



Union County Educational Services Commission
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(Att. 2)

Report of the Superintendent to the Board of Directors
April 3, 2019

WESTLAKE:

Enrollment as of March 18, 2019 Changes: Entered: 0 Exited: 0 Student Total: 67	Referrals: 0 Intakes Scheduled: 0 Accepted: 0
Fire Drills: March 15, 2019	Emergency Drills: Lockdown
Suspensions: 0	March 11, 2019

March began with the celebration of Read across America where many staff members read Dr. Seuss books to each class. Students then played Dr. Seuss bingo with their school-mates and Mrs. Fernandez's class one the school trophy for the month of March. Student also learned about St Patrick's Day celebrations and its history.

This past week was Multi-Cultural week at 1571. Mrs. Fernandez, Westlake teacher, teamed up with Mrs. Flores from Lamberts Mill Academy to create an interactive experience where students had the opportunity to travel to different countries and experience the culture and history of each country they visited. Students received a passport and travel guide. Each day they traveled to a new country visiting stations in the building to experience the music, art, food, and culture of that county. As they visited each country students received a stamp in their passport. Dancers from our community volunteered their time to perform and teach students a traditional dance from each country. Students from LMA researched each country to create stations and through peer modeling taught what they had learned to the Westlake students.

Westlake staff is working hard to prepare students for the upcoming basketball game on March 29, 2019. It takes many volunteers to organize and practice with the students for this event. Students participate in playing the game, the hot shots tournament, school mascot and cheerleading. It is meaningful to so many of our families to be invited to school-wide activities such as the annual basketball game. It is moments like these when families and staff can join together to build connections and sustain healthy relationships.

Westlake students attend many Community Based Instruction trips that provide opportunities for socialization and learning experiences. In addition to shopping, bowling, swimming and the library, this month students in Mrs. Robles class attended a trip to the Can Do Café. Students accompanied Mrs. Boone (job coach) and her student to work for the morning at the café. While there, the students toured the café learning about the daily routine of set up and waiting on customers. Then the students ordered something to eat and a beverage. Each student had to add up his or her food items, count out the appropriate amount of money, pay for his or her order and wait for change if necessary. This experience provided an opportunity to learn about the potential work experience for the future.

Mrs. Palmer's class took a trip to the Railside café. Several days before the trip the students went online and wrote down what they wanted to order. Using money earned through their chocolate business, each student

was given \$16.00 to spend. After eating lunch, the manager came over to talk to the students about the jobs that are available in the café. He talked about the importance of team work and following directions when on the job. He invited them to fill out an application when they graduate. The students told him about the foods they have cooked in school.

The Prom committee has been meeting and the Prom is set for May 3rd. We have sent out invitations to 51 Westlake students and 14 alumni. So far 13 students are coming. We have ordered several decorations with the money that was donated by Goldman Sachs. These decorations can be used again and for other events such as the Talent Show (back drop) and or used in the de-escalation room (laser lights). Goldman Sachs will be sending 6 volunteers the day of the event to help set up and decorate the cafeteria.

The Westlake dance team is working hard on a special Queen Medley for our upcoming basketball halftime show. James our team captain of the Westlake Stars continues to work with his peers to create choreography that can be modeled and taught to each student.

DLM testing will start in early April and the Supervisor of Instruction and the classroom teachers are completing pre-tasks needed to be prepared for testing. Trainings on implementation and technology upgrades have all been completed in preparation for the assessment.

Congratulations to Mariah R. for March Student of the month. Congratulations to Cody A. for receiving the Principal's Award and Congratulations to Samantha D. for being the recipient of the "Unsung Hero Award" sponsored by the Union County School Boards Association.

Language Arts: Mrs. Porchetta's class is reading "Hatchet." This novel has given students so many opportunities to learn about perseverance, resourcefulness and the power of nature. They will be busy completing follow up activities in the next couple of weeks. Many Westlake students work on individual skills using Edmark and Edmark functional words. Students work on comprehension, finding the main idea and sequencing.

Math: In Mrs. Roble's homeroom the students are working on functional math skills. Two students have progressed from double digit multiplication to triple digit using single digit multiplication. Other students in class are working on independently counting nickels up to 45 cents. Students also work on identifying coins and their values in class, in our school store, in the community and during the school held sales.

Science: In Science, students have begun a study of the solar system. A solar system kit was ordered for each student. The students will paint each individual planet as they move through the unit. At the end of the unit, students will complete a project by assembling the entire solar system. This is a great project that they can take home. Mrs. Attlesey's class has been learning about ocean habitats. They made a "pop up" diagram of the ocean. This year, they also completed a study of desert habitats.

Social Studies: In social studies classes are learning about the definition and characteristics of various cultures. Students are working in groups to research topics such as dress, food, celebrations, family structure, location and past times of different countries. They are celebrating what makes everyone similar and different. The Multicultural Week activities are a perfect way to reinforce this concept.

PE: In Physical Education students are working on their basketball skills. Students are taking part in games and drills, all while accumulating steps moved per class. Students are actively engaged with their peers to understanding safe practices while participating in games and activities that utilize and enhance their motor skills. Some of the students remember how to shoot a basketball, pass a basketball, and dribble a basketball correctly. Some students need extra attention while playing in structured activities. The goal is to teach the students basic basketball skills and concepts, expose them to the sport they can play, watch, and enjoy with

their friends and families and support the local professional basketball teams- the NY Knicks, Brooklyn Nets, and NY Liberty of the WNBA.

Over the past week students have been taking part in their 'Hot Shot Challenge'; an assessment for shooting basketballs. Each student shoots baskets for one (1) minute trying to make as many baskets as they can. Each student shoots 3 times over the course of a week. The student who makes the most baskets gets the opportunity to shoot at the halftime of our annual Westlake Basketball Game.

Health: Nurse IJ concluded a lesson on Bathroom Habits with students and is beginning a new lesson on Unhealthy Sharing this week (03/11 - 03/15). Mr. Moss is teaching student's why it is important to be kind, socialize with friends and be a good student.

Health Office: Our health office continues to be very busy and Nurse IJ keeps everything organized and manageable. She works with ongoing phone calls, emails and letters to parents/guardians, physicians and specialists as reminders and/or requests for the students' required treatment, emergency and action care plans, supplies and medications. The medications and doctors' orders from parents/guardians or students' physicians were received and organized accordingly.

An eye doctor and eye technician from the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired of New Jersey came by invitation to the Westlake School on February 19th. Twenty-seven students out of the forty-nine students participated in an eye exam and visual screening. Original copies of results of the screenings and recommendations by the attending eye doctor were sent home to each student's family accordingly with a letter from the health office encouraging parents/guardians to follow-up with the recommendations for their child. Our nurse is still conducting in-school health screenings of height, weight, blood pressure, scoliosis assessment, hearing and vision. Management of three students diagnosed with diabetes received ongoing care and management at the health office in accordance with their prescribed diabetes management regimen.

Pre Voc – Students are working on work readiness skills including work safety, independence, problem solving, self- management, communication, and peer work in all areas (assembly, sorting, and packaging). A total of 12 Good News awards went home this month for showing progress.

Graphic Arts – Silk Screen - A classroom paraprofessional has been trained and Mrs. Casey made a tutorial for the steps of the silk screen process. Two students are learning how to apply the correct pressure to the squeegee so the ink will go through properly. Students made shirts for the Westlake cheerleaders, and Hot Shots. We currently have an incoming job for HeatPress image on canvas bags.

In connection with the school's Read Across America program Mrs. Casey was happy to read "Oh The Places We Will Go" by Dr Seuss to Mrs. Palmer's homeroom class. Reading this book was appropriate for them. It is a little inspiration for the upper class students who are or will be graduating soon.

Embroidery – The students learned how to thread needles, change the bobbin in the machine, and oil the bobbin for maintenance. The machine is running after Mrs. Casey had to totally reinstall and reformat the machine. Students fulfilled a personalized order for a name on a bookbag. They are currently working on two orders for personalized baby blankets. Mrs. Casey has ordered 3 new digitized designs that can be used for spring and Easter season. These designs will be used to generate more business. The bunny will be put on a bag offering personalization for Easter. The spring images can be used on a hand towel.

Sign Making/Engraving Machine: In Save students are becoming acclimated to the different shops. 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 spring season.

