



Union County Educational Services Commission

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Report of the Superintendent to the Board of Directors October 2, 2019

WESTLAKE

Enrollment as of September 19, 2019 Actual: 69 Changes: Entered: 0 Exited: 1	Referrals: 2 Intakes Scheduled: 2 Accepted: 0
Fire Drills: September 13, 2019	Emergency Drills: Evacuation – Off site
Suspensions: 0	September 16, 2019

At Westlake School, September is a busy month and students are happy to be back to school and in a daily routine. We are beginning to schedule many IEP meetings, preplanning meetings and discuss plans for writing student yearly goals and objectives. We currently have two intakes scheduled in the next week and continue to increase our enrollment.

Westlake School's professional development goal for 2019-2020 is to focus on the social/emotional skills and strategies and Community Based Instruction. The importance of generalizing skills into the Community and working with students on these skills will better prepare students for future work opportunities.

Language Arts

Mrs. Shaw's students have started with an HIB lesson to have students learn and further discuss how to identify bullying and how to stand up to it safely. New classroom procedures were introduced to enhance this lesson. The rules we discussed include respecting friends, teachers, and school property, being kind to others, never trying to upset or hurt others and keeping calm to make the right choice. Mrs. Porchetta's class is reviewing social stories about personal space and keeping hands to yourself. Each student modeled what this would look like and they have practiced this throughout the school day.

Math

In math, Mrs. Convery's students have begun the year by working on calculator and abacus skills as well as graphing and the value of money. This will assist students when generalizing their math skills during upcoming Community Based Instruction trips.

Students in Mrs. Fernandez's class are working on counting, creating sets of numbers, calendar skills, and identifying numbers. Students have been using these skills to make connections to their environments such

as making pairs in the game Go Fish and counting money. Individually students have continued working on their specific programs. These include 1:1 correspondence, touch math, money skills, matching and sorting.

Science

The students are very excited to start a Science unit on the sun, moon and planets using our FOSS science kit in Mr. Carten's classroom. Students also participated in an interactive Smart board lesson on different types of energy and matter. The lesson is geared towards all different levels. Other classrooms are learning about their senses and how they will use them to explore their environment starting with a tree study where they will track trees and study how they change with the seasons.

Social Studies

Students are studying how to harvest cranberries, as well as the life cycle of the pumpkin from seed to jack-o lantern. They are also discussing the seasons and how the changes affect our traditions and resources. The students are practicing sequencing and chronological order and reviewing the roles of community helpers.

Physical Education

Kicking off the new school year in Physical Education students are currently taking part in a fitness unit. By participating in an obstacle course the students will develop fine and gross motor skills. Students are working on various skills including hopping, skipping, jumping, walking, jogging, crawling and bear crawling. Each exercise will help develop strength, flexibility and visual perceptual skills. In addition, by learning these new specific terminologies and ever-changing fitness exercises students become more active, healthy and independent throughout their life.

Health

In Health classes, students are going to understand how our bodies function, how to be safe in and out of the school and in the workplace as well as, understanding the need for healthy hygiene and the benefits of good personal hygiene. This school year, students will take part in various activities that allow them to understand and practice these habits. We are going to piece the body together to understand the importance of practicing good hygiene habits and being active and healthy. We just introduced the students to 'Kahoot' an online game that allows Mr. Moss to assess each student in a class wide game.

Vocational

Sign Making/Engraving machine: Students are learning how to make custom name plates and have begun working on designing and carving the plates to fill school orders. Students enjoy this skill and look forward to learning additional work-related tasks.

School Store: Students will continue to work in the school store and practice work related skills associated with shopping. Students will experience many shopping trips during community based instruction and will be able to work on money skills, purchasing items, finding item locations within a store and following a shopping list. Generalizing skills from the Westlake school store to the community is an intricate step in independence for most students.

The students have begun work in the Retail Center on fall items. They have made ribbons, a special birthday chocolate bar order, and have already made several batches of dog biscuits. Students sold two batches to the staff who were eager to purchase them as their dogs have had no new peanut butter treats all

summer. Students also completed a double order to donate to an animal adoption day held by a local pet store.

Print Shop: September is a time for students to begin to learn how the Print Shop works and students are exploring the jobs associated with the shop (copying, collating, filing, laminating and more). So far, they have completed laminating jobs for classroom teachers and are beginning to receive jobs from the main office (copying and mail delivery).

Sweet Shoppe: The candy business has begun with two orders, one for a 3 year old birthday and the other for a 10 year old birthday. CandyLand Crafts in Raritan has requested candy that they can sell in their store. The first group of Halloween candy was delivered on 9/14/19. The owner has requested that we make pink ribbon candy for breast cancer and he will donate 50 cents for every candy he sells. Wagner Farm Arboretum just emailed Mrs. Palmer on 9/16/19 and to request an order of candy and breads for their Brite Nites event in October.

Jewelry: Students are working on designing and making earrings as well as matching and extending patterns through beading. The students will be displaying the jewelry they make for sale in our school store.

Décor Dream Shop: The DécorDream Shop will continue to make beautifully created home décor signs to sell. Students continue to sand, paint and stencil signs to sell during their sales and CBI trips. These skills have increased student confidence in themselves and their abilities to contribute in a productive way.

Job Academy

The 2019/2020 Structured Learning Experience (SLE) sessions are planned to start the first week in October. Fifteen new students were identified for participation in the Job Academy this year. With our 7 existing students from last year, we now have a total of 22 students participating in the Westlake School Job Academy for this school year.

Our students made phenomenal progress during the last school year and the 2019 ESY session. Two students were assigned to ShopRite for the first time during the ESY session and did a phenomenal job. They are excited about continuing their experience at ShopRite this school year. All returning Job Academy students will be challenged to build on the successes they earned last year. Students are required to use the goals they set for themselves based on their self-assessments and assessments from their work-site mentors. Focusing on identified areas of weakness will support continued growth and improvement in the students' employability skills.

Art

These first few weeks of art have been spent organizing the art room, sorting supplies, and getting to know the students. Students have started to celebrate "International Dot Day" in which we are making drawings and paintings inspired by the author and illustrator Peter H. Reynolds. They will continue to use oil pastels, watercolors, and dot paints to explore our creativity. They will celebrate each student's individuality and expression as he or she is inspired to "make a mark".

Therapies

Speech

Over the past several weeks, the speech department has set up our schedules, read student files, reviewed paperwork of new students and created new data sheets for the school year. This year, the therapists will work cooperatively with teachers in utilizing the push-in model to work on functional skills both in the classroom and out in the community. We have also been working to set up/modify students AAC devices and train classroom staff how to functionally use them across settings. ADL groups have targeted functional skills such as following directions as they pertain to their immediate environment by participating in a scavenger hunt as well as following a recipe to make cereal. We have also researched various professional development opportunities for the upcoming school year related to relevant topics regarding our student population. We look forward to an excellent school year filled with positivity and student successes.

Physical Therapy

Currently we have two physical therapists working at Westlake School. One therapist is there three days a week and one is there one day a week. We have 22 students receiving physical therapy with a total of

30 individual sessions, 2 groups and 2 quarterly consultations.

