewed the problems with British rule in the colonies, the differences in the climates and geography of the colonies, the interactions with native Americans, and the creation of their first governing documents. US History II has explored the Gilded Age - the robber barons, the industrial expansion of the country, the growth of the cities, and the first steps of Women’s Suffrage. World History has moved to the development of the early civilizations in China and Rome, the principles of Athenian Democracy, and the development and contrast in world religions at that time. Civil Rights and Liberties has entered the study of the Civil Rights movement for women and the impact on society. We also contrast the liberties of our society’s subgroups and the political implications

All sections spent a bit of time reviewing the Vietnam Era in preparation for a visit with veterans for a Q & A with veterans of that conflict. This included a review of protest artists in the social media (music, radio and TV) of that era.

Science: November flew by in Science class. All classes continued studying the Brain rules. We learned about the temporal lobe and how memories are formed (hint: repeat to remember). Biology students wrapped up our study of what makes living things living and are now prepared to learn about different types of cells through studying some live dinoflagellates that glow in the dark. Our Forensics students are presenting their projects. Chemistry students explored the various states of matter with dry ice (other students explored too - can’t miss an opportunity with dry ice!). Our Earth and Environmental students are wrapping up a unit on water and learned about watersheds, water pollution and the water cycle.

Mathematics: Students working in Consumer Mathematics learned about basic purchases, and how they are consumers in the economy. Students spent time learning about ‘Black Friday’ one of the busiest shopping days in the year. We watched video clips of the possible origins of ‘Black Friday’ and students presented their beliefs and feelings on the shopping day. Students worked on a project in which they reviewed multiple store ads for ‘Black Friday’ and chose items they wished to purchase. They then compared the original prices, and mathematically figured out the percent off each item. Finally, students completed an analysis of a time/money saved ratio to see if they felt their ‘time’ was worth the ‘savings’ for this event.

Students in Algebra classes have been continuing to refine their skills in graphing linear equations. The interactive Smartboard was used to graph linear equations using a T-table students created. These students also got additional enrichment on the topic by utilizing TI-84 graphing calculators to check their graphs for accuracy.

Geometry classes have been working with parallel lines and transversals. In order to make the

abstract theorems and postulates more familiar, students use Google Maps of different streets they were familiar with to create their own transversals. Once they identify the transversal, and parallel lines, they were able to describe angle relations, and find missing angle measures with Smart Tools on the Smartboard.

Spanish: This month students are working on unit II “*La Vida Escolar*” in Spanish class. The Theme for the Spanish classes this month is “¡Es un buen día!” (A Good Day). The students were focusing on our connections to the world and what positive influences we can bring to each day to Make a Difference. Students explored what makes for a great day for different people in the Spanish-speaking world from a child who is bullied every day. Students created a visual display for the Commission’s Bulletin Board about the Week of Respect and School Violence Awareness Week. Also, the students distinguished the similarities and differences between the patterns of celebrations of the target culture related to activities, holidays, and celebrations of the local culture in different Spanish countries. This unit fits precisely in the social studies component of high school standards, where students are exposed to different experiences, traditions, and lifestyles of other people around the world with “*El día de Los Muertos*”. Students demonstrated an understanding of the relationship between practices of the culture studied. For instance, students have multiple opportunities to compare and contrast “The day of the Dead”, which is one of the oldest traditions celebrated in Mexico, dating back since the rule of the Aztec Empire and “Halloween”. Students decorated the LMA garden with different Spooky characters from The Day of the Dead and Halloween where the students have to opportunity to share their knowledge and read a story about these traditions to Westlake students. In addition, the students started Reading Bodies at Westlake school. The students have the opportunity to read books in Spanish and English in different classrooms. Then students demonstrate leadership skills while taking over the teachers’ classroom to read and ask questions about different stories.

Physical Education and Health: For the month of November students have been working hard mastering specific skills in the Volleyball Unit. Students are practicing skills such as bumping, setting, spiking, digging, and serving (underhand and overhand). We have been partaking in lead-up activities and are participating in 2-on-2 and 3-on-3 games. We were also able to put together a student versus staff volleyball game and fun was had by all.

Earlier in the month students were taken on a nature hike through the beautiful Watchung Reservation. Students enjoyed a 2 mile hike around Lake Surprise while learning about the history associated with the reservation as well as learning about nature and the healthy benefits of outdoor exercise. Students also had a nice lunch in a pavilion while taking in the fresh air and nature around them.

Just recently students were treated to a wonderful field trip to Top Golf. Students learned about the game of golf and were able to take part in the activity. Top Golf is a state-of-the-art and high-tech driving range located in Edison, NJ. Top Golf is a game that anyone can play (and win). Students scored points by hitting microchipped golf balls at giant dartboard-like targets on an outfield. The closer they got their ball to the center or ‘bullseye’ and the further the distance, the more points they earned. Students were outstanding and very well behaved.

For Health class we continue to study and perfect our personal hygiene routines. We have been reviewing by playing the game “Personal Hygiene Bingo”. Students are learning why it is so important to have good hygiene as it relates to social and emotional health. We will continue to reinforce healthy hygiene to finish out the unit.