Horticulture: During our vocational period, Mrs. Capizzi's class has been discussing plant parts and doing different activities to reinforce these concepts. Students have also been discussing our spring planting and what they will be doing once we are able to get outside to the garden and greenhouse.

Post Office/Print Shop: The students have been preparing for the Carnival. They have written and copied the donation request, typed labels, addressed envelopes and mailed the donation requests to approximately 30 businesses. The Print Shop has completed two large projects this month. One was for Mrs. Palmer (candy order forms) and the other for Mrs. Fernandez (Passports for Multicultural Week). Students also continue to work on our office kits and various jobs received from the main office (copies, shredding, and mail sorting/delivery). Our next project is for our Applebee's fund raiser. Students will be cutting the tickets for the event.

Sweet Shoppe: The students made 50 chocolate lollipops for the multicultural week events and two Irish soda breads. Students also completed an order for 60 crosses for a christening and are now filling an order for 30 unicorns for a birthday party. Unicorns seem to be the theme for birthday parties this year. Our order forms for Spring Candy went home with all students this week. The students are making, Easter candy, Passover, and flowers for the spring.

Jewelry: In vocational class, Mrs. Porchetta's students are organizing materials and will replenish much needed supplies on their trips to Michael's Craft store. Her homeroom class has been working on their math skills while working in the bead shop. Mrs. Porchetta has created tasks for one to one correspondence, patterning, sorting, counting and addition/subtraction while making different jewelry pieces.

Students from Mrs. Porchetta's class sell pizza to staff on Fridays. They are collecting and counting money, making change and add up the number of slices to be ordered.

DecorDream Shop: Students produced another batch of the wooden signs for the Jersey City Board of Education as well as personalized orders. The students learned how to make double silhouettes and they learned all the possibilities to make different layers of designs on the wood. The students were happy to make a sign for the BMW Car Club of America for their generous donations to the Westlake school every year.

Life Skills: In Life Skills, the students are learning a variety of different life applications. This month, students learned how to fill out the non-driver identification card form and discussed how important it is to have a photo ID at their age. The students were very interested in applying for the New Jersey Non-Driver ID Card and were happy to take the information such as the BA 207 form and 6 Points of ID requirements to their parents.

Retail: Students continue to run a functional school store with regular daily business hours. This store provides valuable opportunities for students to practice a variety of skills across the curriculum. It also provides opportunities in school jobs and vocational training.

Recycling/Paper Pads: Mrs. Roble's students continue to work on various vocational tasks including Easter and graduation die cuts and have been making small flowers and leaves using new paper punches.

Therapies: Speech: In OT/Speech groups, students worked on making simple snacks, such as snowflake tortillas and green eggs. We read the Dr. Seuss book entitled, "Green Eggs and Ham" for "Read Across America". Students also participated in various movement activities, including an obstacle course and a "St. Patrick's Day" scavenger hunt. Basic concepts and prepositions were taught in all groups.

ADL support groups worked on preparing meals and apartment skills, such as folding clothing and towels, setting the table, and sweeping.

In individual and group speech sessions, students worked on vocabulary development, association and classification, making requests, turn-taking and social interaction skills. Younger students discussed seasons and weather, and higher functioning students worked on multiple-meaning words, antonyms/synonyms and problem-solving skills.

Physical Therapy: Currently we have two physical therapists working at Westlake School (one works three days a week and one works one day). There are 21 students on our physical therapy (PT) caseload with a total of 32 individual treatment sessions, six students receiving IEP driven gross motor groups (divided into 3 groups) and one monthly consult.

This month Mrs. Feuerstein is continuing to use our iPad app called “Exercise Buddy” with some of her 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 my students.

Occupational Therapy: Currently we have 2 occupational therapists working at Westlake (2 full-time OTs) and 1 part-time OT who continues to work on Wednesday and Thursday. This month the OT’s continue to assess student’s self-care skills, household skills, fine motor skills, computer skills and sensory needs in order to increase their independence in the school and home setting. We measure the student’s performance and progress through use of task analyses that are aligned with the AFLS assessment.

The OT department also continues to collaborate with speech regarding activities for the ADL support groups. Activities this month included making green eggs in honor of Dr Seuss’ birthday and a tortilla snowflake, following a simple picture/written recipes. Other activities included working in the apartment, following a work schedule to complete simple household chores.

The life skill groups continue to be very successful and enjoyable for our students. The activities completed are the same as those for the ADL support groups. We also make sure to continue integrating technology during these sessions using OT Ipad’s that have been programmed to go along with the activities, allowing the students to make choices, label items used/actions completed, and to communicate with their peers.

Yoga group also continues utilizing weekly music from the Musical Yoga Adventures CD allowing the therapists to work on social skills, ADL skills (removing shoes, pouring water, rolling up yoga mats) and motor skills (flexibility, balance and motor planning). This activity is highly motivating for the students and they remain engaged with the teacher and their peers for the hour.

Social Work: Many IEP meetings and preplanning meetings have been completed in the past month. We have regularly been in touch with families and physicians to discuss behavioral strategies as well as medication adjustments under the direction of the UCESC referring psychiatrist, Dr. Amy. While these medications often take time to implement, we have seen some great results in several cases. We continue to work towards success in other cases. The Social workers also continue to assist many families in securing the services they need such as transportation, enrollment, Performcare, guardianship and more.

In group and individual counseling, students are actively participating, and learning coping skills as well as working on recognizing and understanding the emotions going on inside. Ms. Gronert, Mr. Peneno and Mr. Balassone have been working towards starting a shared social group between the students at Westlake and the students at Hillcrest Academy South. We are excited to launch this program this week and expose the students to differing experiences and points of view.

The food drive to benefit the Linden Animal Shelter has been successful due in part to the assistance of two girl scouts helping to decorate flyers that were sent home to all Westlake families. Ms. Pajewski's mail couriers assisted in the process to get the word out to each homeroom class. Thanks to the generous efforts of staff and students the donation box is filling up with needed food items.

The winter bird feeding project has been successful due to the assistance of Ms. Casey's pre-voc classes enlisting the girl scouts to string pipe cleaners with cheerios to hang from a tree in the picnic grove.

Behaviorist: This month behaviorists have continued biweekly meetings with all teachers. These meetings give teachers a chance to receive support from the behaviorists as it relates to students' success and achievement in their classrooms and provide an opportunity for the behaviorists and teachers to collaborate. Data collection procedures, analysis of student behavior data, use of specific behavioral strategies as well as instructional support as it relates to student behavior are routinely discussed during these consult times. An action plan is included in the written report of the meeting, and responsible parties (teacher/behaviorist) complete the listed activities by next meeting. The behaviorists share these notes with the teacher and administrators.

In addition, Team Communication logs continued to be shared digitally as well housed in each student individual portfolio binders to provide an open line of communication between all staff working with the student. These team communication forms are updated regularly by the behaviorists, as changes are made to procedures used with individual students, and new information is obtained from various sources (e.g. therapists, parents, Dr.). The team communication logs serve the function of allowing the entire team working with that student to receive the most updated information and staff is instructed to initial the hard copy of the log with each update. Additionally, data sheets, Behavior Intervention Plans and Behavioral Strategies have been shared with staff through the Google Drive.

Behaviorists have been active members of pre-planning meetings for IEPs as well as IEP meetings along with participating in Administrator/behaviorist meetings. Behaviorists have also participated in a meeting this month with the consulting Psychiatrist, Dr. Amy. During these meetings, behaviorists have provided behavioral data, current strategies and observational notes about the students. Department meetings between the behaviorists at Westlake and Crossroads have occurred this month as well.

Supervision and assistance during crises continued this month, with the Zen Den continuing to be a valuable tool to help students de-escalate and to proactively prevent various aggressive episodes. Despite successful de-escalation occurring regularly, several crises requiring restraints have occurred this month.

Lastly, the behaviorist department has continued with professional development training; both conducted and attended trainings. Behaviorists led a full day initial training for seven staff members and administrators across the Commission. In addition, both behaviorists completed an intensive 9-hour Supervision Training, in order to be certified in supervising BCBA, BCaBa and/or RBT candidates who work for the Commission. There has already been one staff member who is scheduled to receive this supervision from these behaviorists throughout next school year. In addition, both behaviorists have completed additional webinar training this month to maintain their BCBA certification.