This month we have created our schedules for the year, set-up our motor room for treatment and began writing goals for our new students. We have attended all required professional development from our district including a Safety Care recertification course.

We have begun taking baseline data on our students' IEP goals to monitor their status post summer vacation. Overall our students are adapting well back into PT and we are looking forward to a great year ahead.

Occupational Therapy

Currently we have 3 occupational therapists working at Westlake (2 full time OT's, 1 part time OT Wednesday). They are informally assessing all OT students and developing goals and objectives for upcoming IEP's. The therapists have met with several of the teachers to address the sensory needs of the students, provide sensory strategies and review equipment needs. Along with the speech therapists, they have developed the curriculum for the ADL Support Group.

The Life Skills classes have begun with Mrs. Pajewski's, Mrs. Porchetta's and Mrs. Attlesey's classes in the newly upgraded apartment. So far, the students have completed a scavenger hunt to familiarize them with the new apartment and prepared a simple cold breakfast. 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

Presently, social worker's combined caseloads totaling 69 students require sustained vigilance in order to meet IEP requirements as well as meet the diverse social, emotional and behavioral needs of all students. The start of the school year utilized social workers to contact families to obtain information for an assortment of time sensitive paperwork, i.e. lunch forms, trip permissions, and releases. The Social

Workers also assist with bus transportation issues impacting attendance as well as design and implement fluctuating daily schedules and emergent psycho/social needs.

To date, hallway duty, lunch coverage, Preplanning and IEP meetings, individual and group counseling schedules, Administrative, Teacher, Department meetings, Psychiatric Team meetings, DCF, ABS and School Safety, along with HIB and anti-bullying activities have been put into motion. Daily crisis calls are answered as students adjust to change. Unwavering support is provided whenever needed to quell escalation and provide constructive council.

The “Zones of Regulation”, a curriculum designed to foster self-regulation and emotional control, was successfully piloted during ESY and will continue to be implemented in the classrooms. Most teachers, unlike students, are learning for the first time having not worked during the ESY program. Preparation is required to provide students with these individually designed tools. It is paramount for success that staff members utilize the zone concept when speaking with students to ensure a unified message.

A bulletin board, under construction, will identify the emotional zones. More training on the “SCERTS” model is required to better meet the needs of students that require a more individually tailored approach to learning about emotional connections.

A graduate bulletin board near the school entrance is also underway serving to highlight nine students anticipating their diploma in June 2020. The transition needs of these students are diverse, require a plan, and many hours of collaborative efforts on the part of the social worker, with parents, CST members, and support agencies such as DDD, to meet numerous State requirements to be eligible for a DDD funded Over 21 program. The majority of Westlake graduates will require some form of support for the rest of their adult lives. Parents are often in need of great support to navigate through the application process for state funding for Over 21 programs.

Mr. Balassone has been working with families on issues relating to bussing, lunch forms, iPad concerns, Perform Care, and much more. He met with Ron Wasserman from DDD and sat in as he administered the NJ Cat with one of our students.

Counseling sessions have begun with a caseload which includes 15 students with individual counseling and a range of groups covering topics such as teenage issues, social and emotional issues and social skills. Students were excited to resume their work together with Mr. Balassone and have begun by discussing new issues that came up over the summer as well as discussing potential goals for this year.

This September, Mr. Balassone and Mrs. Tantillo did a site visit to the brand new facility- Lifetown, which is a new program that opened in Livingston catering to special needs students. The facility offered many opportunities that would benefit some of our students. The building includes a mini town composed of stores, a movie theatre, laundromat, sensory rooms, an art room, water play, a pool and many other amazing activities that encompasses Community Based Instruction. We are looking into possibilities for field trips for some of our classes this year.

In the coming days and weeks we will revisit some of our other programs such as pet therapy, Boy Scouts, and the Shared social group with Hillcrest South students. We are looking forward to a busy and productive year.

Nurse

This month started with 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 at the health office for the new school year. Medications and doctors' notes/orders sent to the health office were received and organized accordingly.

The students confidential medical/health information, food allergies and diet restrictions, and medications were updated with new information from both the students' parents/guardians and physicians/specialists for the new 2019 – 2020 academic year and distributed to certified staff for reference during the school hours as needed.

The students diagnosed with diabetes receive ongoing care and management at the health office in accordance with their prescribed diabetes management regimen. Families are notified by phone and/or in writing whenever blood sugar readings indicate hypo/hyperglycemia and, prescribed management order followed accordingly.

The evacuation go bag and supplies at the health office were updated and the expired supplies were replaced with new ones. Also, students' information in the go bag was updated in preparation for the off-site evacuation and upcoming school year.

Behaviorist

September began with Safety-Care full day training for staff, including recertification. Mrs. Salvatore updated Commission & Safety-Care websites to ensure all staff is up to date on crisis training.

Data input, graphing and review has begun this school year, with behaviorists beginning to sort out and complete these tasks from summer data collected.

Crisis calls are at the forefront since students returned to school this month, along with the first team meeting of the school year with consulting psychiatrist Amy Borg-Glickman. Behaviorists met with Ms. Glickman after the meeting rather than during the allotted time, to maximize the behaviorists' needed assistance and consultation in classrooms. A behaviorist has met for first time with administrators and new RBT Karly Barreto. We are excited to work with Karly this year.

Several restraints have been needed due to inconsistency with behavior as well as aggression and elopement attempts. The behaviorists have worked with these students outside of the classroom to assess their needs. The past two days have included working in the Zen Den on calming strategies, as safety could not be maintained within the classroom.

Behaviorists have been speaking with each teacher to ensure that all students have the necessary behavioral visuals (e.g. token boards) along with data sheets and that the data sheet implementation has begun. This is now complete with most teachers/students.

New students' assessments, specifically with attention paid to behavior impeding their educational programs, have been ongoing. A large number of IEPs are due shortly which will need the behaviorists to assess and possibly implement BIPs. In addition, some returning students also have IEPs and updated BIPs due this month. As we have one five day and one three-day behaviorist at present time, we are prioritizing by due dates as well as crisis needs for each class. The RBT has been instrumental in working with a

behavioral student since school started on September 5th. She is now fading her work with this student to begin working with the behaviorists and assessing student and classroom needs.

Finally, ongoing consulting, student observation, strategy revisions and training has been ongoing for students who have presented with challenging behaviors and or struggling academically. The behaviorists have observed, met with teachers and therapists and begun to train new 1:1 and classroom paraprofessionals.

Upcoming Events!

Back to School Night – Thursday, September 26, 2019

Westlake Mission Statement

Westlake School is dedicated to providing a safe, nurturing, positive environment by emphasizing high expectations for all students, fostering independence, encouraging confidence and a collaborative commitment to functional academic excellence.