### LMA Clinical Department

This month during lifeskills each group targeted topics of healthy boundaries, communication skills and conflict resolutions. We identified what it means to have boundaries and why this is important in all relationships, as well as the use of effective communication skills to maintain these relationships. The students engaged in role playing with their peers to apply the knowledge and skills that they learned throughout the month. Lastly, we prepared for Thanksgiving break as we shared what we were thankful for in our individual lives.

New Point Specialty: We have 14 students on the Unit. The students will be having a feast on Wednesday November 21st. Mr. Fitzsimmons stopped by with 12 complete turkey dinners for students and St. Joseph's Social Center. The Social Action Club worked the Food pantry on November 30th.

Ms. Fort and I discussed the midterm elections and their significance to our country. We studied the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of WWI in History.

Ms. Fort had the students writing compositions on what they were thankful for in 2018. The students viewed the play Peter Pan in Staten Island. The students studied the life and times of its author James Matthew Barrie. The students always appreciate any trip they attend in school.

In science, we studied the dark side of bacteria and viruses. Salmonella and vaccines were hot topics during this class. The life of Louis Pasteur and his contribution to science was also emphasized.

Lastly, students are more engaged in our weekly Current Events review. The new template developed, as a part of our ongoing SGO for 2018-2019 has helped students gain a better understanding of the news around the world.

Trinitas: On Election Day, the importance of voting was discussed. Students examined a sample ballot and interpreted political cartoons. Older students read a flowchart that illustrated the checks and balances of the three branches of government that were set up by the Founding Fathers. Other Social Studies lessons covered Veterans Day and our armed forces who help to keep our country safe. Students also reviewed a newspaper article, "The Proudest Sentinels", which interviewed NJ residents who were former guards at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier Memorial in the Arlington National Cemetery. They recalled no greater privilege of duty. We are currently tracing the origins of harvest festivals, and the American Thanksgiving holiday.

Science lessons focused on why leaves change color and fall at this time of year.

### **CROSSROADS:**

Enrollment as of November 21, 2018 Actual: 44 Changes: 1 Entered: 1 Exited: 0	Referrals: 1 Intakes Scheduled: 0 Accepted: 0
Fire Drills: 11/19/18	Emergency Drills: 11/28/18

### **CLASSROOM ACHIEVEMENTS and HIGHLIGHTS**

**Allison Gebler's Class, Room 102-**The thematic unit integrated seasonal changes, Veterans Day and Thanksgiving into Social Studies, Science, Art, ELA and Math lessons throughout the month.

In the area of English Language Arts, students reviewed vocabulary associated with different fall weather images: leaves, autumn, jacket, raking etc. Students sang seasonal songs in morning



meeting involving each of these terms.

In the area of Math, students completed a variety of activities involving the different attributes (amount, size, color) of leaves and turkeys. An introduction of using parts of size sequencing was demonstrated by collecting and examining leaves to be sorted from smallest to largest. The class then used a graphic organizer to describe the other attributes associated with each students' favorite leaf.

In the area of Science / Social Studies, students completed recipe experiments to explore topics related to fall. Students followed a visual recipe for Sensory Dough. With the assistance of their personal aides, each student answered comprehension questions regarding process, utensil use and personal opinion. The class also completed cooking lessons, such as Microwavable Mug Pumpkin Cake.

Centers for the month of November focused on Dramatic Play and Verbal Behavior Skills: Construction Water Play (discovering movement words - up, down, push, pull, float, sink- with our new table top water/sand activity center), Build a Scarecrow (creating a scarecrow through visual directions), Find the Scarecrow (visual perception of an identical image from a field of 3), Turkey Colors (identifying colors from a field of 8), and Following Directions (creating a variety of fall, Veterans Day and Thanksgiving crafts from multi-step visual directions).

Students progressed in their individualized goals: Niall has improved his ability to follow an arrival sequence by decreasing physical prompts necessary and negative behaviors, for most steps. Tanzania has expanded the length of time, in which she is compliant with remaining in group settings and activities. Alex has begun to verbalize his manding requests in partial and full sentences, alongside his use of PECs. Kairo has moved from a 3 task box activity schedule to an 8 task box activity schedule with almost complete independence throughout the process.

Room 102's Star Student, Kairo, demonstrated an understanding of his new individualized Positive Behavior Program by completing 10 nice actions/verbalizations towards others. Every 10 positive behaviors earns Kairo the opportunity to wear a TRex shirt for the remainder of that day.

Students will continue to work on task compliance and participation during group activities. This includes developing abilities to: take turns, share, provide social interaction (verbalizations, signs, high fives, eye contact) and remaining seated throughout group activities.

Room 102 is looking forward to learning about the many different winter holidays next month.

**Consuelo Alzate's Preschool Class, Room 103-** This has been a very busy, exciting and rewarding month for our Preschool Class. The children were able to interact with peers from another classroom during our memorable Halloween activities. They participated in all the activities regardless of how busy and fast the activities went. It was a great experience to play and to meet other settings and other students.

All students are showing great progress this month. Lyla, Jose and Sebastian are rapidly learning to use PECS to mand for food, toys and movies. Jose and Ezequiel are doing very well with their ADL. They are more independent during meals and brushing their teeth, as well as during social play. All students are now able to sit and attend for longer periods of time during circle and large groups.

