



# Union County Educational Services Commission

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## Report of the Superintendent to the Board of Directors July 1, 2020

### WESTLAKE SCHOOL:

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| <b>Enrollment as of June 22, 2020</b><br>Actual: 58<br>Changes: Entered: 0 Exited: 0 | <b>Referrals</b><br>Intakes Scheduled: 1<br>Accepted: 0    |
| <b>Fire Drills:</b> Building Closed due to Distance Learning                         | Emergency Drills: Building Closed due to Distance Learning |
| Suspensions: 0   |  |

Westlake teachers, therapists and paraprofessionals all worked with their students through the month of June and provided the services needed that aligned to each student's IEP. Everyone became accustomed to the live sessions and worked to their fullest potential while working from home. Currently, this has become the new normal and we continue to explain to the students about Covid-19 and the necessary precautions to ensure everyone's safety. We do acknowledge the difficulties of being away from school and the fact that they are missed.

On a positive note, staff and students were looking forward to the Graduation ceremony that was held on Friday, June 19, 2020 streamed live on you tube. The graduation was put together by many staff members who prepared behind the scenes for a virtual graduation. The Administrators presented live, while there were also prerecorded videos by the classroom teachers. We started off with Tylor singing the national anthem and a wonderful video of the graduate's pictures through the years that they attended Westlake. We heard that even though we weren't all together, the virtual graduation was very heartfelt and honored the students in a special way. We could not have done a great graduation without the amazing job from our technology department, Damien, Leonard, and Jay. Also, Mr. Peneno, Supervisor of Instruction, Coordinated the event making it a wonderful day for graduates and their families. Mrs. Foppert, Superintendent, Mr. Kowalski, Assistant Superintendent and Mrs. Tantillo, Westlake Principal were speaking live through the event. Overall, it was one of the most meaningful and special graduations we have ever had.

Now that the school year has ended, Westlake is looking forward to the upcoming Extended School Year for 2020. We had 9 students graduate and a few students move with our total current enrollment as of today at 58 for September 2020. We continue to schedule virtual intakes which are going well and have accepted 2 new students beginning in ESY and 1 new student beginning in September. Currently, we are working on class lists, assignments of staff and creating individual schedules for students that will be

provided to families to follow during the ESY program. We do have a great interest from students and their families to continue through the distance learning platform during our ESY program. Our ESY program will include more live instruction by classroom teachers and therapists. Art, P.E., Health, Music and Karate will also provide live instruction. Westlake is also looking to add social skills, thematic units each week and Virtual Field trips. The students learn a great deal and learn a lot from all these activities.

### **Language Arts**

Teachers utilized many resources for language arts using Edmark and many online resources. Mrs. Attlesey used Education.com where students played games that assisted students with reading short words and developing comprehension skills. Mrs. Capizzi also utilized online resources where animated books were read aloud to students. The stories aligned to themes the students were working on in class. Our teachers used other online engaging resources including: Boom Cards, StoryLine Online, News-2-You and a variety of worksheets.

### **Math**

Mrs. Shaw used individual worksheets designed to beginner, intermediate and advanced learners. This tiered level of teaching which was posted on her web page made it easy for students to strive towards higher expectations. Students worked on patterns and touch math online. The worksheets kept students engaged to the best of their abilities. IXL was one of the main online resources Westlake utilized. This program provided students with work at their individual academic levels, gave them instant feedback and assessed their work.

### **Science**

Mrs. Pajewski's class took a virtual field trip to the Georgia Aquarium and saw whales, jellyfish and sharks. Students then made their own scene of the sea. Through Mentalfloss.com, Mrs. Fernandez's class was able to choose an animal to follow and observe. Assignments were based upon those animals and worksheets were completed.

### **Social Studies**

News-2-You was a great help to teachers as an online resource with up to date news articles enabling students to stay current on the most recent events. Teachers utilized these articles to talk about Covid-19, the President and other recent topics that related to the community and society. This is a great resource that Westlake will continue to utilize.

### **ADL's**

Our Occupational Therapists created and utilized many activities of daily living video's during distance learning. These modeled activities were posted for students to perform repeatedly while doing the activities at home. Some videos included: setting the table, making the bed, washing dishes, filling a dishwasher, folding towels etc. We heard from many parents that students were completing these tasks at home and doing a great job. Our Vocational Teacher, Mrs. Swisher also provided some tasks that involved making simple cookies at home or completing some simple worksheets.