LAMBERTS MILL ACADEMY

<p>As of Sept 2019 LMA Actual: 46 LMA District - Non-NP: 42 NP Specialty at LMA: 4</p> <p>Changes: <u>10</u> Entered: <u>1</u> (Non-NP) <u>4</u> NP Pending: <u>__</u> Exited: <u>5</u> (non-NP) <u>0</u> (NP)</p> <p>Trinitas Hospital : Bedside Instruction: 32 (inpatient)Day Program: 36 Approved-Agreement signed: 19 Classified: 12 Regular Ed: 7</p>	<p>Fire Alarms: 0 Fire Drills: 1 September Fire Drill on 9/13/19</p> <p>Security Drills: 1 September 16, 2019 - Evacuation drill</p>
<p>Referrals in September: 4 Intakes Scheduled: 4 Completed: 2 Acceptance Letter Sent: 2 Sending District Accepted LMA placement: 1 Placement Pending : 1</p>	<p>Suspension out of school: 2 In School Suspension: 0 HIB: 0</p>

Administration

Lamberts Mill Academy started off the school year with ten new students as well as new staff. We are happy to introduce Ms. Caputo, the art teacher, who will work with LMA students every Friday, as well as Ms. Kodack, the resource teacher, who will teach students in crisis. Ms. Hyman, the speech therapist started with LMA on September 7th, and will provide speech therapy to nine students. Additionally, we look forward to welcoming two new paraprofessionals next week into our school family. We are happy to have everyone here and looking towards a productive school year.

To start off the year, we invited all students and families to a Back to School night on September 12th. Ten families came to the event. Our families traveled from 5 counties to visit the school and meet the faculty and staff. Each family received a school schedule that their student follows for the day and was able to go to each classroom for at least 8 minutes to converse with teachers and paraprofessionals. During their lunch

periods, refreshments were served while facilitating further conversation about the programs offered at LMA.

The staff have been working diligently to provide opportunities for students outside of their classrooms. Field trips, electives, and mini specials will begin Friday, September 27th.

The staff and administrators have been preparing for our transition to a new principal. Mr. Jusino, our current principal, will be with us through September 30th. He has ensured that LMA is in good operational order for the new principal. The families have a strong relationship with the staff. Networking and marketing has increased with the sending districts. Our new Middle School classes have solid enrollment. The Drone Program has taken off! The Friday Electives have been scheduled around a ½ day schedule. We have been orientating the new staff members to understand and implement the vision and mission of LMA. Stability has been maintained and we are very proud of the results.

We would like to thank Mr. Jusino for his commitment, effort and genuine desire to move the school to the next level. His hard work, passion and unwavering belief in his students truly made a difference in their lives.

Academics

Middle School

Ms. Falconer

This month, the students introduced themselves and got to know each other. Classroom rules and routines were established. Assessments have also been completed to determine the students' present levels of functioning.

Students started their journey into the world of Chemistry, where they have been looking at matter and its composition. Students also started to work on problem solving in Computer Science. We reviewed the problem-solving process and ways to approach a variety of problems. We also have been focusing on specific strategies to define problems more precisely.

Ms. Principato

Students in the middle school ELA program spent the first week getting to know me, each other, the LMA school environment, and rules and procedures. We focused on the theme of social justice, how it affects our communities and how each of us has the power to correct injustice. New vocabulary was introduced and posted on the word board in the classroom. Students read various current event articles and answered questions based on a theme. They found supporting facts, quotes, and inferences to help identify the author's purpose. The students were also introduced to strategies for writing a proper thesis and using R.A.C.E. to answer questions/prompts correctly.

High School

English Language Arts & Literacy

As students arrived, they were surprisingly welcomed with a variety of young adult novels they had requested on a wish list throughout last school year, which was acquired both by the Commission and teacher. This was an engaging springboard for our Independent reading component where we are cross connecting to ground our Unit skills with student's chosen reading selections.

The students focused on learning routines and group norms in our learning communities to ensure a smooth, organized and safe learning environment. We have been reviewing skills and attaining a baseline for instruction as we began our First Unit of Argumentative Writing and Informational text Close Reading. We read and analyzed the U.S. Constitution in accordance with both our Unit skills and Federal observances. Additionally, we have had varied nonfiction and fiction text upon which we reviewed basic skills of close reading strategies, summarizing texts, annotation, making claims and while supporting with textual evidence.

Social Studies

Students in the middle school Social Studies classes spent the first week examining the idea of active citizenship and how to promote cultural awareness in the community. They read articles, watched clips, and wrote responses on various stories about systemic injustice in America. They were instructed how to write a strong argument with supporting evidence. We had many class discussions on the topics of prejudice, racism, and active citizenship.

High School students enrolled in World History have begun their year with a study of Geography. We have reviewed the different types of maps and used the world map for a scavenger hunt of nations' capitals. We have also made maps of our classroom, their neighborhood and will look at political maps of New Jersey and the USA.

20th Century Civil Liberties has started with a review of the Jim Crow Laws. We looked at the specific rules, made comparisons to today's laws, and developed essays about what it might be like to live under these restrictions. We also asked class members to interview their families to learn if they had relatives who might have lived under Jim Crow and to report these recollections to us.

US History I began the study of the Age of Exploration as we looked at reasons why folks dared to leave the old world and look for new fortunes in the new world. We also began the review of several important explorers and the regions of the new world they found. Our students were quite interested to learn of Leif Erickson's travels so far ahead of Christopher Columbus' and wondered why he does not have as much credit for finding America.

US History II Embarked on a review of the start of the Industrial Revolution, first in England and then arriving in the US. We saw the shift of populations to the cities, the start of factory made goods, and the encouraging works of prominent inventors. We also looked at the start of an actual middle class and the

requirements demanded of factory workers for attention to a schedule and production expectations. Additionally, the students examined the growth of child labor and the harsh implications it encouraged.

The students began a look at current events in all sections. On Fridays we will be using CNN10, a program designed for high schools by CNN. It presents a ten-minute news clip with three or four stories each week. As we watch the show, students are asked to note three facts about each story. The responses then form the basis for further discussion. Topics have included hurricane Dorian, a moonshot from India, a look at a CNN hero who is helping battered women and their children in Detroit, and our recent moon look - Harvest, Friday 13th, and the farthest apogee from the earth (Miroc Moon). We have done two new clips so far with great interest and enthusiasm.

Science

This month in Science we addressed many of the misconceptions about new tobacco products that are on the market. We discussed that e-cigarettes are now the most commonly used tobacco product among youth. The classes read and analyzed data showing the growing trend in just the past 10 years. E-cigarettes have only been on the U.S. market since 2007 and no one is sure what the long-term health impact of heating and inhaling the chemicals in e-liquids will be.

Mathematics

All students taking Mathematics classes spent the first week of September competing in a STEAM activity, "The Straw Tower Challenge". Students had to engineer a tower using a set number of straws, and a set amount of scotch tape to assemble a free-standing tower that is capable of supporting a tennis ball for at least 5 seconds. We spent time looking at different types of buildings, and what makes a building strong, and different shapes to make a building tall. Students then measured each tower and tested the structures to see if they fulfill the requirements of the challenge.

Students working in the Drone Academy have begun reviewing different flying regulations for an unmanned aerial vehicle that are aligned with the FAA. We have also started familiarizing ourselves with the tools needed to build a drone including different sets of screwdrivers and soldering stations. The students have been practicing working with these tools by reverse engineering current built drones, and disassembling them.