LAMBERTS MILL ACADEMY:

As of March 2019 LMA Actual: 34 LMA District - Non-New Point: 30 New Point Specialty at LMA: 4 Changes: <u>7</u> Entered: <u>2</u> (Non-New Point) <u>0</u> New Point Pending: <u>4</u> Exited: <u>3</u> (non-New Point) <u>2</u> (New Point) Trinitas Hospital : Bedside Instruction: 35 (inpatient) Day Program: 51 Approved-Agreement signed: 56 Classified: 31 Regular Ed: 25	Fire Alarms: 0 Fire Drills: 3/19/2019 Security Drills: 3/11/2019 Referrals in March: 5 Intakes Scheduled: 5 Completed: 5 Acceptance Letter Sent: 5 Sending District Accepted LMA placement: <u>N/A</u> Placement Pending : 5 Suspension out of school: 6 In School Suspension: 0 HIB: 1
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Administration

Frank Picone trained our staff to be more in tune to their students' stress level and states of crisis. It was focused on "The Trauma Attuned School- Understanding the Effects of Chronic Stress on our Students and Ourselves. Creating Educational Environments that Promote Safety, Minimize Triggers and Teach/Model Regulation Skills". This training touched upon the key elements of the Trauma Attuned Model. We now have an understanding that these students' behaviors constitute an array of strategies they developed to survive and negotiate highly stressful growing up experiences. The TAM views this array of skills as student's "Survival Skills". Chronic high stress experiences (trauma) in their lives as well as the associated mental health issues (poor self-image, mood disorders and intellectual/developmental disabilities, learning disabilities) constitute the context within which they have developed this array of "Survival Skills". We will help our students to better regulate themselves and learn new strategies to feel safe and secure in at LMA so they can be more successful within it.

Ms. Corbin attended two professional development workshops in March that focused on women in leadership and women in school administration. Both conferences were highly inspirational and encouraged Ms. Corbin to empower the students and staff to support and build leadership characteristics amongst them. Ms. Corbin will now collaborate with Mr., Jusino to design an entrepreneurship and leadership elective for our Friday elective selections.

Students were working very hard with the teachers in the classroom to prepare a Multicultural Week event. Therefore, Lamberts Mill Academy and Westlake teamed up to bring an interactive travel experience for students of both schools. Students from Lamberts Mill Academy researched different countries in Spanish class to create interactive lessons to teach students at Westlake about a new country each day. Westlake students received a travel folder, which includes passport, boarding passes and travel journal to go to Kenya, Ireland and Spain. Multicultural Week was held on March 12th-14th at the Westlake gymnasium. Each day the Westlake students experienced a new voyage, visiting different stations at their leisure to experience the music, art, food, and culture of that country. As they took their journey to a different country, the students received stamps in their passport and other souvenirs. The event gave students the opportunity to "Tour the World" and to learn about many diverse cultural customs. Therefore, the entire school community participated in an afternoon of enrichment and fun while Social and Emotional Learning was taking place. Therefore, students have the opportunity to take all this experience of leadership and teaching and compare and contrast with their own culture.

Students have been able to select "Friday Electives", where the students pick an elective for the last two periods of the day. In the music elective, students have been able to use the Audio Engineering Grant supplies. They are learning, while in a fun and non-threatening environment, the way to set up the electronic drum set from the grant, as well as a donated synthesizer, and use of the grant's 8-track recorder and microphone. Terminology has routinely been added in an organic way, so students don't feel the pressure of academic learning. Additionally, students have been learning how to read music, allowed to try an array of instruments (electronic and acoustic based, winds to percussion) that staff have shared, as well as teach other students the skills they already knew or just learned. Students also had a day of low pressure critiques and stage performance techniques to assist with not only music, but situations where they may have to be in front of an audience.

Students are looking forward to recording their performances in the upcoming weeks with the hopes to provide student lead soundtracks for the broadcasting grant.

Academics

CTE

This past month we have been assessing personal spending behavior by looking at college expenses, purchasing a new versus an older car and scheduling the payments that are manageable and affordable. We revisited the concept of opportunity cost and evaluated spending choices when it comes to personal wants versus needs. We looked at the cost of drones and whether or not it is was feasible to repair them or purchase new ones. Being an entrepreneur dealing with drones, would it be a position in which they can grow?

Computer Science Discoveries we are currently looking at Intellectual Property and Images. Students will be exploring the copyright do's and don'ts. We looked at trademarking their own drone brand along with how the financing could and would be handled. They will move into activities exploring the various creative commons licenses as a solution to the difficulty in dealing with copyright.

Over the past year students have been hard at work doing varied pieces of art. Students were taken to the Teen Arts Festival last week where some of their work was displayed. As the judges critiqued students work they were on hand to answer any questions that the judges posed. Each student accepted criticism gracefully.

English Language Arts & Literacy:

In celebration of *Read Across America* observed on March 1st, we began earlier in the week were students shared in grand discussions sharing their knowledge of various Dr. Seuss writings and trivia. We proceeded based on the inspiration we found with Dr. Theodor Seuss Geisel by designing posters placed throughout out building. In collaboration of March Madness and our Argumentative Unit students choose their favorite poem to analysis and go head to head to advance in the Poetry tournament brackets. Students looked at supporting their favorite poem with insight to the poems tone, images and author's point of view. We are anxiously awaiting the final rounds of the March Madness Poetry competition.

Arguments have been encouraged in ELA&L as students learn the aspects of what makes an argument effective? Students have been exploring an array of hot topics such as bullying, school violence, shorter school weeks to four days and finally dress codes. Students have shown respect as they are driven to defend and advocate their opinions. We are completing our essays and preparing with a practice project before our Unit II Argumentative essay district assessments.

Social Studies:

Social Studies classes continue to review the past while looking at current events and making numerous comparisons. Recently we discussed social media and compared it to the media that existed in the different time periods we study - from the early written language to the development of writing to the invention of paper, the printing press, the telegraph, early radio and TV, and the large range of communication systems we have today. Our classroom has several artifacts as well that help our conversations - a typewriter from 1925, radios from 1945 and 1965, and a 'portable' TV circa 1956 (no doubt a source for original episodes of 'I Love Lucy!')

Everyone was moved by the recent mass killings in New Zealand and marveled at the speed they were able to tighten their gun laws. This culminated with the value of each voter and the methods we enjoy supporting change and improvement.

In US History I, we completed the study of Reconstruction and have moved to the Roaring Twenties. The students were non-believers when we talked about Prohibition. There were many folk heroes of sorts as well as we read about Bonnie & Clyde, Al Capone, and Eliot Ness. The flappers, zoot suits, and Blues and Jazz were also included in our discussions. US History II is moving to the WWII period. This includes the preparation of the country, the hope to avoid war, the industrialization of America's industries, and what will be expected of the folks on the homefront.

20th Century Civil Liberties has concluded its depthful look at Apartheid and the work and efforts of Nelson Mandela. Comparisons and review were also made with the efforts of Martin Luther King Jr. and his work with the US South and the fight against Jim Crow. Many of the students were fascinated as they learned that Mandela at first did not receive help from the US, but instead Cuba. These students will move on with the issues related to immigration control, the mistreatment of Blacks in the military, and role that government took in the support of civil liberties. World History has moved solidly into the study of China's ancient dynasties, their contributions to the world, and the model they set for other countries.

All of the classes have included role play and debates in their activities. They research their topic, layout a guide of discussion points, and then enthusiastically join in the activity. It's also a great opportunity for our students to gather some additional self esteem, assert themselves, and feel secure in a more public format.

Science :

March Madness is settling in! We are about to participate in March Mammal Madness - a competitive battle of weird and obscure mammals that mirrors the basketball tournament. All students who wish to participate can join in. In Biology, we are learning about photosynthesis by literally watching plants take CO₂ out of water. We created some lactic acid in our legs with some exercise and sampled cheese that bacteria made for us by fermentation! Earth and Environmental students are finishing individual projects and some groups completed an Earthquake project that incorporated an understanding of the size of earthquakes, soil effects on damage and how we can engineer upgrades to buildings (if we have enough money!). Our Chemistry students have been cruising through material and are spending this last week trying to balance chemical equations - a skill not for the faint of heart! In Forensics, we have learned a lot about what bones can tell us! Students are getting pretty good at identifying sex, age and race (who knew?) from skulls and pelvis bones! Many students participated in the Multicultural Week as well!