**Briana Gallo's Class, Room 104-** This month room 104 has been working on their social skills,

play skills, learning about Thanksgiving, as well as, how to be a good friend by sharing. Our students have also participated in making fall themed crafts such as a fall reef, red and orange glitter slime, and sweet potato pie.

Along with all the fall theme activities our students started Yoga this month. The students are having a great time following the movements and enjoying the soft music.

The class's star student for November is Victor. Victor has been working hard this month and is now using full sentences to request. Yoga is one of Victor's favorite activities, as well as, cooking Fall themed dishes.

**Anna Garrison's Class, Room 105-** This month room 105 continued their unit on pumpkins, discussing the life cycle in more detail and made their own 3D pumpkins depicting the life cycle. Students even made pumpkin pie for Thanksgiving. Students also learned about Election Day. They read an adapted, interactive book explaining what Election Day is and discussed voting and democracy. The class held their own election and "voted" for favorite class snack.

Veterans' Day was a very important unit. Students watched an interactive book about the Vietnam Memorial and what it represents. They discussed what a Veteran was, why we honor them every year and why they are important to our country.

Students were excited to learn about Thanksgiving this month. They discussed what the holiday is and why we celebrate it. They learned about the Pilgrims, Native Americans and the first Thanksgiving. The class really enjoyed making a craft to show what they are thankful for.

**Stephen Goham's Class, Room 106-** Students learned how to use a graphic organizer/story web to tell a story about the Pilgrims and Indians, and the first Thanksgiving. The children applied new vocabulary as well as map skills to their learning. They also used their graphic organizer to answer "wh" questions related to the topic. The children were challenged to think critically by comparing and contrasting the similarities and differences between present day Thanksgiving traditions to those of the pilgrims and Native Americans.

This month's Language/Reading included "Thanksgiving" sight words. The class was introduced to new words by utilizing flashcards and writing 3x each, etc. Math included concepts of graphing and money skills. One-to-one correspondence when engaged in arts & crafts activities.

Classroom student of the month was Thomas. With limited prompting, Thomas demonstrated knowledge about the pilgrims and Native Americans. He is able to identify his sight words, place each of the items accordingly in a story web, and correctly use the story web to sequence the events and retell the story appropriately.

**Chantel Abughazaleh's Class, Room 108 -** November themes enabled students to learn about Election Day, Veterans Day and Thanksgiving. Students learned what an election is and why it is important for citizens to vote in the election. They discussed the importance of Veterans Day as well as who veterans are and why we should pay respect to them. And lastly, students learned about Thanksgiving Day and the history of Thanksgiving. To coincide with these themes, the class read coordinating books. Some of these stories include: "Today on Election Day" by Catherine Stier, "Election Day" by Margaret McNamara, "Veterans Day" by Julie Murray and "Thanksgiving: Stories and Poems" by Caroline Feller Bauer.

On November 15th, room 108 took a field trip to Michael's Craft Store. Students were able to buy a Thanksgiving craft to make for their families. They worked on walking and waiting in the store as

well as using money to purchase items. This will help the students improve their socialization skills and it is always great to go in the community to promote daily living skills.

Some enrichment activities in conjunction with the themes the students participated in were science experiments and exercises. The class used baking soda, food coloring and vinegar to make a small volcano explosion. The students loved it and did a great job participating. For Veterans Day and Election Day, the class participated in patriotic yoga, in which they recreated poses named after patriotic, American symbols, such as, eagle pose and star pose. And for Thanksgiving, students will make Pillsbury Thanksgiving themed cookies.

**Christina Witte's Middle School Class, Room 109-** This month students learned all about Thanksgiving. Room 109 chose to study the Native People more in depth by reading the book "Squanto's Journey" and discovered the difficulties the native people were facing. Students learned about the cultural values and beliefs of the Natives, made some original crafts, artwork and recipes. They gave special consideration to the Story of Creation of Turtle Island (North America) of the Ojibway People.

On November 16th, they had their annual Middle School Thanksgiving Feast, for which our students vote on and choose recipes, write a shopping list, compare prices in store circulars, shop for the items on our Community-Based Instruction trip and finally prepare all the food from scratch. All the student show particular motivation and engagement during the cooking activities and even the students who have extremely limited diets have been a little more receptive to trying different foods during these activities.

**Susan Parenti's Middle School Class, Room 110-** Veterans Day is an opportunity teach the students the meaning and significance of the day. Also, to honor and give thanks to those who have served or are serving in the military. The students read stories and discussed the military Veterans, the five branches of service and their roles.

The focus of The First Thanksgiving for the students is to understand the experiences and hardships encountered by the Pilgrims on their voyage on the Mayflower to the New World and in establishing a new settlement. Students discussed how the Wampanoag Indians assisted the Pilgrims during their first year in Massachusetts. They instructed the Pilgrims on where to hunt for food and how to grow crops. The students learned how the Pilgrims shared a meal with Wampanoag people who had helped them, which is what is known as the first American Thanksgiving celebration.