### **Physical Education**

Mr. Shanfield has done a great job posting various exercises and repetitions of those exercises to keep all students healthy. When we logged in and saw students during the live sessions. It was amazing to see students keeping up with Mr. Shanfield and exercising to the best of their ability. He worked on fitness vs teaching game skills so that students could work on a fitness routine while being at home. It was just enough of a routine that they could maintain during this quarantine time.

### **Art**

Mrs. Caputo provided each participating family with a weekly email that included directions about the upcoming Art lesson and the needed materials for that class. She provided a positive, warm and creative art lesson that brought out the creativity in each student. Students were able to express the work they created by self-evaluating and Mrs. Caputo observed their work when they each held it up to show each other.

### **Health**

Nurse IJ continues to remain in touch with many families to check in on how they are doing during the pandemic and offers support as needed. During health classes, she is teaching students the precautions that are still needed at this time.

### **Vocational**

Mrs. Swisher has worked on student work behaviors through distance learning, providing them with appropriate vocabulary to use in a work environment. She has provided them with guidance on looking professional (i.e. getting a haircut) and other ways they should act when looking for a job. Exposing students to these skills will make a difference, even at a younger age, so they are prepared when they are old enough to start looking for employment.

### **Social Work**

Mrs. Sandrock and Mr. Balassone completed many video IEP meetings and individual counseling for students. They support families connect families with case workers and Performcare, keep the Administrators abreast of any concerns with student attendance, monitor behaviors in the home and the social/emotional needs of the students. Mr. Balassone put together a fantastic graduation video with the help of some staff The video was so memorable and families will have it forever. Mrs. Sandrock worked very hard with our volunteer, Carol Raftis to plant the Westlake garden and plant flowers by the main entrance. The school property looks wonderful and the garden took a great deal of both of their time.

### **Behaviorist**

The behaviorists worked to continue to provide visual strategies for the students who need these supportive cues. Our dedicated team of behaviorists consulted with teachers and through distance learning were able to connect with parents and provide meaningful strategies to support learning and a healthy home environment. They participated in teachers' live academic sessions to offer extra support to students and families in need during this difficult time.

Westlake would again like to acknowledge our staff who are retiring this year! Karen Attlesey, Teacher, Rosemary Edelstein, Occupational Therapist and Jaime Rodriguez, Custodian. We wish you all great things to come and your Westlake Family will miss you dearly!

Claudine Tantillo, Principal and Robert Peneno, Supervisor of Instruction would like to thank each and every staff member at Westlake School for your extremely dedicated teamwork during the 2019-2020 school year and throughout the distance learning program. We couldn't be more proud of our staff and the incredible adjustments they made providing excellent resources and live teaching to our students. It was amazing work to see from March through June. We know that the staff interacted with the students professionally and supported them to learn and grow in a safe and healthy environment.

We extend our deepest congratulations to Mrs. Foppert on her retirement and thank her for all her support over the years. We also wish the Board members a Happy Summer!

**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><b>As of June 2020</b></p> <p>LMA Actual: 44 LMA District - Non-New Point: 41<br/>New Point Specialty at LMA: 3</p> <p>Changes: <u>0</u><br/>Entered: <u>0</u> (Non-NP) <u>0</u> NP<br/>Pending: <u>0</u> Exited: <u>0</u> (non-NP) <u>0</u> (NP)</p> | <p>Fire Alarms: 0<br/>Fire Drills: 0<br/>Security Drills: 0</p>           |
| <p>Referrals in April: 3<br/>Intakes Scheduled: 3 Completed: 3<br/>Acceptance Letter Sent: 2<br/>Sending District Accepted LMA placement: 0<br/>Placement Pending : 1</p>  | <p>Suspension out of school: 0<br/>In School Suspension: 0<br/>HIB: 0</p> |

**Administration**

Lamberts Mill Academy and our students were able to weather the storm. We saw an increase in student engagement and a decrease in behavioral incidents. However, I believe that it has been difficult for our students to stay focused and engaged during this time of uncertainty. Thankfully during this pandemic, we only had a few instances where our students had to be hospitalized. Looking forward towards ESY and September our goal will be to focus more on behavioral incentives as well as different “out of the box” ways that we can better engage our students. We have decided to create two activity periods per day called, “Preferred Activities” These periods will be 30 minutes each and students will have to earn these activities. Our goal is to create an incentive/motivation program to help engage our students in their academics.