Mathematics:

Students in Algebra courses learned about graphing quadratic functions on the Coordinate Plane system. They got experience graphing them, using T-Tables of values, and experience working with the TI-84 graphing calculator. For a project they looked for different parabolas in photographs of everyday objects and described the characteristics of each parabola. Students also we're able to create parabolas and find the similarities with a drone flight path. The students from this class we're given the opportunity to create their own flight path, and fly it on the school property. After they flew the drone, other students described their flight path, and related it to quadratic functions and the shape of a parabola.

Geometry classes continued to expand on their knowledge of area and perimeter of two dimensional shapes this month. They applied skills learned to irregular shapes, and worked with many different examples as to how to find the area and perimeter of these shapes. Skills we're taught so they can successfully complete multiple step problems. Students did get to use the Smartboard to isolate certain sections of objects in order to stay organized in completing a task. Finally, students got to see a 'real world' application of an irregular shape, and some of the challenges people have with maintaining them via the use of the drone. Students we're able to fly the drone high enough to get an aerial visual of 1571 building and record images taken by the drone. From there they applied how they could find the area and perimeter of the building given the fact that it's an irregular shape.

Students in Consumer Mathematics have been discussing housing situations and the pros/cons of renting vs buying a house. These discussions and debates have been positive, and have given students the opportunity to utilize their skills, both listening and speaking, from social/emotional learning. Students had the opportunity to articulate why renting or 'buying' a home is better than the other with multiple factors discussed (mortgage rates, property taxes, flexibility, etc.) There was a drone connection with this topic as well. Students learned how real estate agents for both rental and home buying listings utilized drones to showcase different properties to potential clients. Although this technology is newer, it gives future buyers a perspective not normally shown before. The students learned about how the drone helps real estate agents make more money on commission as they are able to 'present' it better.

Finally, select students in mathematics classes have been learning about photography in an elective from the start of the class. These two individuals have been learning how to properly balance the amount of light entered into a digital SLR camera, and how to adjust the shutter speed and aperture opening to achieve a properly balanced photograph. These students submitted their best work from their portfolio to the Union County Teen Arts Festival, and had the opportunity to have their photographs critiqued and scored by a judge during the month of March. Students we're excited to have their work displayed for Union county to see, and we're pleased to get feedback on their work.

Spanish

This month students are finishing the unit "*La Familia y las Celebraciones*" in Spanish. Students continue co-op learning experience on three different classrooms at Westlake every Thursday while reading different stories and discussing what events happened in the story. It is a wonderful social interaction with the higher functioning students. Students are writing some of the stories in the Spanish classroom and then read the stories to the Westlake's students. Also, students are completing a project for the unit called "*El Albun de Mi*

Familia” where they are completing a cultural interview questions based on the essential questions: What is your definition of “culture and family?” Finally, students will take a pre-assessment about the new unit called “La Comida”.

Physical Education and Health:

The month of March is always a busy one for Health and Physical Education. We first started the month with our Project Adventure/Team Building Unit. Students demonstrated the ability to use effective positive interpersonal skills (patience, accepting different ideas, resolving differences of opinion, etc.) to work together to achieve a common goal whether it was a communication activity, trust and respect activity, or problem solving activity. The unit was a great success with all students participating and showing great leadership, communication, and social and emotional skills.

For the next unit in the month of March students have been learning and participating in the fast-paced game of Pickleball. Combining all the elements of tennis, badminton, and table tennis, pickleball has taken off and become quite the popular sport. Using a paddle and a small wiffleball students need to strike the ball across the court and score points to defeat their opponent. Students have been working on mastering serving, striking the ball, gameplay, and strategy.

Drones are the next up-and-coming big thing in Physical Education. Drones are the perfect tool for developing fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination. It influences many other skills such as reading, writing, balance, sense of direction, and other fine motor skills. All of these skills are important and drones are a great way to hone them. Flying drones requires excellent hand-eye coordination, as students need to use visual cues so that they could use their hands to control its path and destination. It is of crucial importance to engage students in more physical activities, and drones are the perfect tool to get them outside and get them interested in outdoor activities. Working collaboratively with Mr. Lopreiato, we have been working with groups of students on building, flying, and maintaining the drones. Eventually the drones will be used during Physical Education classes to record students while doing sport-specific drills from different angles which can then be used for future demonstration purposes. The recordings can also be used to help students improve on areas where they are making errors and also be used to improve their athletic performance.

LMA Clinical Department

The students are getting excited for spring as it is nearing the end of March so we are continuing to build on that enthusiasm during Lifeskills. Students have been discussing ways to be “their best self” and so we have continued to discuss stress management skills and self care.

During our morning groups, clinical staff has reinforced our MOSAIC Social Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum and the concepts that the students are learning as well as how to best apply them. Students have been able to talk about stress management, compassion for self and showing gratitude in daily situations, and the importance of these concepts.

Lastly, following our school wide professional development on “The Attuned School” with Frank Picone LCSW on March 18, we have been able to explain the Zones of Regulation with our students. We had a discussion on what the zones are and how we can use these zones to express ourselves both verbally and non verbally. The students appeared quite interested with this activity and enjoyed identifying which zone they felt they fit into. As a group activity the students will be asked to design a Zones of Regulation board to display in the classroom in order to cultivate a positive culture within LMA.

New Point Specialty There are presently 14 students on the New Point Roster for the month of March.

March was celebrated with Women in History Month. Throughout the month the students studied the biographies of Clara Barton, Marie Curie, Ruby Bridges, Marian Anderson, Dr. Helen Taussig, Eleanor Roosevelt and N.J.'s own Dorothea Dix and Molly Pitcher. The students researched individual women and wrote short reports about each one. Scientists, writers and physicians were studied. Ms. Fort organized a trip to the MAYO on February 5th to see a musical about **Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad**.

On March 2, Attorney Robert Toll came to new Point and spoke to the residents about CyberBullying and the criminal process. He was an excellent speaker and the students had great questions for him.

Mr. Will Beatty, a former Super Bowl winning N.Y. Giant spoke to the residents about school opportunities and keeping out of trouble. He was interesting and signed autographs afterwards.

Ms. Fort organized a trip to the Mayo on March 19th, to see a one man play about the life of author Jack London. Ms. Fort class had covered his writings in class. The play was outstanding. Ms. Fort also got students to a performance of **Ellis Island**. We were discussing Immigration of the late 19th century. The play was very informative.

Lastly, Mr. Gillickson organized a trip a trip to Snug Harbor to view a rendition of **The Lion King**. The play was outstanding and we went for lunch afterwards.

SOCIAL ACTION CLUB- The Social Action Club worked the Westfield food Pantry on March 29th. The students took and prepared orders for clients.

Trinitas:

Students worked on individual assignments sent by their districts. However, materials that focused on St. Patrick's Day and Women's History Month were available for many grade levels. They learned the origin of Saint Patrick's Day, and viewed photographs of the Chicago River that runs green after hundreds of pounds of green dye is poured into it. Also, the water in the White House fountain is turned green. An article in Scholastic News related the story of how an American woman named Virginia d'Albert-Lake, who was living in France during World War II; put her life on the line to help guide soldiers to safety.

Since it is the beginning of spring, science lessons review that the movement of Earth around the sun and the tilt of Earth are the two reasons why we have seasons. On March 20th, the earth's axis is not tilted, and we have the vernal equinox, when daylight and darkness are equal.

CROSSROADS:

Enrollment as of March 22, 2019 Actual: 46 Changes: Entered: 1 Exited: 0	Referrals: 4 Intakes Scheduled: 3 Accepted: 1
Fire Drills: 3/26/19	Emergency Drills: 3/22/19

Recent Classroom Accomplishments

Allison Gebler's Classroom 102

One of March's thematic units focused on Read Across America and Saint Patrick's Day through various group activities, centers, and independent hands on learning experiences.

In the area of English Language Arts students completed a review of the letters learned this year by creating arts and crafts projects, selecting items from an array that begin with the specific letter, and practicing letter skills dependent on student specific modifications: pronouncing letter sounds, listing words that begin with the letter, matching the letter with an AAC device or touching the letter when presented.