Students in Algebra II with J. Principato spent the week reviewing Algebra I concepts including math vocabulary (i.e. exponents, variables, operations, numerator, denominator, multiples, etc.), solving linear equations, adding and subtracting fractions with uncommon denominators, finding common denominators, solving linear equations with a variable(s) and with a given value. It is clear after this first week the students are at various levels, many having difficulty remembering basic algebraic concepts they learned prior to this year while other students had no previous expose to algebra. We will continue to review for those students who need it and I will assign more challenging and advanced work for those students that are ready to move on.

Spanish

This month students are working on the unit Daily Life, “*Para Empezar*” and Personal Identity in Middle and High School Spanish classes. The students reviewed the class rules and routines. Students created different posters about “*Las Reglas de la Clase*”, which are displayed on the Spanish bulletin board outside in the hallway. Other areas that were addressed the first weeks of school included giving students a list of materials that will be needed daily and communicating the methods that will be used to assess their work (i.e. rubrics and reflection forms). The students have taken a pre-assessment to aid in placing them in different levels. Also, based on test results students completed an academic Spanish vocabulary assessment to determine their baseline knowledge and create their own learning goals. The students also interacted with each other using TPR (Total Physical Response) Storytelling while introducing themselves and others. These activities provided the students with ample opportunities to practice and understand the lesson about greeting each other in Spanish. The students celebrated the Hispanic Heritage Month which runs from September 15th through October 15th. During this time the students will be working on a project called “*Los Hispanos Famosos*”. The students will research the generations of Hispanic Americans who have positively influenced and enriched our nation and other societies around the world.

Physical Education and Health

Students have been working hard at the start of the year at Lambert’s Mill Academy. We began the school year with the Fitness Unit where students participated in Fitness Monopoly. Just like the board game students roll dice to move to the next exercise. Exercises include yoga, Pilates, cardiovascular, strength training, and stretching. Corners are hot spots and have a special exercise such as a scooter, rowing machine, or stationary bike. Students loved the variety and challenges faced during the activity and all enjoyed themselves. In Health class students were reviewed the syllabus and class expectations for the year. We introduced the Healthy Relationships unit and began talking about communication skills and the importance of having proper skills to help foster healthy relationships.

LMA Clinical Department

The students and staff were welcomed back to the September 2019-2020 school year. The clinical team continues to facilitate Life Skills groups first thing in the morning as a way to jump start the day and increase daily motivation with the students. Life Skills groups started the year off by reviewing the student handbook and discussing rules and expectations of LMA. We will continue the month of September by identifying short and long term goals and will work on group cohesion. The students are being introduced to the Zones of Regulation and how the four zones help to identify specific emotions and moods, with the goal of gaining awareness and being able to self-regulate. The Zones of Regulation will be intertwined in the daily lessons of each Lifeskills group throughout the school year.

Trinitas

Since instruction is 1:1, we have been assessing the students who have been approved for instruction, in order to provide appropriate materials, while waiting for home districts to send IEP’s and/or books and assignments. It is an opportunity to get to know students’ interests and engage them in learning.

Special lessons have focused on Hispanic Heritage Month. Students have been reading biographical selections about famous Hispanic Americans. (ex: Roberto Clemente).

CROSSROADS

Enrollment as of September 20, 2019 Actual: 42 Changes:0 Entered: Exited: 0	Referrals: 2 Intakes Scheduled: 2 Accepted: 2
Fire Drills: 9/19/19	Emergency Drills: 9/11/19

Crossroads School Principal, Reed Leibfried and Supervisor of Instruction, Melissa McLaughlin greeted returning Crossroads School paraprofessionals, classroom teacher and specialized therapists at our opening day faculty meeting.

We were pleased to introduce the following first year staff members to the Crossroads Family:

Emily Caputo, Art Teacher
Alexis Lorenz, Classroom Teacher
Jennifer Bace, Registered Behavior Technician.

The Crossroads School administration would like to sincerely thank the Union County Educational Services Commission Board of Education, Superintendent, Mrs. Terry Foppert and Assistant Superintendent, Mr. Michael Kowalski for supporting the Registered Behavior Technician position. Mrs. Bace will assist our behavior team in providing additional support for our students and staff.

Allison Gebler's Classroom 102

The class began a thematic unit focused on back to school activities. Student target skills included social introductions to new students and staff, building classroom routines with visual supports, locating academic and reward materials in the classroom and an introduction to individualized communication platforms and/or token economies.

In the area of English Language Arts, students were introduced to matching identical images through a class wide Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), developing Speech/Language expectations from staff modeling of appropriate requesting, and interactive group centers: pre-reading, writing/tracing, ABCs, word work and curriculum assessments.

During Math lessons, students were introduced to matching, identifying, and counting number symbols 1-10. Cardinality skill sets, number identification/matching, and exploratory play skills were the targeted focus of informal groups designed to assess basic skills.

The students practiced various greetings to peers/staff and were introduced to matching or identifying categories, such as weather conditions, clothing and leisure activities available at Crossroads School during Science and Social Studies lessons.

In the area of verbal behavior, students worked on their ability to identify preferential rewards based on personal interests. Staff administered preference assessments via each student's individualized communication platform, and adjusted their token economies to represent high value objects and activities.

The best part of this month was getting to know each of our classroom's new students and staff members. The students have quickly found areas of common interest with their peers. Staff are enjoying the ability to foster all of the natural-environment opportunities to expand student social connections.

The class will continue to work on the re-assessment of previously mastered goals and yearly VB-MAPP assessments to determine maintained and regressed skill sets. Additionally, classroom staff will continue the focus on demonstration and repetitive completion of school, classroom, and daily living schedules.

Room 102 is looking forward to developing new friendships with peers and staff, establishing classroom routines and all of the fun Halloween activities planned for next month.

The Student of the Month for September is Niall D. He has maintained the skills established during the ESY Program and has transitioned well from parent driven to bus transportation. Niall has been incredibly accepting of his new transportation harness and we could not be more proud of him!

Consuelo Alzate's Pre-School Classroom 103

This has been a very busy exciting and rewarding month our Preschool Disabled Classroom. This school year seems very promising as our classroom has come together again as a united front for learning and fun. The students enjoy learning about each other, playing together, following directions, and sharing. The theme for this month is all about "Apples". So far, students are demonstrating their creativity and talents by coloring, hand printing and cooking apples.

All of the students are showing significant improvements and are practicing mastery of their previously acquired skills. Jose has been very successful at toilet training. Alaiyaa is rapidly learning to use PECS to mand for food and multiple play toys. Ezequiel and Rasheed are doing very well staying engaged and finding toys to play with. They all enjoy sensory play and exploring their possibilities, cooking, circle time and social play as well.

Briana Gallo's Classroom 104

It's the first month back to school and our students in room 104 couldn't be happier to be back. Everyone seems to be adjusting nicely to their new classroom, staff, and friends. This month students are working on their social skills, classroom rules, and classroom routine. Through the use of PECs, our students have been following picture schedules to establish routines, as well as, visual aids to help assist them in learning the classroom rules. We also use structured play time for the students and staff to get to know one another; and to help enhance our students' social skills.