The Middle School hosted their Annual Thanksgiving Feast. Students shopped for the items at Shoprite by using a picture or written list and each middle school classroom helped prepare the food.

**Natalia Amador's Middle School Class, Room 111-** Students learned the importance of voting and about the election process. To make the lesson relevant to our students, the class hosted our their own election where our students went to other classes and had them vote for our Senator. They also learned about Veterans Day through readings, crafts, and technology. Students were introduced to some of the symbols, songs, and pledges that represent our country and which have special significance. Students will learn about Thanksgiving by exploring the rich historical and cultural aspects of this American holiday with Thanksgiving activities, lessons, and printables. We will have a Middle School Thanksgiving dinner made by our students.

Ms. Amador's class has continued to work on strengthening their pre-vocational jobs by completing the many tasks here at Crossroads and by attending community based instruction. This month students explored Westlake, Clark Commons, Shoprite, and Clark gym. Community based instruction has truly fostered a lot of independence skills and important daily living skills among our students. So far, they have worked on completing Ellison orders, sorting magazines, doing laundry, collecting recyclables, and are currently working on utensil orders and kitchen inventory this month.

For science and social studies, the middle school teachers continue rotating all classes to teach thematic units, which include: Seasons, Election Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving, and community helpers. For direct instruction, all students continue to work on their VB MAPP goals and IEP goals.

**Speech Therapy-** Devin is improving his ability to be patient and give his peers turns during speech group. Elijah is making great strides in relaying personal information in response to questions. Luis is becoming increasingly comfortable with transitioning between the classroom and therapy environments.

Jessica Pinzon attended a two-day Picture Exchange Communication Exchange (PECS) workshop, as pictures are an essential component for our preschoolers and other early learners to develop communication skills. Hope Weinstein and School Social Worker, Elaine Liggeri, are in their third month of developing and implementing a weekly Makerspace program for students in grades K-5. Middle school students continue to attend a monthly Makerspace overseen by Hope at the Clark Public Library. Themes that were included in our curriculum this month included patriotism (for Election Day and Veterans Day) and Thanksgiving.

**Occupational Therapy-** The focus of this month has been on fine motor and visual motor work. Each class participated in making a large turkey feather. All of the feathers were put together to make a turkey decoration that is currently displayed on the wall in the front hallway.

The OT department continues to develop, monitor, and modify sensory diets. As of now, five students were started on the Therapeutic Listening Program. Collaboration with classroom staff continues, focusing on the student goals. Therapists will also be attending a "Therapies in the School" conference.

**Physical Therapy-** Currently we have one PT working two days a week at Crossroads School. Twelve students receive PT services with a total of 12 individual treatment spots, one PT consultation and two PT groups. In addition, two students from our school were informally assessed for PT services this month based on teacher recommendations. We are awaiting district response for potential addition to our regular PT caseload.

Our students continue to demonstrate progress during their physical therapy sessions. Mordecai C. (one of our newer students) has achieved so many of his PT goals already that his services were able to be decreased from twice weekly to once weekly. George W. continues to show nice improvements with higher level bilateral coordination exercises. A "movement break" program with a focus on crossing midline has been created for Rashid M. to perform in his classroom throughout the day. All of our students continue to work towards their IEP specific goals this month during their sessions.

## HILLCREST SOUTH:

Enrollment as of 11/21/18 Actual: 93 Changes: Entered:4 Exited:2. 1 for attendance policy violation/ refusal to attend school and 1 for being in another placement. Suspensions: 2. 1 for assault on a student and 1 for disrupting the educational environment/ aggression towards staff.	Intakes Pending General Ed.: 6 Intakes Pending Sp. Ed.: 1 Waiting List: 0
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During the month of November Hillcrest Academy South Campus (HAS) welcomed new students from Elizabeth Public Schools (EPS) and Ms. Gronert, shared Guidance Counselor, worked to audit their transcripts and create individualized schedules for each student. Ms. Gronert worked with Dr. Balsamello, Principal of HAS, and the staff to acclimate the new students into the culture of Hillcrest Academy South. The Guidance Counselor will continue to work with EPS and their administration alongside Dr. Balsamello to interview potential students. The Guidance Counselor continued to work with the seniors to discuss their graduation track and their post-secondary plans and how they can achieve these goals. She also worked to monitor the progress of the students taking Credit Retrieval to make sure they are on track with the grading teachers and Ms. Dattilo, Director of Curriculum and Instruction. The students continued to participate in the Union County College ALEKS program which will prepare them to take the Math portion of the Accuplacer at the end of the month.

Ms. Gilchrist, the School Social Worker, has attended the monthly DCF/ HIB meeting for enhanced services for identified students. She has completed the BIS pre-test for all involved students. Ms. Gilchrist will host the second perfect attendance breakfast for the month of November with 12 eligible students. The Social Worker continued to track the seniors to identify who is no longer attending Saturday school and may need independent study to graduate in 2019. These students will be required to attend After School Tutoring once a week in their ultimate quest for graduation. Parents/guardians will also be notified to assist students who may be faltering. Ms. Gilchrist continued to be instrumental in acclimating the new Guidance Counselor to the culture of HAS as well as the Elizabeth District requirements. She continued to assist with Credit Retrieval and graduation audits.