Closing out the year we saw 11 Seniors and 4 Middle School students graduate from our program. Unfortunately, we were unable to hold normal graduation ceremonies, so we created a video of the ceremony and posted it online. Our students participated in a Google Meeting while we all watched the graduation video. I truly believe that our students enjoyed the graduation ceremony and were happy, although sad at the same time to be leaving LMA.

Currently we are planning our September opening and trying to envision how it will look. We've received strong guidance from the Commission, and we are also looking forward to reading the documentation that has been put out by the CDC and other states as it pertains to opening schools in this time of uncertainty.

## **Academics**

### **Middle School**

Middle School students continued to develop their Google skills this month interacting through forms, editable slides, live video tutoring, and WebQuests. Students continued their English work through summarizing, predicting, visualizing, questioning, and clarifying through audio and visual prompts. Using paired texts, they increased their ability to compare and contrast story elements to make inferences about varied types of literature. Grammar drills focused on correctly using prepositional phrases and clauses in writing.

The Middle School welcomed our new English and Social Studies teacher, Ms. Cosio, who led the students through research projects on landforms, with a strong focus on oceans, and their effect on everyday life. Oceans control the Earth's weather as they heat and cool, humidify and dry the air and control wind speed and direction. Long-term weather patterns influence water supply, food supply, trade shipments, and property values. Students researched oceans and their impact on society.

Math classes went off without a hitch this month. Students did the best they could while they worked diligently one step at a time to get to the finish line. Students worked on different academic levels to achieve understanding as they worked on ratios and proportions.

The Middle School celebrated the graduation of four students, Melek, Joshua, Sebastian, and Zahair. Students enjoyed a virtual graduation ceremony, and a packed Google Meeting with lots of smiling faces.

### **High School**

#### **English Language Arts & Literacy**

Students worked tirelessly up to the end of this unprecedented school year showing great effort with the support from both our academic and therapeutic support services. Students progressed throughout our Poetry and Analysis unit based on the key concepts of close reading skills and organized writing strategies to enhance written communication skills. The insight students shared showed progress projected through their diverse and in-depth analysis. As a part of the compilation of the unit and the year, students listened to various famous authors read aloud their poems. The students analyzed them and explored various strategies to develop writing skills.

The silver lining with our unexpected distance learning is how students persevered, learning new skills online even during our country's troubled times. With varied modalities of live tutoring or personalized video recorded instruction, students were able to learn both ELA&L content as well as time management and technology skills. Most importantly students uncovered their strength in their voices as they created their own historical documents and learned first-hand how to close read and analyze information as it unfolded daily.

### **Social Studies**

Social Studies classes continued to look at our world and the immediacy of our pandemic. Our weekly current event studies took us through the events of the Covid 19 infecting our country and their world. We talked about essential workers and their sacrifices, the burden on hospitals, the tragedies that happened in nursing homes, and the changes in our lives as we move to the new normal. We had some very spirited exchanges.

Our students in 20th Century Civil Liberties looked at the impact of man-made environmental disasters. We saw changes in lifestyles, fear, huge job changes, and negative economic impact as just a few of the changes. World History finished the year looking at the impact of the Great Depression in the US and the overflow to the world's stature.

US History I looked at life in the Roaring Twenties and the dynamics that led to the Great depression in 1929. All of the hope and optimism that energized the end of WWI came tumbling down. US History II was studying the Cold War - the US's containment policy towards the USSR, the Korean War, the Red Scare and the Cuban Missile Crisis.

### **Science**

The students spent June catching up on coronavirus facts and took some time to watch some drama unfold in a bird nest outside Mrs. Warmke's house. A cowbird laid an invader egg in the nest - it left us with a lot of questions! Biology students continued to learn about genetics, studying pedigrees and some genetic diseases. Chemistry and Environmental students worked on the same lessons, learning about the chemistry of climate change - how greenhouse gases are produced, accumulated, measured and how they affect our environment. Forensics students studied forensic anthropology and how we can use bones to tell us stories about victims of crimes. And of course, we discussed and 'watched' the SpaceX/NASA launch of astronauts Bob and Doug to the ISS; perfect timing for our Astronomy student. In the last weeks of school, we had some fun listening to podcasts and commenting on some fun science photos.