In the area of Math students completed activities that highlighted visual perceptual skills: matching colors to develop a rainbow from torn pieces of paper, following measurements on a visual recipe to create Leprechaun snacks, and sequencing the numbers of the month on the calendar during Circle Time.

In the area of Science/Social Studies students completed multiple holiday related crafts and STEM activities during Speech and Makerspace Groups. Hands on experiences involving cooking, architectural planning and implementation for marble runs, and sensory fun with foam shamrocks were a big hit!

Students progressed in their individualized goals: Niall and Tanzania have increased the amount of time they are able to remain in group activities with their classmates. Alex is making huge improvements in his communication by using the Proloquo2Go app to complete full sentences to mand for his wants and needs. Kairo is expanding his ability to follow specific verbal direction through teacher led coloring activities.

Room 102's Star Student, Niall, accomplished multiple daily living habits: throwing away his trash, remaining seated while eating, acknowledging the need to use the bathroom nonverbally, and beginning to practice using a toothbrush with the help of his personal aide. Collaboration with his family has allowed for all of these skills to be practiced at home as well.

Room 102 has a new student this month, Jianna. The class will continue to work on maintaining their routines and skill sets as we adjust to their new classmate.

Consuelo Alzate's Classroom 103

It has been another exciting and rewarding month for our preschool class. Dilan, who started last month, has adjusted to our daily routine very rapidly.

In the area Social Studies and social play the children have learned about traditions and celebrations in other countries. The children enjoyed dressing up as Leprechauns and used their imagination to make believe they were living in Ireland many years ago.

In the area of English Language Art students are learning about the color, green. They enjoyed reading books, watching videos and used the smart board to learn about Saint Patrick's Day. Students also created crafts that were used to decorate the bulletin board and the classroom. During their Science lessons students

celebrated Dr. Seuss by making and testing green eggs and green pudding. They have also tried green apples and green grapes.

All children have demonstrated significant improvement in many areas. Dilan has adjusted very well to the preschool class and enjoys playing games with his classmates. Sebastian and Lyla continue to improve in the areas of social play and language development. Jose and Ezequiel continue PEC'S training and are now very successful at level 3.

Briana Gallo's Classroom 104

The focus of March is Saint Patrick's Day and Dr. Seuss. In the area of English Language Arts, students participated in reading interactive books written by Dr. Seuss. An arts and craft activity was coordinated with each book. In Mathematics, students are working on rote counting and patterns. They practiced by making rainbow patterns for St. Patrick's Day.

This month, the students are participating in daily OT Groups. Room 104's Star Student, George, has really taken a liking to this new routine. He loves to bounce on the ball, spin on the spinner, and do wall push-ups. It has been great seeing him lead the group.

Anna Garrison's Classroom 105

For the month of March, the class worked on several different thematic units, including Dr. Seuss. Students learned who Dr. Seuss was and read a book about his life. To celebrate his birthday, they did a craft and baked a birthday cake. Each day, the class picked a Dr. Seuss book and then completed an activity to match the story.

To celebrate St. Patrick's Day, the class participated in a treasure hunt around the school. The students had to listen to the clue and identify what school location was being described. After St. Patrick's Day, the students came back to find the classroom in disarray with a letter from our leprechaun that visited them. He messed up their classroom and left green footprints and some of his gold.

Room 105's star student this month is Juliana. She has shown great improvement and has mastered several steps and is starting new programs. She works really hard and tries her best every day.

Stephen Goham's Classroom, 106

Dr Seuss – Students celebrated Read Across America by reading Dr. Seuss books such as “The Cat in the Hat”, “Green Eggs and Ham”, “The Lorax”, “Oh, the Places You'll Go!”, “One Fish Two Fish Red Fish Blue Fish” and others. Children discussed instructional concepts such as the writing process, rhyming words, and creating illustrations. Students enjoyed decorating their classroom bulletin board with famous Seuss characters. Students also participated in St. Patrick's Day activities learning new vocabulary such as clover, luck, gold, shamrock, leprechaun, magical, harp, and many other concepts. Students completed worksheets involving open ended questions, reading comprehension, alphabetical order, problem solving, and map skills. Students also enjoyed engaging in a fun Lucky Charm cereal graphing activity where the students were challenged to sort, graph, and compare & contrast charts with their friends.

During Science lessons, students actively participated in a science experiment called “Walking Rainbow.” The students explored colored water transferring, or traveling, from one cup to another using a paper towel. The colored water travels up the paper towel by a process called capillary action. Capillary action is the ability of a liquid to flow upward, against gravity, in narrow spaces. This is the same thing that helps water climb from a plant's roots to the leaves in the treetops. By demonstrating this science experiment in the classroom, students were able to learn through a hands on experience and connect the experiment to the science process.

Lindsay DeNigris' Classroom 108

This month students are working on several different thematic units. They started the month by celebrating Dr. Seuss week. Every day was a different theme and both students and staff dressed up accordingly. This was a great idea for the whole school and we loved having a "spirit week". Each day they read a different Dr. Seuss book and did an activity or craft to match the daily book. After our Dr. Seuss unit, students learned about St. Patrick's Day. They read two adaptive books about things we can see on St. Patrick's Day and what leprechauns do. Another theme this month is "In Like A Lion, Out Like A Lamb". The class discussed the different types of weather we're having this month now that it's almost spring! After talking about the different weather, students will get to vote on which weather is their favorite. They will also categorize the different activities and clothing items we can wear while it is sunny, snowy, and rainy.

Middle School

March started with the celebration of Dr. Seuss' birthday and Read Across America. Students chose the book "Put Me in the Zoo" and decorated the classroom door bright yellow with colored spots on it. After reading the book, they noticed that the Spot Dog had hid all his spots in the school and went on a zoo animal scavenger hunt all through Crossroads School in order to find animals hidden under his spots. Students also made yellow spotted cookies, which they colored with turmeric and M&Ms. While enjoying the colorful spots from the story, they also conducted several color experiments, such as melting M&M colors or letting food colors sink to the bottom of a water glass in different temperatures.

All this color experimentation leads us into St. Patrick's Day. Students learned about Irish customs, the history of St. Patrick, built a leprechaun trap and had fun with rainbows. They made a giant tub of rainbow foam, made real rainbows with flashlights, mirrors and water and also explored how color travels and mixes on its own.

This March truly lived up to its expectations of coming in with a roar and going out like a lamb. In the beginning, students enjoyed some snowy weather and experimented with snow melting on the playground. They even built a tiny snowman. As March progressed, they continued working on our horticulture program. Students repotted the herbs which they had planted from seeds earlier and set up the cold frame outside in our new garden plot. They started planting some hardy seeds outside, such as spinach and kale and moved some of our herbs and tomatoes into the cold frames. The students are all enjoying the warmer weather and the opportunities to work outside noticeably improves their concentration and energy during regular academic instruction.

Occupational Therapy-

This month the OT groups focused on cooperative play by using board games and motor games such as the "Cat in the Hat I can do the" and scavenger hunts to promote student/staff communication and student/student interaction. A classroom sensory path was set up in room 104 to incorporate movement breaks and sensory motor input for all the students between instructional sessions. The path includes bouncing on the ball, jumping on the footpath, toe touches, spin disc and wall push-ups. The path is laminated and taped to the walls and floor for long wear and simple to follow to promote student independence. A Quinnipiac University OT student came in to tour the school and interview for an intern position in the Fall of 2019.

Parent Training

Crossroads School staff were proud to present a parent training opportunity to our families on March 21, 2019. Mrs. Christine Gottesmann and Danielle Cicalese (Board Certified Behavior Analysts) led the parent training on creating picture and activity schedules. Ms. Elaine Liggeri, our school social work assisted in organizing the event and Principal Reed Leibfried, actively participated as well. Parents submitted pictures that represented their children and specific tasks in which they participate at home. Parents and Crossroads Staff worked together to cut out the pictures, laminate the materials and create the individual student activity

schedules. Five parents were able to leave the professional development training with completed activity schedules that they can utilize at home. These schedules will assist the students in communicating with their families as well as diminish behaviors.