Lindsay DeNigris' Classroom 105

The class has begun the school year with a fantastic start. Room 105 has an amazing team of both staff and students. The staff have spent the last week establishing classroom rules and routines and the children are really adapting into their new classroom nicely. The students have been working on whole group activities that require each student to sit at the table together with quiet hands and mouths.

Room 105 started off the year by reading Chicka Chicka Boom Boom, exploring letters, and exploring their names. The students cut out letters to decorate trees with the letters of their names. Then they played a game where students took turns picking a letter out of a box, showing their friends, and identifying that letter on their sheet. After that book, the students read Chrysanthemum. Students made a story map, read the book, and answered comprehension questions on the iPad.

The class has been working diligently on their new morning meeting routine and have really gotten the hang of it in five short days. The students begin by coming to the board one at a time to sign in. Then, they practice their social skills by saying hello to each of their classmates and teachers. Each student says, "Hi Lindsay," and the other returns by saying, "Hi Fernando". Once everyone has had a turn, the students each receive a differentiated morning meeting sheet. Some students circle the answers as we do calendar and some write in the answers. This activity has been going really well.

Stephen Goham's Classroom 106

The school theme is designed to develop and practice school and classroom rules, manners, and routines while focusing on creating structure and social interactions within the classroom. We encouraged the development of relationships with ball playing and turn-taking games and activities. In addition, "school words" vocabulary was introduced using flashcards, matching pictures to words, writing words 5x each and developing sentences.

School expectations require staff to assess our students on a quarterly basis and individual student assessments begin in September. Our English Language Arts curriculum includes Edmark & Phonic reading levels. Students reviewed previously learned words, utilizing flashcards and comprehension activities. Math lessons included assessment of addition, subtraction, time, money, and problem solving tasks. Children completed worksheets and used manipulatives to reinforce skill development.

Angel impressed his teachers by displaying strengths/skills in the area of Visual Perception. Angel is able to match both identical & non-identical pictures to objects, as well as utilize language to effectively communicate correct responses.

Alexis Lorenz's Classroom 108

The students started the school year by familiarizing themselves with the classroom routines, rules and expectations. Once classroom rules, as well as individual rules were established the students looked around the classroom to try out different items and activities to see what types of things they can earn.

During social skills students worked on making a Fall tree with apples. They stamped different colors on a tree to show the different fall color and learned about what happens to the leaves as the season starts to change.

In science the class started a unit on chemical reaction. Students participated in a simple lemon volcano science experiment. They watched as the baking soda and dish soap mixed with the juice of the lemon to cause an eruption. Each student seemed to really enjoy watching the fizz as the lemon erupted.

Christina Witte's Middle School Classroom 109

The students started the school year by familiarizing themselves with their classroom routines, rules and expectations. They read several books and completed some welcome back projects, including the book "A Frog Thing" by Eric Drachman, which explores the idea of being able to do whatever you set your mind to.

Every student made a board using pictures and/or writing showcasing what he or she really wants to do this school year. Some of the choices included making a hook rug, painting a picture and going to the farm. They also followed up the story by making green frog slime, which most of the students really enjoyed. The Middle School started back up our school-wide recycling program during pre-voc instruction by handing out the recycling bins and paper recycling boxes. The first community-based instruction trip this school year headed to BJs Wholesale. Students purchased items to replenish our school store, as well as the Crossroads kitchen. Direct Instruction has been utilized to probe all the students in order to assess the retention of previously learned material, as well as to re-assess their skills through the VB-MAPP.

In science and social studies, the middle school groups explored different fall themes, including apples and pumpkins. They also began a problem-based engineering challenge where students are building simple machines with Knex and circuits. The first challenge was designed around making a sturdy surface/bridge structure.

Susan Parenti's Middle School Classroom 110

The students viewed a chart which shows the parts of an apple. They matched the word cards to the correct apple part on the chart. They also used the apple slicer to cut open the apple and were able to take it apart for more careful observation. This hands-on activity gave the students the opportunity to explore all five senses through the following five specific examples:

- ***SEE**- the colors of the apples, the skin, the flesh, the seeds and the stem
- ***HEAR**- the crunch of the apple when taking a bite or the sound the slicer made to cut through the apple
- ***TASTE** -the apple and it's juice
- ***SMELL**- the sweetness of the apple
- ***FEEL**- all the different parts of the apple: smooth, sticky, wet, hard

The opening school year Social Studies thematic unit focused on allowing students an opportunity to familiarize themselves with their peers and Crossroads Staff by actively participating in *getting to know you activities for the first week of school*. Students read the story *First Day Jitters* by Julie Danneberg on the first day of school. Since the first day of school is always filled with a mixed bag of emotions, from excitement to fear, this book shows students that they are not the only ones a little anxious on the first day of school.

Natalia Amador's Middle School Classroom 111

Middle School classroom staff have been working hard on establishing strong and positive rapport with our students and getting them to feel comfortable within the classroom setting. They are also working on maintaining consistent classroom rules and routines that will enable our students to be successful throughout the day. All students at this point are being assessed and books are being updated to match their present academic levels.

In the area of social studies, students have been exploring various topics through reading, writing, crafts, and videos. They researched topics such as Labor Day, 9-11, and community helpers. For Labor Day, they read a story called "When I Grow Up", by Mercer Mayer. Students worked in dyads to answer Wh questions and sequence the story. Students were given the choice of different community helpers to research and write a short text about what they learned.

For ELA and Math, all students are working on strengthening mastered skills prior to being introduced to upcoming concepts. Students are being assessed during various times. For example, they are working independently on completing skills that they already acquired.

So far this year in prevoc, students worked on sorting magazines, doing laundry, taking utensil orders and completing the kitchen inventory. Understanding the small details that are required to complete our prevocational jobs, will help them to be more independent and successful.

Occupational Therapy Department

During the month of September, the Occupational Therapy Department has been very busy reviewing student goals, establishing treatment schedules, as well as developing sensory diets and providing sensory equipment to the students and classrooms. The therapists continue to provide consultation information to classrooms and shared therapy information amongst therapist to ensure consistency of treatment from one year to another. Direct service has begun in the classrooms as well as in the therapy rooms.

Physical Therapy Department

Currently we have one physical therapist working two full days per week at Crossroads School. There are 12 students receiving individual physical therapy (PT) services with a total of 15 individual treatment sessions, one PT group and three PT consultations per week.

This month, Aliza created her schedule for the year and organized the motor room which is ready for treatment. Aliza has begun taking baseline data on our students’ IEP goals to monitor their status post summer vacation.

HILLCREST SOUTH

<p>Enrollment as of 9/20/19 Actual: 94 Changes: Entered: 4 Exited: 17 (4 moved, 6 dropped out/ GED, 4 returned to district, 1 aggression towards staff, 2 transfered)</p>	<p>Intakes Pending General Ed.: 13 Intakes Pending Sp. Ed.: 1</p>
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This school year at Hillcrest Academy South Campus (HAS) we have implemented a new initiative entitled “Improving School Climate and Culture.” Staff and students are reviewing attendance, grades, and various lessons that will produce productive citizens who are capable of making ethical decisions. Additionally, Social Emotional Learning is being infused in lessons and counseling as well as a modified Advocacy Program that aligns staff with students to assist them in tracking their progress for a successful school year.