### **Mathematics**

For the last month of the school year, all mathematics courses continued to work on Daily Do Now Logic questions till the last day of school. In addition to increasing their lateral thinking skills with riddles, students spent time watching vocational videos, and described how different trades/jobs/careers utilized mathematics in the day-to-day operations. All students received access to the new program, IXL, and a couple students were able to give positive feedback on the assignments and software.

All students spent two weeks learning and reviewing scatterplots. They spent time analyzing data and determining the difference between positive, negative and no correlation for various different scatterplots. Students also worked on connecting scatterplots to science class, by looking for relationships between two

variables: the independent and dependent variable. It was interesting for students to present multiple scenarios in which they believed an independent variable altered a dependent variable.

While the Google Classroom format isn't a traditional way for students to learn, it did allow them to work on time management, and to improve their ability to self-advocate for themselves, and request live tutoring on a consistent basis. This is an important skill for students to learn as they transition to their college and career plans after high school graduation.

### **Spanish**

This month an instructional plan through Google Classroom continues education using an online format. The students finished the unit "*La Comida*" in Spanish class. The students described different types of healthy foods and described how to maintain healthy eating habits. The teacher asked different questions about healthy habits such as, "how does your culture influence what you eat, what factors influence a healthy lifestyle?" as a Formative Assessment. Also, using Total Physical Response Storytelling strategy allows students to learn grammar, reading, writing and vocabulary, focusing only on the students' learning. Therefore, students have ample opportunities to practice and understand the lesson about healthy issues in Spanish. The teacher checked the students' comprehension daily by asking questions about the story "*La Comida De Mi Pueblo*" after it is read. The students also completed a reflection form at the end of each week to get feedback about their learning. Furthermore, they also had the opportunity to research a native Spanish plate and create a set of questions in order to compare and contrast the type of hobbies and caloric intakes of a typical Spanish student with those of American students. Also, the students finish the assessment "*La comida saludable*". Finally, the teachers in the Spanish classroom help to organize the Virtual graduation ceremonies for Middle and High school students.

### **Physical Education and Health**

In Physical Education, students are being shown multiple avenues to participate in activities to increase strength, increase flexibility, and take part in cardiovascular exercises. Students are participating in workouts such as yoga, Pilates, meditation, cardiovascular, strength, and flexibility.

All workouts are between 15-25 minutes in length and students answer a self-assessment at the end to score their efforts. Students were also assigned a couple "internet challenges" that have become popular through social media such as "The Cupid Shuffle Challenge" and the "Flip Cup Challenge". These challenges kept Physical Education fun and interesting in a time when students have to participate in PE from home.

Classes are also learning the rules and regulations to the sports of hockey and golf through online videos and research. This week students will practice golf swings in their own home and use visualization to imagine striking a golf ball and hitting down a fairway.

In Health, we continue to forge on in our CPR/First Aid/AED unit. The American Red Cross manual was loaded onto Google Classroom and is being used to teach the material along with videos and self-practice.

## **LMA Clinical Department**

During the month of June, the clinical staff and students continue to work extremely hard as we wrap up the school year while engaged in distance learning. Each day the students were encouraged to participate in their daily life skills activities that continued to focus on mindfulness skills, time management skills and healthy coping skills. In an effort to end the year positively the students were asked to leave a note of gratitude for staff or students of their choice that they wanted to thank. This exercise was nothing short of excellent as each student personalized their note about staff with something that was meaningful and important to them, and later was shared with the staff member.

Clinical staff continued weekly individual sessions with their students and families via Zoom with the focus on stability and clinical discharge planning for the summer. Ms. Pelaez and Ms. Fumi continue medication management for our students and use teletherapy for medication management as well. At this time, the clinical team will move forward into ESY planning for the students that will continue to receive their related services at LMA.