Professional Development

Professional Development was conducted at Crossroads School on Monday, March 18th, 2019. Implementing General Feedback into the Classroom Environment was the theme of our professional learning. Implementing general feedback is also our school wide professional development goal for the 2018-2019 school year. The administrative and behavior team in coordination with our SciP Committee, designed professional learning podcasts on three topics; the verbal behavior approach, challenging behavior and functional communication. The three podcasts were facilitated by Principal, Reed Leibfried, Supervisor of Instruction, Melissa McLaughlin, and Behaviorist, Christine Gottesmann. Each podcast group presented to our entire staff during our afternoon sessions. The discussions were meaningful, collaborative and effective.

Pre-School Disabled Classroom

Crossroads School participated in a student intake on Wednesday, March 20th with family, district personnel and a student from the Union Public School District. The acceptance of this student now gives us our sixth student in our Pre-School Disabled Program! Crossroads School would like to take this opportunity to thank Mrs. Terry Foppert, Superintendent of the Union County Educational Services Commission, Mr. Michael Kowalski, Assistant Superintendent of the Union County Educational Services Commission and the Union County Educational Services Commission Board of Education for their support for our Pre-School Program at Crossroads School.

HILLCREST SOUTH:

<p>Enrollment as of 3/27/19 Actual: 101 Changes: 8 Entered: 2 Exited: 5 (2 moved, 1 GED, 1 noncompliance with substance abuse policy, and 1 transfer) Suspensions: 3 (2 for peer assaults and 1 possession of a weapon)</p>	<p>Intakes Pending General Ed.: 4 Intakes Pending Sp. Ed.: 3</p>
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This month at Hillcrest Academy South Campus (HAS) Ms. Gronert, the shared School Counselor, has worked to review PARCC scores with the students and collaborated with Ms. Dattilo, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, to begin preparation for the administration of NJSLA. Ms. Gronert worked to plan a senior field trip to UCC with Ms. Gilchrist, School Social Worker, to ensure the seniors are prepared to attend Union County College (UCC) in the fall. The School Counselor also worked with UCC to plan to administer the ELA Accuplacer at HAS on 3/27/19. Ms. Gronert continued to monitor the progress of the credit retrieval classes and met with individual students who required guidance. Ms. Gronert and Mr. Balassone, the School Social Worker at the Westlake School, launched the first shared social skills group. Both students from HAS and Westlake benefited greatly from this first group session. Ms. Gronert and Mr. Balassone will continue to collaborate and plan lessons and activities for the upcoming groups. Tuesday’s School Spirit Days continued and students were eager to participate under the facilitation of Ms. Gilchrist. Additionally, the [HAS Instagram \(http://Instagram.com/ucesc_has\)](http://Instagram.com/ucesc_has) page is activated with students and staff is excited to participate. Please visit our page at your convenience.

March was Women's History Month and in recognition of this, students within the HAS Community Service Program (HASCSP) organized their third annual Women's History Awareness Day. Throughout the day, students orated famous events in American history that showcased woman’s accomplishments. Additionally, all students and staff watched the movie, *Hidden Figures*. This movie was a true account of the

extraordinary accomplishments of three African-American women that worked at NASA. At the conclusion of the movie, the Culinary Creations committee presented a tasting of multicultural dishes prepared by the students and inspired by the significant women in their lives.

HAS art students focused on painting and color theory. Students in Ms. Scheetz's classes completed a painting in watercolor then moved into 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 mixing color. 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. In Art History, the class focused on how color was important in art because it was a symbolic language. Colors set the tone of a work by evoking feelings and moods. Color schemes that Van Gogh used led to the expressive qualities of his work which often exaggerated the beauty of nature while Picasso's monochromatic works, gave the viewer a subdued, and sorrowful feeling.

Mr. Grez's classes started with the students who continued their in-depth studies of multiple scientific concepts. Environmental Science and Biology students completed projects on the parts of a cell and created "Theme Parks" based on analogies drawn between organelles and typical theme park attractions. Moving on from the parts of a cell, Biology students began to tackle the concept of heredity while Environmental Science students began to wrap their heads around the size and scale of the universe. Computer Science students began coding their own personal websites using HTML and associated tags.

This month in Forensic Science the classes finished anthropology and started mock crime scene investigations. Students reviewed how to conduct an eyewitness interview, crime scene search patterns, crime scene investigations, responsibilities of the first responder, recorder checklist, sketch artist checklist, photographers' checklist, evidence collector's checklist, and documents used during a crime scene. Students also reviewed the process of evidence collection. Students conducted mock interviews of eyewitnesses and started their sketches of the crime scene.

Ms. Duarte's units of study focused on personal career planning and the United States involvement in World War II. In Economics students used the Occupational Outlook Handbook database to explore various job options, their potential for growth in the future, and the education necessary for these careers. Students were able to learn about the relationships between growth rates within careers, level of education, and income. This information could be used as students think about their futures and explore various career opportunities. In USII students delved into WWII as they studied the causes of the war and the impact war brought on the home front. More specifically, students were able to study the way in which war mobilizes society. In contrast, students explored the darker sides of America's domestic policies by studying firsthand accounts of Japanese American treatment during the war. Thus, students saw the positives and negatives associated with the coming of war that can be extended to lessons still being learned today.

Ms. Wrzesinski'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. Sources included artwork, primary and secondary texts, and audio/video elements. Students were able to evaluate various events from the past and compare them with events in the present by reading and analyzing standard aligned current event informational texts as a means of better preparing them to develop and implement thoughtful solutions to personal, community, and societal issues of the present and future. U.S. History I students analyzed topics related to Manifest Destiny, Andrew Jackson, Indian Removal Act, Trail of Tears and Sectionalism. U.S. History II students analyzed the Great Depression, New Deal Programs, causes of WWII, as well as the rise of Nazism, Hitler, and Pearl Harbor. In Modern World History students analyzed primary and secondary

documents related to Imperialism, specifically, African Imperialism, and the scramble for Africa and the Boer Wars. This was followed by the British Imperialism of India and the Sepoy Rebellion.

Mr. Sobieniak's students in Algebra II focused on learning properties of rational functions. They also learned how to simplify rational expressions and to solve rational equations. Students in Probability and Statistics classes learned more about probability, conditional probability and mutually exclusive and independent events. They also learned to solve probability problems by drawing Venn diagrams. Students investigated many real life application problems. The students in Success Seminar Math Strategy class utilized Khan Academy to improve their algebraic skills. Students of all mathematics classes used Khan Academy to improve their algebraic skills on Fridays.

Ms. Ferrari's students in Algebra worked diligently on a unit on the Laws of Exponents. They completed on average three worksheets daily. Each worksheet was valued as one point towards their total of three points for their classroom participation grade. They began with a Do Now that was a real-life word problem. The second worksheet was the day's lesson in which several examples were modeled for the students. Lastly, the students completed practice problems about the day's lesson. The Do Now worksheets, daily lesson worksheets, and practice worksheets came directly from the concepts listed on the Consensus Map. This was the sixth unit that the students have worked on. Students also began the NJSLA practice standardized tests. This past week the students enjoyed Girl Scout cookies as a product at the HAS School Store in addition to the usual items for sale.

Ms. Cioffi's English lessons continued practicing the content and skills from the unit two English curriculum by continuing their reading of nonfiction and informational texts. During the month of March students learned about various ways to structure a text and analyzed the way authors chose to organize and structure their ideas. Classes learned how to analyze nonfiction and informational texts by creating PAPA squares where students identified and analyzed the author's Purpose, Argument, Persona, and Audience. For the remainder of the month, students analyzed and read historical documents along with other supplemental texts. Students used their analysis of these texts and wrote an essay in which they outlined and made comparisons to a historical document and a poem that shared similar messages to its audience.

In commemoration of Women's History Month, students in Ms. Holden's class completed a webquest on famous women. In addition, students enjoyed reading and analyzing the poem *Phenomenal Woman* by Maya Angelou and an excerpt from Liz Murray's book *From Homeless to Harvard*. Students also wrote about a woman who had most influenced their life. Students engaged in a lively debate about why there wasn't a Men's History Month. Students also worked on analyzing United States documents such as *The Gettysburg Address* and John F. Kennedy's Inaugural Address. Students continued to work on their revising and editing skills.