The HAS Community Service Program (HASCSP) began their annual “gently used” coat drive to benefit Jersey Cares. All of the coats that are collected will help Jersey Cares statewide effort of providing a warm coat to those in need this winter. The coat drive runs through December 11th and your donations are greatly appreciated. The Hillcrest Cares committee held a “Cocoa for California” fundraiser to benefit the American Red Cross and their efforts to provide comfort and relief to families that have been affected by the wildfires in California. In honor of Veteran’s Day, students visited the Veteran’s Memorial Home in Edison. During the visit, students mingled with the veterans, while playing trivia games geared to stimulate their memory and conversation. Students then assisted the Home’s recreation therapy staff with the veterans during their daily exercise program. Throughout the course of this outreach, our students engaged the veterans in lively conversation about the time they spent in the military and the wars in which they served. Additionally, students participated in a fundraiser to benefit the Wounded Warrior Project. HAS is very grateful for our veterans and are indebted to them for their service.

Students in Mr. Reichman’s Chemistry classes did some special activities over the last month. On Halloween, they used some “kitchen chemistry” techniques and materials to create a kind of “fake flesh” that they used along with their artistic and creative skills to create some gruesome looking mock organs to match the holiday. They used cornstarch and water in that activity and learned about the material property of thixotropy. Chemistry students also did a student-centered, process-oriented, guided inquiry learning activity where they learned about how atoms form molecules and compounds and how chemical formulas tell us how they are arranged. Mr. Reichman is currently investigating how to get PhET science simulations to work on

our Chromebooks and his students are currently learning about the evolution of atomic models and how the science process led to the discovery of subatomic particles.

The students in Mr. Sobieniak's Algebra II classes focused on learning properties of exponents and exponential functions. They learned multiplication, division, and power rules of exponents. Students in Probability and Statistics classes learned more about measures of dispersion. They also learned about representation of data and scatter graphs, lines of best fit and cumulative frequency graphs and box plots. Students were investigating many real life applications problems. The students in Success Seminar Math Strategy course utilized Khan Academy to improve their algebraic skills. Students of all mathematics classes were using Khan Academy to improve their algebraic skills on Fridays. At the end of October, Mr. Sobieniak attended a two day Association of Mathematics Teachers Conference and in November he attended the NJEA Teacher Convention.

Ms. Ferrari's Algebra and Geometry classes continued their work on fluency. The students took a drill on skills about fractions every Friday that included: simplifying fractions in their lowest terms, improper fractions, adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing fractions. The SGO drill indicated that only two students out of thirty five have mastery of fractions. This underlying skill deficiency has affected the students' performance in math. Each Friday after the students take their drill they worked on fraction lessons. The goal is for students to increase competency as it relates to fractions as well as increase their overall performance in mathematics.

Ms. Holden's students read and analyzed excerpts from *The Lottery* by Shirley Jackson. Students explored how the word choice, mood, and tone all have an impact on the author's message. Students also enjoyed learning about the use of figurative language through rap videos. In recognition of Veterans Day, students read and analyzed *In Flanders Fields* by John McCrae. In addition, in remembrance of President John F. Kennedy, students viewed a short documentary on his life and times and then reflected on the documentary. Students also continued to work on improving their lexile level through the computer program Read Theory.

Ms. Cioffi's English courses continued practicing skills in the Unit 1 English curriculum. Students learned how texts can have a different pace, how to write dialogue, and the importance of conversations between character in texts. Lessons also focused on the impact of word choices and how the use of figurative language transforms a text. Students have practiced these skills by reading higher level texts with the teacher and then practiced on texts, such as their independent reading book, that were based on their individual reading levels. Students also practiced using more academic writing by using academic sentence starters in their essays. For the remainder of the month, students will use the skills learned in Unit 1 to write a narrative essay where they brainstorm, outline, and edit their writing. Students will then review the skills learned in Unit 1 and take the English Unit 1 Common Assessments during the first week of December.

Ms. Cherville's Spanish classes started a new unit in which the students learned about Spanish culture traditions. They were able to identify the difference between Halloween and the Day of the Dead. They also learned food vocabulary and used it to form statements, interpret paragraphs, and perform conversations in meaningful settings. As part of our authentic activities, we tasted a variety of fruit and fruit combinations. Advanced students worked on learning facts about different countries and completing a variety of reading and writing assignments.

Ms. Duarte's Social Studies students continued to study subjects that manifest themselves in their everyday lives; these themes remain at the center of the American story. In USII students studied immigration in the late 1800s and extended this study by looking at present trends within immigration. We then viewed the HBO documentary *Which Way Home* that explored young children making their way into the United States alongside *It Will Be Chaos*, which explored immigration into Europe from the Middle East and Africa. We used our understanding of both films to form supported arguments as to how nations can tackle the issue of illegal immigration. The discussions spurred on with the viewing of both documentaries highlight the many

viewpoints expressed throughout the United States and Europe. These studies added context to students' understanding of the immigration debate. In Economics, students began their monthly budget projects to bring focus to the need of budgeting in order to maintain a balanced future. A great deal is taking place and students are moving along swiftly.