Mr. Deo joins the HAS family as the leave replacement for Ms. Duarte as Mr. Hill departs for a full time position. Ms. Vandana Arora also joins HAS as the full time science (biology) teacher and will begin on 10/7/19. The search continues for a part-time physical education/ health teacher.

Ms. Gronert, the shared guidance counselor at HAS and Hillcrest Academy North Campus, worked to ensure a smooth transition for all students into the 2019-2020 school year. The guidance counselor met

with each student to make sure they understood how many credits they have and their path for graduation. In addition, Ms. Gronert setup all of the credit retrieval courses and went over the guidelines and expectations with all the students and facilitating teachers. Ms. Gronert met with each of the potential seniors with Ms. Gilchrist, school social worker, to go over their track and expectations. The guidance counselor looks forward to continually meeting with the students to ensure they are meeting the academic and social emotional goals they have set for themselves for the 2019-2020 school year.

Ms. Gilchrist is diligently preparing the student body for another extremely successful year. In conjunction with the guidance counselor she has developed Senior Plans for every aspiring graduate. Plans are developed for success and include August graduates. The first DCF meeting is later in September and she is busily researching records to identify any student who is in need of extra services. Ms. Gilchrist has also been reviewing special education IEPs so that all their requirements are met in a timely fashion. As part of the "Improving School Climate and Culture" initiative, Ms. Gilchrist will join staff, administration, and the guidance counselor to assist students in creating Student Development Plans.

Positive reinforcement incentives are essential in helping our students' success. For the end of 2019, Ms. Gilchrist has planned a movie incentive trip for approximately 30 of our best and brightest. This includes academics, behaviors, and attendance. Incentive Tuesdays started with a shout out to sport teams! Over forty students and staff members have participated.

As the school social worker has confidentially begun meeting with students who may be in need of clinical services, she has also been instrumental as a liaison with the new bus vendors and HAS staff. This includes but is not limited to coordinating routes, translations, behaviors, and family contacts.

It's a new school year and the Hillcrest Academy South Community Service Program (HASCSP) is off and running. We have a dynamic year planned with community service outreach activities that will consist of a combination of in-school and off-site projects. The HAS Student Council Executive Board (E-Board) for 2019-20 has been established and they are busy brainstorming ideas for school wide activities in order to generate school spirit among the student body. Leadership opportunities abound for our students throughout these programs, which will allow them to develop skills in leading peers, training others and professional interaction with our community partners at the local, state and national level. To commemorate the 9/11 National Day of Service, the HAS Community Service program hosted a fundraiser to benefit the American Red Cross and their relief efforts for those affected by Hurricane Dorian. The HAS Respect Committee is being formed in support of New Jersey's Anti-Bullying Law. The Freerice Program is back and providing all students within HAS a means of satisfying their EHS mandated community service requirements.

At the start of the year, Ms. Holden's English class spent time reviewing the routine and rituals of the class. Students set goals for themselves for the year and created their own Classroom Participation Rubric. In commemoration of September 11, students read and analyzed excerpts from Flight 93. Students viewed a docudrama on the tragic events that occurred on that date and read first person accounts of several of the first responders. While reading the articles on 9/11 students identified the main idea and the author's point of view. Also, students engaged in several lively discussions which dealt with terrorism. Also, in celebration of Spanish Heritage Month, students researched a famous Spanish American and wrote a short report.

During the month of September Ms. Cioffi's English courses focused on learning the routines and rituals of the class to ensure a smooth, organized classroom structure for the rest of the year. Students have been learning to come to class on time, get all materials needed immediately upon walking into the room, and completing the Do Now silently for the first 5 minutes of class. Classes have been centered on review of basic skills such as making annotating texts, summarizing, and identifying main and central ideas. Further plans for classes are to continue practicing the routines and rituals of the classroom consistently, continue independent reading to improve students' ability in sustained reading and reading ability, and to begin learning the skills linked to the English Curriculum Consensus and Projected Maps.

Ms. Cherville's Spanish classes started the school year with great enthusiasm. We identified the 21 countries where the Spanish language is spoken. This information motivated the students to state their own reasons for learning this world language. So far they have learned how to introduce themselves, express feelings, and describe people and objects. They are using learned structure and vocabulary in meaningful settings in daily interactive practice. Spanish speakers started a new curriculum based on reading and writing. They completed the reading of a book and they are working with periodicals on summarizing and interpreting a variety of articles from different parts of Latin America.

In September, the students in Mr. Sobieniak's Algebra II classes reviewed many Algebra I topics. They learned to solve different kinds of equations and inequalities. The students also learned many properties of linear functions. Students in Probability and Statistics classes learned about representation and summary of data and measures of central tendency. They were investigating many real life applications problems. The students in Success Seminar/Math Strategy class learned about school attendance and its impact on school grades, graduation, future average salary and future life. Students also reviewed many Math skills by solving a few fun Math activities and Mathematics Puzzles. Students were using the interactive whiteboard in their lesson and Do Now activities.

The students in Ms. Ferrari's Algebra class worked diligently on a unit on basic algebraic concepts. They completed on average three worksheets daily. Each worksheet was valued as one point towards their total of four points for their classroom participation grade. They began with a Do Now that is a real-life word problem. The second is 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. The students applied STEM applications such as using unit analysis to compare the speeds of trains around the world. The students used a concentric circle diagram to help classify whole numbers, integers, rational numbers, and how this population of numbers relate to all real numbers. Additional skills the students have worked on include, but are not limited to adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing real numbers, order of operations, and simplifying algebraic expressions. The geometry students worked on basic geometric concepts. They applied STEM applications such as determining how airport runways are numbered based on the angles they form with due north. The students will practice using the Pythagorean Theorem to help them conceptualize the distance formula. Students also studied points, lines and planes, the segment addition postulate, angles and their measure, the midpoint formula and segment and angle constructions. All classes have worked on establishing rules, classroom procedures and school expectations. The HAS routines and procedures are posted in the students' view and can easily be used as a reference. The students have assembled their math binders, individualizing a colorful cover sheet themed around Fibonacci's sequence/The Golden Ratio and how many ways it is found in nature (i.e. conical shells, the shape of a hurricane, a sunflower, a galaxy, etc.).

Mr. Hill's U.S. History II and Economics classes demonstrated critical thinking and analytical skills through the evaluation of primary and secondary sources. Sources spanned all mediums, including 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 standards-aligned current events 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. USII History students analyzed how various push-pull factors influenced the rise of the industrial revolution including natural resource availability, the available population of workers and the rates of their wages, and the desire for industrialists to utilize capital and technology to exact more control over labor, wages, and profits. Economics students analyzed documents related to systems of taxation and infrastructure support/benefit, community collaborative value structures vs individual and small group resource hoarding, and concepts of value and how those vary over time, culture, and location.

Ms. Wrzesinski's U.S. History I students reviewed school and classroom rules and procedures. Students also started their European explorers unit to decipher who founded the Americas and why. This included the rivalry between Spain and Portugal, their explorers, and their many achievements, the 3G's of exploration (God, Glory and Gold), the natives that inhabited the land first and the outcomes of these explorations. U.S. History II students reviewed school and classroom rules and procedures. Students also started their unit 1 topic which is the American Industrial Revolution. Students looked in depth into the different natural resources, technology and transportation that initially helped start our Industrial Revolution. Students then went on to look at and discuss the life in factories and their processes. This included mass production, assembly line and division of labor.