Ms. Rubin, the School Nurse and Health education teacher, assisted with daily student entry and exit procedures. The School Nurse made attendance calls to all of the absent students' parents each day. She has been compiling attendance letters for students with excessive absences. When the Secretary was absent, the Nurse input the absentees into PowerSchool. The Nurse saw an average of 17-20 students for health concerns each day. There have been a number of new students who started at HAS and she attempted to obtain current health information from the sending Elizabeth Academies. In addition, the Nurse reviewed all of the health records in preparation for a Westfield Health Department audit. The Nurse accompanied the school trips to the Teen Arts Festival and the Newark Museum. The students had a great experience at both. Ms. Rubin and Ms. Ferrari ran the School Store a few times each month during lunch periods. The students were excited each time the store was available. The attendance incentive for the school store has been very successful. The students receive credit to purchase items for each full week they attend school. In Health class, the students had lessons about the Nervous System and the Brain. Lessons will start on CPR training next month.

The students in Mr. Barone’s Physical Education classes continued with their unit on volleyball. Students have moved from modified games which focused on specific skills into full game play. The games were exciting and the students enjoyed the competition between one another. When in the Fitness Center, students participated in ping-pong tournaments as well as billiards tournaments. In Health classes that followed a unit on the muscular system, the students were introduced to a unit on the nervous system. The students learned how messages were sent throughout the body and also discussed some potential problems that may affect the nervous system such as meningitis, cerebral palsy, and something as simple or common as a headache.

HILLCREST/NORTH:

<p>Enrollment as of: 3/21/19 Actual: 96 Changes: Entered: 4 Exited: 2</p>	<p>Referrals : 5 Drills: Fire Drill: 2/25/19 Lockdown: 3/21/19</p>
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The month of March focused on a person’s rights in Social Studies. Students focused on what people “deserve”. We as a class continued to improve in writing and research specifically using internet capabilities. Students were able to work upon these skills by looking at how people created the Constitution and Bill of Rights. These two concepts led students to question how and why people act the way they do. Students did this by breaking down primary source documents, researching expert opinions, discussing and debating key topics and synthesizing the information in a final assignment.

Also, in the month of March, students in history classes at Hillcrest Academy North examined the horrible impact of genocide around the world. First, students learned the eight stages of genocide, as defined by the US Department of State in 1996. Students applied these stages to atrocities committed throughout modern history. Images and first-person accounts of the Rwandan Genocide of 1994 were analyzed and used to identify each “stage.” Students then turned their research to the Holocaust, studying the classification, dehumanization, and attempted extermination of Jewish people by the Nazis. This study of the Holocaust will continue into April.

In English, students learned about credible sources. They are learning about how easy it is to read or watch news that is not credible, and how prevalent that non-credible information is. Students are learning how to evaluate sources. Students are picking a topic for an argument essay and will research their topic. They will need to find sources that not only provide the information they are looking for, but also which are credible. Students will create a thesis, make a claim, find evidence to support that claim, and provide analysis.

Also, in English, students continued to explore the essential question of “How can arguments be won?” Students completed writings explaining the connection between two pieces such as songs, poems, and stories. Students have been working on creating a claim connecting the two pieces, citing evidence from multiple sources to support their claim, and explaining each piece of evidence using thorough analysis. Students are currently starting to analyze historical documents such as The Declaration of Independence, “The Gettysburg Address,” and “I Have a Dream” speech. Students will write argumentative writing pieces using historical documents.

In Creative Writing, students are starting each class writing a story for ten minutes. We are continuing the short story unit. Students wrote short stories focusing on plot and pacing. They drew a storyboard of a story that needed to have certain elements in it, and then they wrote the story using more detail and pacing.

In Spanish, the Spanish learners studied how to identify the Spanish verb structure for the present tense. They started writing meaningful positive and negative statements. Now students are able to write complete paragraphs in the target language. They identified Spanish question words and used them to ask and answer questions. They also performed a variety of conversations. They are creating an "All About Me" poster in which they are using learned vocabulary and language structure to write a full page composition in Spanish. Spanish Speakers worked on completing a reading comprehension story book. They also interpreted 2-3 stories from English to Spanish. They will create a story timeline to present it to class.

Mrs. Machado started the month of March in Algebra finding slopes within equations in all different forms, graphs, tables and real world rate of changes. Students understood that using multiple representations to prove rate of change was a way to compare and make predictions within variable relationships. Students analyzed information and combined it with theorems and definitions that they learned throughout the unit to support statements and reasons. Building their logic and reasoning skills are the foundation of this course.

Algebra 2 students are studying the laws of exponents. Students collaborate and tackle real-life decisions using the graphing method within systems of linear inequalities.

Geometry students have completed the unit on centers of triangles. By folding paper triangles they were able to create concurrent lines from angle bisectors, perpendicular bisectors and medians to find different centers of a triangle. They measured the various lengths regardless of their original shape and deduced a conclusion about them. We also celebrated Pi Day by estimating and measuring various circles around the room.

Students in Probability and Statistics have just completed the unit on standard deviation and normal distribution. They created a model of the bell curve with the percent values as a guide for analyzing distributions. Some examples of the applications included SAT scores, life expectancy of tires, shoe sizes and heights of young men.

In honor of women's history month, students practiced outlining information about famous women mathematicians. The daily outline had to include the background, education and accomplishments of each woman. The celebration of Pi Day included expanding the values of Pi and creating a banner in the hall to demonstrate that it has no pattern and no end. Students found areas of circles and shapes that had circles and rectangles such as a basketball court. They created circle designs using repetitive order. They analyzed the ratio of the areas of circles to the radius and came up with a general rule.

Students in Mr. Reichman's chemistry classes are learning about the history of atomic models over the last two and a half millennia. They are currently working on using technology resources to complete an electronic presentation on the timeline of experiments and observations that led to the revolutionary models of the atom that were developed during this time period. They are working on this project in small groups as an exercise in practicing their Collaboration Skills, which is our SELCD focus this month. They will also soon be working in pairs to investigate inter- and intra-molecular forces using computer simulations provided by the PhET website hosted by the University of Colorado.

In Health class, the students continue the substance abuse unit. This month methamphetamine, cocaine, the opioids, medications such as Zanax and anabolic steroids were covered. The students learned about what exactly the substances are, how they affect the brain and body, short term and long term affects and treatment options. The students viewed a CNN special report about the NFL player Aaron Hernandez who was a known PCP abuser and how this drug could have possibly contributed to the devastating decisions he made. Students continue to work toward their fitness goals in PE. The students have worked on a unit in basketball and start their class with stretches and warm-ups.

This month at Hillcrest Academy North the school counselor worked with Mr. Marquet and students to review their PARCC scores from last year and prepare them for the NJSLA coming up. In addition, Ms. Gronert worked with Ms. Dattilo to begin preparation for the NJSLA. Ms. Gronert continued to monitor

credit retrieval closely to ensure each student is on track, especially the seniors who are expected to graduate in 2019. The school counselor also collaborated with Union County College and the social worker to plan senior trips to UCC and schedule the English portion of the Accuplacer at HAN. The ELA Accuplacer was administered to the students at HAN. Ms. Gronert and Ms. Goldenberg worked to administer the mid-year Success Seminar survey to the students in the Success Seminar/ Credit Retrieval classes and will begin to analyze the data.

The Social Worker continues to facilitate advocate meetings every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday mornings from 8:20 - 8:30 to discuss student progress and concerns and update attendance for all students in the document weekly. She has worked with multiple seniors on completing financial aid documents for next year and has communicated with parents to identify concerns from second marking period and scheduled meetings to discuss ways these students can improve their performance.

HAN had their last HEART grant session of the year. Diane Michaels, an extremely talented harpist played for about 15 of our students for a 45 minute session. It was a wonderful year of music at HAN!

NONPUBLIC:

Nonpublic Department Teachers, Speech Therapists, Nurses and Child Study Team members continue to provide services at 47 of 53 nonpublic schools in the following districts: Berkeley Heights, Clark, Cranford, Elizabeth, Hillside, Kenilworth New Providence, Plainfield, Roselle, Scotch Plains, Springfield, Summit, Union and Westfield.