Mr. Hill's U.S. History I, U.S. History II, and World History classes demonstrated critical thinking and analytical skills through the evaluation of primary and secondary sources. Students were able to evaluate various events from the past and compare them with events in the present. By reading and analyzing standards aligned to current events and using informational texts students were able to develop and implement thoughtful solutions to personal, community, and societal issues of the present and future. US I History students completed their work in Unit 1 analyzing the economic and religious reasons for the colonization of the Americas. Students also analyzed documents related to the Salem Witch Trials and the Columbian Exchange to evaluate possible consequences of systems where absolute power and control are held by the few. USII History students analyzed the impacts natural resources, technology, and transportation had on American industrialization, as well as explored how the unchecked excesses of industrial capitalism during the Gilded Age led to the rise of organized labor in America. Modern World students analyzed primary and secondary documents related to the discovery of Indian and Pacific ocean trade routes by the Spanish and Portuguese kingdoms, and the eventual discovery and conquest of the great civilizations of Mexico, Central, and South America by the Spain and Portugal.

Ms. Rubin, School Nurse and Health Education teacher, assisted with entry procedures, including bag searches. The school nurse made calls to all of the absent students' parents each day. She has been compiling attendance letters for students with excessive absences as per the NJDOE guidelines. The nurse saw an average of 10-15 students for health concerns each day. There have been a number of new students that started at HAS this month and the nurse was in the process of obtaining current health information from the sending EPS Academies. The nurse called parents to follow up for those students with food allergies, asthma and other health concerns. Required health screenings continue throughout the year as required by the state. Mrs. Rubin and Mrs. Ferrari are the facilitating staff for the HAS School Store and provided snacks for the students a couple of times each month during lunch periods. The students helped with selling items and gaining community service hours. The orders for "school spirit wear" were sent out and should be back soon. In Health class, the students had lessons on the cardiac and circulatory systems. The next module in health class will be the respiratory system.

The students in Mr. Barone's Physical Education classes were introduced to a unit on basketball. After the students reviewed basketball specific skills such as dribbling, passing, and shooting on days they are in the gym, they were introduced to modified games. One of the games that the students really enjoyed was the "3 Point Shootout." The students enjoyed this game because they were able to compete in teams and are constantly moving throughout the activity. Mr. Barone has been very pleased with the amount of participation throughout the unit. In Health, students completed a unit on the cardiovascular system. Numerous topics were discussed including blood pressure and the importance of having a healthy blood pressure. Many students were able to take their blood pressure in class. Students now also understand what can increase one's blood pressure. In addition, Mr. Barone explained to the students what the DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) Diet was and how following that diet can assist people in lowering their blood pressure.

**HILLCREST/NORTH:**

<p><b>Enrollment as of:</b> 11/21/18  <b>Actual:</b> 86  <b>Changes:</b> Entered: 7 Exited: 1</p>	<p><b>Referrals :</b> work in progress   <b>Drills:</b> Fire Drill: 11/7/18  Lockdown:11/20/18</p>
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In the month of November, students in Economics evaluated the various world economic philosophies (Capitalism, Socialism, Communism). Students read about each philosophy and created a “pros and cons” list for each. Next, they discussed these pros and cons as a class. For each philosophy, students completed the writing prompt “If given the choice, would you want to live in a purely (Capitalist, Socialist, Communist) society? Our next step will be for each student to create their ideal economic philosophy for their own society.

Also in Social Studies, students were able to work upon debating skills by comparing the tale of Columbus with both Columbus’s diaries and Native American reports. Students discovered what it means to be “true” and how things occur. Students also learned about the groups and individuals involved and how it affected and continues to affect the United States. Students did this by breaking down primary source documents, researching expert opinions, discussing and debating key topics and synthesizing the information in a final paper.

In English, students continue to learn skills that “good readers” use to approach texts including analyzing characters and identifying theme. Students have analyzed the characters in their reading books by identifying character traits, analyzing passages that define their characters, and finding examples of direct and indirect characterization of their character. Students have also learned how to identify theme in a piece of literature. Students explored the themes in a short story, their independent reading books, and poems. Students also read their independent reading books every day, and have been tracking their lexile level weekly using an online reading assessment. During independent reading time, the teacher and students engage in daily discussions about reading progress and strategies for improvement.

Geometry class has begun completing two column proofs by identifying properties of equality, definitions and postulates. They worked with familiar steps from Algebra and continued the concept of a reason for every step in Geometry as well. Probability and Statistics classes have continued to work on assignments in Google Classroom. Not only are they creating bar graphs and scatter plots, they are also drawing conclusions and making predictions based on the data. Finding the line of best fit, or trend line, and its equation allows the student to make a valid prediction.

Mrs. Machado’s Algebra students have begun to use graphing systems of linear equations to make real-life decisions. With fun research activities, students have concluded that Hybrid cars are a bad investment. The money saved in gas doesn’t begin to pay off the initial higher cost until after 16 years of driving. Purchasing a washer and dryer however, is a good investment instead of continued use of the local laundromat. Laundromat fees will surpass the cost of standard laundry machines in less than one year of use for an average family of four. Mrs. Machado is aligning the language arts skills to have students practice making claims and using the graphs as evidence to articulate an analysis. Otherwise, what’s the point?