As the school year comes to an end and we reflect on how the pandemic affected everyone there are not enough words of affirmation to describe our student body and how they handled this. Our students were faced with a challenge like never before with the distance learning model. Whether they needed a great deal of support or less support, each student took to this challenge every day, doing the best they could in order to continue learning. The students looked forward to “meeting” with their therapist each week and they were truly challenged to use all the skills that we work so hard to teach them every day. I am so incredibly proud of our LMA students!

## **NewPoint Specialty**

**Enrollment as of April 27: 13 residents at NPS**

### **Students attending LMA-3**

New Point students ended the year with such a positive attitude to the Distance Learning Model. The teachers continued using *IXL* for students to work on their level in Math and Reading and be challenged at their own pace. *IXL* allows teachers to recommend specific skills for students to focus on that week. *IXL* has proven to be an asset to our trauma-based population. Students enjoyed going over their progress levels in the last week of school.

Both teachers at New Point have worked diligently to create an engaging Google Classroom. In addition to *IXL* and *Flocabulary* students are required to complete three to four Google classroom activities each week which focuses on the curriculum. Teachers can collaborate, access, and assign daily lessons for the students to complete. The teachers begin each day at NPS with a Zoom meeting to review and assign what the students will be completing each day. This activity allows the students to focus and the teachers can give mini lessons about the topics they will be covering. Teachers continue to use *Flocabulary* weekly. This program allows the students to improve their vocabulary and writing skills. At the end of the week teachers review with “Week in Review”. This strategy allows the students to be informed about “Current Events.” Teachers discuss with the students their thoughts and expectations concerning the global world.



Lastly, we were able to organize a “Moving Up’ ceremony and provide closure for our students from this very difficult year. Ms. Barb and Ms. Mary surprised the students by meeting them outside in the courtyard so that we were able to safely social distance from them but also give them an in-person send off.

**TRINITAS BEDSIDE INSTRUCTION:**

# of Inpatient Students Served: Approximately 30

In April, UCESC’s bedside instruction program at Trinitas Regional Medical Center made a successful transition to a remote, distance learning model after the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic resulted in stricter visitor policies that no longer allowed our staff to work onsite at the hospital.

UCESC’s three full-time teachers assigned to the Trinitas bedside program did an outstanding job of quickly shifting to a virtual instruction model. They provided live instruction from their homes which was transmitted to large screen televisions inside the classrooms at the hospital. Students received instruction in small groups.

*The Bedside Instruction program at Trinitas Regional Medical Center serves both in-patient and day program students who have been referred to the hospital for psychiatric and mental health treatment. UCESC is the preferred vendor of bedside instruction services. Once a student is admitted to the hospital UCESC reaches out to the student’s home school district to offer home instruction services.*

**CROSSROADS SCHOOL:**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Enrollment as of June 18, 2020<br>Actual: 50<br>Changes: 0 Entered: 0 Exited: 0 | Referrals: 1<br>Intakes Scheduled: 0<br>Accepted: 0 |
| Fire Drills: N/A  | Emergency Drills: N/A                               |

**Crossroads Staff Distance Learning Plans and Video Conferencing Sessions**

The need to provide a virtual learning model in response to the national pandemic has tragically altered every aspect of our students, parents, staff and sending districts lives. Crossroads administration, classroom teachers, therapists and paraprofessionals continue to work collaboratively with our students, families, and sending district personnel to ensure that academic progress remains consistent for our children during this unprecedented time in education. We are also providing our students and families with multiple opportunities to learn about the mental health challenges that are being experienced at this time and how we can support them through their angst and countless other emotions. Crossroads staff continue to meet with school administration throughout the week to participate in IEP meetings and parent training sessions. We

are also currently implementing teletherapy sessions as well as live instruction video conferencing opportunities for our students and parents. Crossroads School has scheduled our first ever virtual graduation for our middle school students on June 19th, 2020.