Modern World History started their Renaissance and Reformation unit. Students have discussed the meaning of the term Renaissance, what occurred before the Renaissance that essentially propelled people forward into modernization, key artists and inventors such as Da Vinci and finally an art analysis of four of the most famous works of art from this time period.

Mr. Barone's classes began the year by reviewing classroom rules, procedures, and expectations for the 2019-2020 school year. Mr. Barone introduced students to a unit on soccer and covered basic rules, different scenarios one may face in game play, and demonstrated the necessary skills such as dribbling, passing, and shooting. After practicing these skills, students began to participate in modified games. During Health, students started the year off with an "ice breaker" activity that allowed the students to get to know one another. Mr. Barone felt because there were a number of new students to the school, allowing students time to ask each other questions was an excellent way to get the students engaged in conversation. In addition, students were asked to answer the question, "What is Health?" in their own terms. Mr. Barone explained that health encompasses one's physical, social and emotional health. Mr. Barone feels that when students are more comfortable in their surroundings, they are more likely to participate.

Ms. Rubin, the school nurse, assisted with entry procedures, including bag searches. The school nurse made calls to all of the absent students' parents each day. The nurse has seen an average of 10 students per day. The nurse is updating health files and obtaining A-45 records from Elizabeth Academies for new students at HAS. The nurse also covered Crossroads School on September 10. In health class, the students are being introduced to "what is health?" and annual screenings have begun. The next topic in health class will be the dangers of vaping and information about E-cigarettes.

HILLCREST/NORTH:

Enrollment as of: 9/20/19

Actual: 91

Changes: 3 new students enrolled

Referrals: work in progress

Drills: Fire Drill: 9/18/19

In English, students were introduced to the rules and procedures of the classroom and signed the classroom wall of rules. Students learned about the course syllabus, schedule, and created a binder. Students also wrote a letter of introduction to the teacher, and created a star for the bulletin board that explains how they want to shine in the future. Students began the first unit while reading the novel *I am Malala* by Malala Yousafzai. While reading the novel, students have been practicing various reading skills such as annotating, active reading strategies, and context clues. Students have learned how to identify the main idea and details of a chapter, and how to summarize a book chapter. Students watched an interview of Malala and segments of a documentary of her life while examining her point of view on education and terrorism. Students also completed the English department SGO in which students had to read both a fictional text and a non-fiction text and respond in writing.

Also in English, students read a speech by Neil Gaiman: “Why our future depends on libraries, reading and daydreaming.” They then learned about the main idea and supporting details. Students then had to find the main idea and supporting details in the speech. As the class went reviewed these concepts, they discussed the speech and the important ideas it addressed.

In Creative Writing, students are starting each class answering creative questions. Students learned about synonyms and antonyms. We went over some of the English language’s most overused words: said, asked, happy and sad. Students brainstormed individually, and then as a class, to come up with different words they could use instead of the overused words. Then they put the words on a poster. Students learned about connotation and denotation. Students revised a story using different words to come up with a story with a different connotation. Students learned about imagery and description. Students discovered description isn’t as easy as they thought. They wrote a description of a photograph, and then the students had to draw the description another student wrote.

In Success Seminar, students spent the first week of the course learning about the importance of attendance. Students were exposed to the different tiers of attendance and identified their tier. Students watched films on the impact of attendance on learning and performance, and examined statistics related to attendance. Students reflected on their attendance in the past and set goals for their attendance this year. Students chose a book for independent reading days and have shared their books with the class. Students have been reading their independent reading books while also tracking their reading progress and answering questions each day. Students also had their first grammar lesson on nouns.

The month of September found Chemistry, Biology, and Forensic Science students hitting the ground running in their quest to master their applicable Next Generation Science Standards. Both Chemistry and Biology students began their implementation of the curriculum laid out by the Progressive Science Initiative (PSI). PSI science is a method of teaching and learning science that relies on student-centered problem-solving that is dynamically led through frequent formative assessment. Students learn by

prescribing to the mantra *that it does not matter which path they take to their destination, it only matters that they make it to the end of their journey*. Chemistry students began their journey by learning about the origins of atomic theory from the early “plum pudding” model to the nuclear model. Biology students started on their path by learning about theories of the origins of the universe and its bearing on the origins of life on Earth. Forensic Science students began their studies into the gritty underbelly of “crime science” by learning about the history of forensic science and the basic subcategories that comprise the discipline as a whole. Next month, Chemistry students will begin studying isotopes and stoichiometry and are eagerly anticipating “getting their hands dirty” while performing laboratory experiments. Biology students will begin studying the basic characteristics of life and how cells regulate these necessary functions. Forensic Science students will begin their inquiry into the disturbed minds and acts of serial killers through the completion of a “Serial Killer Cereal Box” project.

As the new school year starts, the Social Studies Department at Hillcrest Academy North has actively worked to set the atmosphere and culture for our students. Students have learned what is to be expected and how they should proceed and advance throughout the year. September has focused on introducing the grading system, syllabus, and class culture. Students have also begun learning about the “Great Migration” and how it relates to people from across time and culture. This concept 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 into a final project.

Also in the month of September, Social Studies classes began the year focusing on current events. Classes read an article from UpFront Magazine analyzing different countries they viewed as “threats” to the United States. After reading each part of the article, students scored the “threat level” of each country based on the information they gathered from the article. Students were then asked to write an argumentative response about the country they believed posed the biggest threat to the United States today.

In Art, students began the semester learning how viewing art can be an experience where all the senses are evoked and emotion can be felt. Several pieces of art were shown and students were asked not only what they saw, but what they felt. Most reported smells, sounds, and textures and empathized with the characters in the paintings. Art is a medium in which all the senses intermingle; for example, not only can you hear from what you see, but you can draw from what you hear. Students were challenged to “see the music” in several exercises and instructed to draw the movements, images and color they saw in different musical selections. During this process, they learned color and line symbolism, building blocks in art, and created their own pieces of Abstract Expressionism. The language of color and line without recognizable images, narrative or scenes, can have emotional and meaningful content. Students also began drawing from observation this month. They practiced sitting with a drawing board and learned how to “see” what was before them. They practiced creating basic skeletal foundations known as guidelines, of good observational skills. Finally, students learned how to shade and highlight objects to make them look three dimensional.

In Health and PE, students got acclimated to the new conference room where some will be taking their health classes. The teachers went over the syllabus and set the tone for a productive school year. In Health they are learning about current drug trends while the PE classes are in their beginning weeks in the basketball unit.

The Probability and Statistics class is enriching their understanding of mean, median and mode. The main idea is to be able to make conclusions about the data and possibly make predictions with evidence to back up their statements. Not only must they be able to express their conclusions verbally, but written clearly as well for any reader to understand. They are discovering what “average” means depending on the range of the data. The Geometry classes are starting with the basic concepts of figures, their representations, notations and classifications. Drawing, measuring and constructing are some of the basic skills we are working on.