The month of November found Biology, Forensic Science, and Computer Science classes delving deeper into content. Biology students further enhanced their knowledge of DNA by studying its structure and the mechanisms by which it transmits traits to successive generations. From there they explored structural hierarchy and how cells are organized into tissues on up to whole organisms. Next month, Biology students will begin studying genetics and how traits are passed on to successive generations of offspring. Forensic Science students began their inquiry into the stages of cellular death as it pertains to determining cause and time of death. In December Forensic Science students will begin their investigation of fingerprints. Computer Science students continued their journey towards becoming competent computer programmers by wrapping up their task of programming their own websites using HTML. Next month they will move on to javascript and its applications to creating games and animation.



In Art classes, students focused on painting and color theory. Students completed a painting in watercolor then moved on to using medium body paints such as tempera and acrylic. Students learned many things regarding painting which included procedures, making a palette, getting supplies and color mixing. For most students, this introduction was their first exposure to painting and color theory. They began with mixing the primary colors to create secondary and tertiary colors and then moved onto tints, tones and shades. Students learned color schemes, complements and the psychological effect of cool and warm colors in designs such as advertising and the world around them. Brush strokes and painterly style was also introduced and practiced. They designed a painting about their favorite food where they will apply their knowledge of paint and color schemes in order to create a painterly style work about their favorite food which through symbolism, will reveal something about themselves.

This month, Hillcrest Academy North welcomed new students from Elizabeth Public Schools and Ms. Gronert worked to audit their transcripts and create individualized schedules for each student. Ms. Gronert worked with Mr. Marquet and the staff to acclimate the new students into the culture of Hillcrest Academy North. The guidance counselor will continue to work with EPS and their administration along with Mr. Marquet to interview potential students. The guidance counselor continued to work with the seniors to discuss their graduation track and their post-secondary plans and how they can achieve these goals. She is also working to monitor the progress of the students taking Credit Retrieval to make sure they are on track with the grading teachers and Ms. Dattilo. The students at Hillcrest Academy North have continued to participate in the Union County College ALEKS program which will prepare them to take the Math portion of the Accuplacer at the end of the month.

### **NONPUBLIC:**

The Director and Supervisor of Nonpublic Services met with the Nonpublic School administrators and reviewed the following:

- Updated DOE Guidelines for Auxiliary & Remedial Services Chapters 192 & 193
- Guidelines for standardized testing and compensatory education
- Child Find
- Updates to state and federal funding for student services
- Delivery of services: pull-out vs. in-class
- Mandated teacher trainings

Teachers met for their monthly PLC meeting where Mrs. Winter introduced a book study with the book *Teach Like a Pirate*. The study will focus on increasing student engagement and to boost creativity for both the student and teacher.

The Non-Public Nursing program is running in all of the Nonpublic Schools in Union County. The Non-Public nurses assist in maintaining health records (A-45) and complete specific basic screenings grades K to 12

The Non-Public Schools are successfully receiving their individual textbooks and technology orders based on the school's allotted allocation for the 2018 – 2019 school year.

### **TRANSITION SERVICES:**

Work Readiness Academy Individual Student Enrollments: 12

Project SEARCH-Overlook Medical Center Enrollment: 9  
Westlake School (Job Academy): 14 (Projected)  
Lamberts Mill Academy (Job Academy): 3 (Projected)  
Sub-Contracted SLE Programs with UC School Districts: 3 (Plainfield, Elizabeth, and Summit)

Students in the **Work Readiness Academy** continued in their first semester internship experiences. Students are placed in one experience two days per week and a second experience one day per week.

Highlights from the classroom this month included:

Using values to make decisions: Students had the opportunity to participate in the “When Is It Okay?” activity where they considered their values and why they make the choices they do.

Post Secondary Goals: Students identified their post-secondary goals and are in the process of making vision boards.

No Second Chances: Students participated in discussions after watching the James Stanfield videos dealing with the consequences for stealing money, stealing supplies, lying and “borrowing” items from the workplace. Students discussed the importance of integrity and trust at the workplace.

“What is a Reputation?” and “Changing Your Reputation”: Students in the “Amazon” group discussed how reputations are formed, how they can be changed by their actions, and what the difference is between a good and bad reputation.

REC Lasagna Sale: The REC (Readiness Easy Cooking) Chef’s prepared and sold 18 lasagnas at their 1st lasagna sale. The feedback was unanimous...everyone loved them and said they were delicious. Way to go REC Chef’s!

“Step It Up” Project: Through a grant awarded to Ms. McQuade, LETSCOM fitness trackers were purchased for the students and staff to keep track of how many steps they take each day. Our goal is to have the students increase their number of steps each week by 500 steps to help them reach their goal of 6,000 steps during school hours (equaling 3 miles).

During their weekly skills group students began a lesson series on Self Advocacy. They are learning how to use “I” messages and other assertive forms of communication.

Transition Planning Meetings:

Round one Transition Planning Meetings with all students who are leaving the WRA in June 2019 are scheduled for the week of Dec. 3rd. Our Social Worker, Ms. Purdy, sent home parent surveys. She is in the process of working with students 1:1 on updating their Person Centered Plans and helping them understand their I-Strong Career Interest Assessment results.