### **Crossroads Middle School Virtual Graduation**

The Crossroads School Community celebrated our inaugural virtual middle school graduation on June 19th, 2020. The middle school committee worked diligently with our graduates, their parents and families, as well as technology staff to ensure a successful and quality virtual graduation by utilizing Zoom software. Crossroads staff created a graduation program, gave live speeches honoring our graduates and made countless prerecorded videos to celebrate our students and their accomplishments. Special presentation awards were given to our three graduates and their loved ones and families were encouraged to mingle with our staff after the ceremony. The commencement was enjoyed by all participants

### **UCESC Crossroads School Speech Department Distance Learning**

**Hope Weinstein M.Ed., CCC-SLP, Jessica Pinzon M.A. CCC-SLP, Catherine Serzan M.S. CF-SLP**

As distance learning continued over the past month the Crossroads School Speech Department, in addition to providing students and families with individual speech-language digital assignments, has a teletherapy program up and running. Live speech and language therapy sessions are being conducted with students via the Google Meet video platform. Our students and families are making phenomenal adjustments to these new ways of learning and we are most proud of them. The speech therapists continue to post daily speech and language activities, strategies, and demonstration videos for parents every day on their UCESC Distance Learning webpages (links to webpages: [HWeinstein](#), [JPinzon](#), [CSerzan](#)).

For families who have opted for group teleconferences rather than individual teletherapy sessions the speech therapists continue to collaborate with classroom teachers and other related service providers during weekly telephone and video conferences with parents. We continue to provide direct strategies to parents with communication issues they face as they work with their children at home.

### **Specific Student Outcomes**

Kevin F. has made enormous progress in his speech and language skills since our distance learning program has begun. He works regularly on the Boom Cards he is assigned, and the data is reflecting his improvements. He is using the Proloquo2Go application on his iPad nicely during weekly teletherapy sessions. He is even allowing his mom to assist him in some oral motor exercises as Hope facilitates them during sessions. A lot of credit goes to Kevin's mom, who really stepped up to partner with Kevin's therapeutic and educational team and Kevin to make the best of this situation. It is very clear that when strong parent collaboration is there it makes all the difference in the student's progress.

### **In Allison Gebler's Elementary Classroom**

The thematic units focused on insects/bugs, home-based play learning, and continuing to adjust to the new "normal". Each day, videos for distance learning included variations of class meeting, read along, basic skills training, and cooking. Additional cross-curricular activities were assigned individually via the Boom Cards App to allow for some opportunities of modified independent schoolwork.

A variety of lessons were provided to families via the virtual classroom google doc in the following subject areas:

-English Language Arts: letter and core word practice through songs and sign language, adapted read alongs of thematic stories, digital reading comprehension questions using picture answers, and multisensory handwriting tutorials.

-Math: counting, 1:1 correspondence practice, color and shape review through songs and using common household items.

-Science / Social Studies: sensory play, virtual field trips, and seasonal/holiday review through class meeting.

-Daily Living: visual schedules of self-help skills and songs/videos to review basic living skills.

Families shared some mastered skills that have been maintained:

-Sebastian continues to maintain skills using Boom Cards. He is also participating in Live Instruction with therapists and his teacher to practice interactive skills.

-Niall continues to maintain low self-injurious and aggressive behaviors while home. He is making some one-word verbalizations as fill in for video songs.

-Dilan has been very successful with toilet training and daily living skills.

-Jianna is working to maintain skills using Boom Cards. She is also participating in Live Instruction with therapists and her teacher to practice interactive skills.

Although Distance Learning is not the most ideal format for our students to receive instruction, they have each used videos and some materials provided in the Virtual Classroom to remain engaged in their learning. Live Instruction has allowed for continued socialization with teachers and therapists, while assisting in the maintenance of skills previously mastered in the school building.

### **In Christina Witte's Middle School Classroom**

With this school year coming to an end, we reflected back on the 65 days of distance learning we all successfully completed. Despite the many challenges associated with this dramatic disruption in the routine that is so valuable to our students, we have continued working on each student's individual IEP goals during individual live teaching sessions and through daily lesson assignments. As a culminating activity, I invited my students to make a digital "Covit-19 Time Capsule" for which they had to integrate their math, reading, and writing skills.

We also prepared for a digital graduation ceremony and all my students were asked to compose a personal note to our graduate, Jillian, on a 'digital graduation card'.

### **In Susan Parenti's Middle School Classroom**

each student in my class participates in individual live teaching sessions. During the teleconferences, I work on the student's individualized goals from their IEPs. I prepare all my materials beforehand and

create google slides for each of my students to follow along during each session. I am continuing to use Boom Learning for my students. Boom is a website that provides educational activities in which the parents can access through a computer or tablet. I am able to monitor the student's progress and it is individualized to each student. The parents have given me positive feedback and we will continue using this program. I add new boom cards weekly for each of my students.