Nonpublic Teachers participated in training based on *Teach Like a Pirate* titled Engage and Empower presented by Geryl Gerhart. This workshop reminded teachers that as an instructor they need to be who their students need them to be. The workshop also reviewed various learning strategies. Nonpublic teachers and speech therapist participated in a hands-on presentation on PLAAFP writing and writing compliant goals/objectives.

Additionally, 192/193 billing was completed for the month of March.

TRANSITION SERVICES:

Work Readiness Academy Individual Student Enrollments: 12

Project SEARCH-Overlook Medical Center Enrollment: 9

Westlake School (Job Academy): 12

Lamberts Mill Academy (Job Academy): 5

Sub-Contracted SLE Programs with UC School Districts: 3 (Plainfield, Elizabeth, and Summit)

Students in the **Work Readiness Academy** have successfully rotated into their second half of the year 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:

Mock Interview #2: The students participated in Mock Interview #2 where they had to dress appropriately for an interview, bring a copy of their resume to offer it to the interviewer, and answer 7 common interview questions while using keywords to help facilitate more eye contact.

Health Class-Personal Choices (Changing your appearance and Nutrients our bodies need): The students learned the various ways one can change their appearance, and what nutrients our bodies need

Completion of Resume: The students completed their resumes. They learned how to be clear and concise when creating a profile/summary identifying their work experience and personal interests. The students are ready to actively participate in a job search.

Listening and Not Overstating Skills: Through the use of James Stanfield videos and class discussions, the students learned various reasons why you need to listen more than talk, why you don't say you know how to do something when you don't, and when you don't know how to do something ask for help.

Self-Awareness: Students participated in various assessments and activities to heighten their self-awareness and identify what will help them succeed.

Other Highlights:

Cranford Strength and Fitness Club: Students identified the muscles being used and logged their workouts which consist of completing 4 different exercises (12 reps, 2 sets each) then participating in a cardio workout on treadmills, ellipticals, stair steppers, and stationary bikes.

Field Trips:

Scotch Plains-Fanwood YMCA: Students visited the Scotch Plains-Fanwood YMCA where they were exposed to the various programs that the YMCA has to offer and the different opportunities for employment available.

Skills Group - Mondays:

During the month of March, students finished our formal unit on identification of stresses that pertain to work, home and community and coping skill development. This work formally culminated in the development of Coping Cards (4-6 each) that were individualized for each student. Students now carry their Coping Cards with them at all times. Each student's set of Coping Cards are currently in a separate plastic ID holder and attached to their personal lanyards alongside their ID's.

We continue to address the topic of anxiety and how it relates to stress with coping skills on an ongoing basis. We also added a Monday through Friday daily tracker with a mood, coping skill, and a reflection component. We have now transitioned into Social Skills Training with our first class called, The Question Web, where students learned how to converse by taking turns questioning each another about a topic, using a ball of yarn.

Life Skills - Enrichment:

During our Friday, Enrichment-Life Skills we continue to work on every day, practical independent living skills as they pertain to work, home, and in the community. WRA students and Project Search students (on March 5th) individually researched a specific aspect of personal safety; walking, in parking lots, with mass transit, the internet, on a bicycle, or when interacting with law enforcement, or an Uber-Lyft. They then developed a WRA Personal Safety Brochure which contains highlights of how to remain as safe as possible when in one of the given situations.

Other topics addressed during the Enrichment class included, learning to recognize the symptoms of a STROKE (FAST) or Heart Attack, and the most effective responses, i.e. call 911. They also learned how to deal with personal emergencies such as being lost and how to problem solve in difficult situations. We also discussed the value of carrying an I-Wallet Card or Personal Emergency Information Sheet on their person to assist them in times of high anxiety or stress.

Lastly, we utilized resources from MyPlate.org to learn about healthy eating and healthy portions using the main food groups. The students learned easy healthy snack recipes and the meaning of Gluten Free. They

very much enjoyed tasting the various options available to them from the grocery store which are gluten free, fat free, as well as various healthy food choices covering all food groups on a mock-up of the MyPlate.

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. Beginning in March, the nine interns started their final internship rotations.

For the 3rd rotation, students are participating in experiences with the following departments:

Environmental Services

Overlook Foundation

Engineering

Food Services-Overlook Cafeteria

Patient Transport

Dietary & Nutrition

Nursing Education

Information Technology

Instructional topics covered in the classroom this month included:

Effective Communication: Self-talk is usually characterized by negative statements that occur both within oneself and publicly. In order to disregard the negative, and practice the positive, it is important that we first recognize all the things we hear and say. Are we applying THINK to our own thoughts? Students learned to pay attention to negative comments that keep them from succeeding and practiced using more powerful language.

Constructive Criticism: Offering frequent and meaningful feedback can create effective and engaging learning experiences. Often feedback is about people wanting you to change what you do in order to result in a better outcome. Students learned that being able to accept feedback is just as important as giving it.

Maintaining a Job:

Students considered the following question: How can taking responsibility for your actions at work show that you are accountable and reliable?

- Being accountable for your actions means taking responsibility for them, whether the actions are positive or negative. After all, your actions belong to you.
- Being accountable and reliable shows that you are a mature person, worthy of trust and respect.

Financial Literacy:

Students learned that it is important to know how to read their pay stubs and understand the difference between gross pay and net pay. Through hands on reading and practice looking at sample pay stubs, students were able to identify deductions such as taxes, social security, union dues, and more.

Employment Planning Meetings:

The students, their families, and the PS team (DVR counselor, Job Developer, Skills Trainer, and Instructor) met to exchange information regarding internships, skill acquisition, and the job search process. We also discussed goals related to post graduation.

Applications for the 2019-20 Project SEARCH program are now being accepted. The application deadline is April 12th. Applications are available by visiting the project search website at www.projectsearch-unioncounty-nj.org or contacting Mr. Josh Bornstein at 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.

TECHNOLOGY:

The IT Department is working with Administration to improve our backup environment. There are several avenues we are looking down but the IT Department has discovered a method that will avoid costly cloud hosting expenses but maintain the security of cloud services in the event of a disaster. Since we are in the early planning stages it is difficult to provide an estimated time of implementation however we predict that a solution will be in place by the end of the summer break.

Our phone systems are completely cut over to Comcast phone services. This was a lengthy and convoluted process but we now have detailed maps to our phone infrastructure and are fully educated on our systems and the porting process.

Our Antivirus management system Symantec is undergoing a complete upgrade to the 14.2 MP1 (Build 1031) release. This will update all of our workstations and servers to the latest protection technology. We expect to have the new infrastructure completed by May and all clients deployed throughout the summer.

This month our helpdesk system Freshdesk was attacked by a Russian hacker group. It only took 15 minutes to stop a spam outbreak resulting in over 1000 bogus tickets. We increased security measures within the system and implemented CAPTCHA technology to reduce our vulnerability.

We have upgraded our Sonicwall firewall to an NSA 2650 with 1gb/1gb LAN/WAN throughput capability. These speeds future-proof our main portal to the internet. It also utilizes the most up to date security protocols with cutting edge content filtering abilities. This allows us to better safeguard our students' and staff's personal data housed in our LAN as well as improves our ability to protect our students from unsafe internet sites.

TRANSPORTATION:

On March 18th and 19th, 2019, the Motor Vehicle Commission conducted an on-site inspection of the Commission's fleet. Of the twenty-two vehicles in the fleet, all passed inspection. The fleet is set for another six months of service until the next scheduled inspection in September.

An updated estimate of total yearly transportation costs will be mailed to all participating districts on April 15, 2019. Since billing for services rendered is done on a monthly basis and there have been many changes since the last report was sent, this report is needed by the districts for budget planning and preparation, especially with the end of the school year approaching.

The cut-off date for the submission of summer school transportation applications is April 26, 2019. Reminder letters were sent to all participating districts on April 1, 2019.

The Transportation office is finishing one of its busiest years ever. Bidding competition amongst the bus companies is sparse. This drives prices higher; however, we continue to provide the most cost-effective services possible to our participating districts. However, the number of requests and hence the number of

routes operating remain very high. The department has exceeded a total special education and vocational school transportation route count in excess of 600 for the seventh year in a row, a route count in excess of 700 routes for the fourth year in a row, and is on track to exceed a route count of 800 for the second year in a row.

cc: Eric Larson, Business Administrator/Board Secretary