During skills group with Ms. Purdy the students are working on Self Advocacy, and Assertive vs. non-Assertive forms of communication, including non-verbal communication.

*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** program at Overlook Medical Center is in its third year of operation. This fall, the nine interns are participating in experiences with the following departments:

Infection Prevention  
Neurology/ICU/CCU  
Environmental Services  
Overlook Foundation  
Materials Management  
Food Services-Overlook Cafeteria  
Central Sterile  
Dietary & Nutrition  
Human Resources

The first round of Employment Planning Meetings (EPMs) were held this month on-site at the hospital. EPMs are an integral part of the Project SEARCH program model. Held 4-5 times per year, the EPMs bring together the student, family, instructor, skills trainer, DVR counselor, and assigned Job Developer where the student's progress is discussed and goals for employment are established and tracked.

Instructional topics covered in the classroom this month included:

- Self advocacy
- Discrimination and Harassment on the Job (youth at work)
- Rights and Responsibilities, including learning about the ADA
- Communicating using "I" Messages
- Evaluating our preferences at work to begin discussing plans for the next round of rotations

The Project SEARCH Advisory Committee met on Tuesday, November 27th at the hospital. Among the topics discussed were: the student recruitment plan for 2019-20, planning for the second year of an email mentoring program for the interns, possible replication/expansion of the program to another Atlantic Health location, and revised considerations for early dismissal in the event of forecasted poor weather.

Applications for the 2019-20 Project SEARCH program are now available by visiting the project search website at [www.projectsearch-unioncounty-nj.org](http://www.projectsearch-unioncounty-nj.org) or contacting Mr. Josh Bornstein at [jbornstein@ucesc.org](mailto:jbornstein@ucesc.org)

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

The Westlake School and Lamberts Mill Academy programs continue to provide unpaid internships at community businesses through our **Job Academy** program. Students between the ages of 16-21 are screened and selected to participate in the program with the approval of the sending school district. There is currently an additional monthly fee to participate in this program. Students participating in the Job Academy this year are participating at experiences at the following locations:

- UCESC's Can Do Cafe in Fanwood
- Marshalls
- Walgreens
- ShopRite
- Panera Bread
- Modell's

Following the launch of this year's **Job Academy**, Ms. Goodson immediately began working with our community-based partners to develop training plans (required by N.J.A.C. 12:56-18, School-to-Work Program, N.J.A.C. 6A:19-4 Structured Learning Experience) to address each student's intellectual and physical capabilities.

*The Job Academy is a structured learning experience program offered at both Westlake School and Lamberts Mill Academy that provides students with the chance to sample work by participating in unpaid internships at a variety of community-based businesses with the support of UCESC staff.*

## **TECHNOLOGY:**

The Technology Department is working with Data Management on improving our PowerSchool environment. This will not only help teachers and administrators keep track of attendance and grading but it will also greatly assist with reporting for billing purposes and state requirements.

UCESC's Edumet database virtualization project is ahead of schedule and the new environment is built and ready for testing. We are working with Edumet to ensure the system is 100% operational before cutting over to the new infrastructure. This project is now expected to be completed in early December.

We have begun to work with new Chromebook manufacturers as we build out our refreshment cycle. This is not only to ensure we receive the best pricing but primarily to ensure we are using the product that best suits our students' needs.

After sizing out improvements to our virtual environment, we have chosen to extend the warranties of our current equipment rather than look to replace any of it at this time. We now have an additional two years of coverage to work toward bolstering this infrastructure as wisely as possible.

The IT staff have created communication modules within PowerSchool that work with PaySchools to update lunch eligibility status. We continue to work with both vendors as we tailor the modules to accommodate our needs.

We ran a full security patch audit and update on our server fleet. All servers are fully patched with the latest security and all antivirus and antimalware applications were updated, upgraded and scans showed no infections present. This is a monthly procedure to ensure all of our systems remain secure.

The Technology staff have developed a plan to migrate share resources to a new share environment. The move to Google Drive has been trying for some and there are staff that prefer their data not be stored on the cloud. To address this concern we have built a new share server and plan to migrate data from the older server over winter break.

## **TRANSPORTATION:**

A bid opening was held on November 7, 2018, for 73 routes established since the beginning of the school year. Competitive bidding was very light at this bid opening due to the current critical shortage of school bus drivers. However, the Commission still saves money over districts bidding their own routes themselves since our vendor list now numbers at more than fifty, and the Commission typically has more bidders, i.e., more competition, than a local district.

The Commission's own data submission for the DRTRS was transmitted over the internet to the Department of Education on November 13, 2018.

Winter arrived with a bang on November 15th . The strength of the storm seemed to catch everyone by surprise. The resulting traffic nightmare left many vehicles stranded and children on school vehicles for several hours. The transportation office remained open throughout the ordeal, and, fortunately, no serious mishaps occurred. On Friday, November 16th, transportation services resumed, albeit at a snail's pace. If this day was any indication, it is going to be a long winter indeed.

**cc: Eric Larson, Business Administrator/Board Secretary**