This month, Ms. Gronert, the guidance counselor at Hillcrest Academy North worked to ensure a smooth transition for all students into the 2019-2020 school year. The guidance counselor met with each student to make sure they understood how many credits they have and their path for graduation. In addition, Ms. Gronert setup all of the credit retrieval courses and went over the guidelines and expectations with all the students and facilitating teachers. Ms. Gronert met with each of the potential seniors with Ms. Goldenberg to go over their track and expectations. The guidance counselor looks forward to continually meeting with the students to ensure they are meeting the academic and social emotional goals they have set for themselves for the 2019-2020 school year.

NONPUBLIC

A special thank you to Mrs. Foppert, Mr. Kowalski, Mrs. Winter, Mrs. Quigley Russell, Mrs. Jakubowski, Mrs. Squicciarini and Mr. Seidu for their efforts providing a tremendously positive start to the 2019-2020 school year for the Nonpublic Services Department.

Nonpublic Teachers and Speech Therapists participated in departmental meetings reviewing department practices and introducing *Teach Reflect Learn: Building Your Capacity for Success in the Classroom*.

The Nonpublic Nursing program is up and running in all the nonpublic schools in Union County. The Nonpublic Nurses continue to assist in maintaining student health records (A-45) and completing specific screens for students grades k-12.

Nonpublic Teachers began providing services to students and Child Study Team Members continue to build their schedules. Technology and School Security Plans for nonpublic schools are in the process of being approved by their public school district.

TRANSITION

Work Readiness Academy Anticipated Student Enrollments: 12 (Max 12)

Project SEARCH-Overlook Medical Center Anticipated Student Enrollment: 9 (Max 9)

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

The Work Readiness Academy kicked off the new school year on September 5th with 12 students, including 8 newcomers.

Some of the highlights from the first month of the year included:

Students were involved in a variety of assessments to identify strengths, preferences, interests, and needs. We also examined our values and personal characteristics.

Students had the opportunity to participate in a Google Docs Scavenger Hunt assessing their knowledge of the various tools one can use in Google Docs.

Students learned about the importance of community service and had the opportunity to participate in a service-learning trip to Grow-A-Row where they helped to harvest crops. Students went to an AGAR Farm in Hunterdon County and participated in the harvesting of corn which will be distributed to food banks in the tristate area.

Students identified various hazards that may exist in the workplace, their responsibility to health and safety in the workplace, and the importance of not putting others in danger.

Students went on a mindfulness walk to the Lenape Trail, noting how nature can help you de-stress and stay calm.

The WRA student-run RAW business held the first Car Wash of the year on September 20th.

Seven out of eight students who graduated the Work Readiness Academy in June 2019 are now competitively employed. One student applied and was accepted to the Project SEARCH program at Overlook Medical Center.

The Work Readiness Academy targets students with disabilities (ages 17-to-21) who are in need of 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 welcomed its 4th cohort this September. Nine student interns were selected this past May from an application pool of 20 candidates.

The interns spent most of September working on self-discovery including, what are our strengths, areas for growth, and interests? Students completed assessments on careers to find out what kinds of jobs they may be interested in.

The interns also learned about the importance of teamwork. They built towers and completed puzzles while practicing skills such as communication and being flexible through compromise.

In addition, staff led onboarding activities including elevator/hallway etiquette, basic interview skills, handwashing, budgeting for lunch, privacy and confidentiality, fire safety and codes, and practicing our elevator speech.

Six out of the nine interns who graduated from the Project SEARCH-OMC program this past June are now competitively employed. The other three are actively job-seeking and we hope to have them employed in the coming months. Applications for the 2020-2021 program will be available in November.

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.

In 2019, UCESC officially became a vendor for Pre-Employment Transition Services through the New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS). UCESC is currently receiving referrals from the Union County DVRS office to provide Job and Career Exploration Services to students from school districts across Union County -- at no additional charge. This eight-hour module is delivered in a one-on-one setting and helps students begin the process of completing activities and informal assessments to identify their strengths, interests, and preferences related to possible employment options. Additionally, students are eligible to participate in a Pre-ETS funded "Work-Based Learning Experience". This 20-25 hour module enables students the chance to experience an unpaid internship at a local business where they learn entry-level job skills and expected behaviors appropriate for employment.

For more information, district personnel should contact their local DVRS representative.

TRANSPORTATION

The 2019-2020 school year is another busy one for the Transportation Department. As of September 1, 2019, the Commission had established 503 routes with private bus companies transporting approximately 2,800 special education, vocational, and public school students. These routes service 28 districts and 170 schools. The Commission is also providing after-school athletic and/or field and trip busses for three participating districts. Six participating districts contract with the Commission for all or part of their in-district transportation needs, including public and special needs transportation. The Transportation Department once again bid for nonpublic, private, and parochial school routes this past summer for the coming school year. Ten routes were established transporting 339 students servicing 10 districts and 7 schools.

This year, the Commission is operating 5 routes on its own vehicles which are transporting 25 students from 8 districts servicing 5 schools and programs. In the month of September, the Transportation Department began to establish the daily routes which will service the various Commission schools and programs throughout the rest of the school year. Primary among these is assistance to the Transition Program with transportation to and from student placements. The department will also be providing transportation for the Westlake School's S.A.V.E. program held at various locations, including the Clark Shop-Rite, Clark Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, Clark Commons, and Target. Additional regularly scheduled trips are also provided to the Scotch Plains/Fanwood YMCA for swimming lessons. In addition, the transportation department is providing transportation for the Hillcrest Academy North gym classes held at the Clark community center.

Twenty school vehicles were presented to the Motor Vehicle Commission for inspection on September 13-16, 2019. All twenty vehicles passed and are set for another six months of service.

Since the start of school in September, approximately one hundred thirteen additional routes were created to accommodate late requests or changes to existing routes. Other changes to existing routes which were routine (address and phone number changes, additional or deleted students, etc.) numbered in the hundreds and contributed to the hectic climate of the beginning of school. Slowly but surely order is established from chaos so that by the third week of school a more controlled atmosphere prevailed, and another school year was underway.

TECHNOLOGY

IT staff have taken over PowerSchool administrator responsibilities for the past few months. We have assisted in the training of the new PowerSchool administrator so that we may shift focus back to the security and functionality of the IT network.

The IT department ran in house training on PaperCut for all of our staff. Each member is now versed on user rights and access as well as producing reports based on usage of staff member or machine activity. We have assisted Westlake onsite with the two copiers that were delivered over the summer. We discovered that most of the issues were due to staff not being versed in the PaperCut workflow so in room W94 we posted a document illustrating how to bring an affected copier back to the PaperCut splash page.

We also opened a ticket with Atlantic on the main office staff's behalf since the copier there was communicating a hardware error. The IT Department has been working closely with the Business Office building out a new billing workflow through our Student Information System PowerSchool. We will continue to provide resources until the entire billing system is completed.

We have created several technical documents to help assist with the new Secure Print features in the Atlantic copiers. Providing these to the different schools has helped to resolve problems quicker and address staff's questions about the new workflow.

cc: Eric Larson, Business Administrator/Board Secretary