I also created a Happy Numbers account for each of my students. Happy Numbers is an individualized PK-5 online math curriculum designed for remote learning at home. Each student took a 20-question placement test to determine their appropriate starting point in the happy numbers' curriculum. I am able to monitor their progress.

I create an instructional webpage each day for my students. On the webpage, I include videos of myself and the paraprofessionals. The videos consist of functional life skills, communication, receptive language, leisure skills, math, reading, social studies and science. Paired with each video are supplemental materials. I communicate daily with the parents using the Class Dojo App. The parents can message me anytime with questions or concerns. The parents send me pictures and videos of the students completing activities at home. I also post a daily check in on this app each day at 8:30 am. It includes the link to my page on the UCESC webpage.

### **In Aliza Feuerstein's Physical Therapy Sessions**

Currently we have one physical therapist working 2 full days a week at Crossroads School. There are 12 students receiving individual physical therapy (PT) services with a total of 15 individual treatment spots, one PT group and two PT consultations.

Currently physical therapy services are provided either via electronic virtual sessions sent through email or through live teletherapy sessions. The live teletherapy sessions are going well for those families participating. It is a great opportunity for parents to see firsthand what their children were practicing in school. Our parents are being educated on how to practice these skills at home. For those families opting for virtual sessions via email (in place of live teletherapy) I continue to send specific content for each student including personalized videos, pictures, and instructions of what to do. Videos are allowing for easier explanation of the given exercises and the students are enjoying the reminder of seeing their therapist and hearing some familiar songs and verbal cues from our sessions.

In addition, I have been updating my virtual learning page each morning with more resources for our parents to use with our students. Each week I run a series of posts relating to a specific topic. This month we spoke about throwing skills, jumping skills and core strengthening exercises.

I continue to participate in regular teleconferences with parents, virtual IEP meetings and virtual staff meetings with my colleagues.

### **In Kaley Francis Pre-School Disabled Classroom**

We made it to the end of the school year!! A few months ago, we never thought we would be ending our school year through distance learning. I can say that not only did the teachers, therapists and paraprofessionals overcome many obstacles and learned a lot throughout this but so did the parents as "teachers" to their children. I have seen such growth in not only my students but in their parents as well.

Throughout the month of June, we had different thematic units such as tadpoles & frogs, different house pets, and dinosaurs. The classroom teacher and paraprofessionals provided videos, read alouds and crafts to address the thematic unit. I continued to post a daily greeting for my students each morning so they could see a familiar face. In this video, I would go over the calendar and weather for the day. My main goal of this personal video was to provide some comfort to my students during this challenging time. June also provided me with the opportunity to assist a couple families with toilet training routines for their children.

By June, I felt that my students, their parents, and myself found what worked best for each of us during distance learning. My students' parents and myself established a weekly schedule to follow where we could collaborate to discuss any questions or concerns.

### **HILLCREST ACADEMY SOUTH:**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Enrollment as of 6/22/20 Actual: 103<br>Changes: 0 Entered: 0 Exited: 0 | Intakes Pending General Ed.: Seven TBD<br>Intakes Pending Sp. Ed.: Seats full |
|---|---|

This is HAS's final report for the 2019-2020 school year. As the principal of Hillcrest Academy South Campus (HAS), I would like to thank all the HAS staff, UCESC staff, the Foundation, and the Board of Directors for their support during this pandemic and our Distance Learning Program. The HAS staff worked diligently during this time and continually advocated for their students to teach and encourage them. I would also like to thank Ms. Foppert for her guidance over her time at the UCESC and wish her all the best on her retirement.

The Hillcrest Academy South Campus (HAS) last day was Friday, 6/19/20. We held our virtual annual Senior Recognition and Awards Ceremony for the 2019-2020 school year on 6/10/20. The success of the program was due to the contributions of the staff and the support of the Technology Department (Mr. Gonzales and Mr. Patel).

Fourteen students graduated at their respective Elizabeth Academies between 7/13-16/20. Eight seniors were scheduled for summer school in order to graduate in August. An appeal was issued to various Assistant Superintendents in Elizabeth due to summer school requirements being modified in June. We are hopeful that five out of the eight potential seniors will be granted permission to take their required classes in order to graduate. The Board of Directors of the Union County Educational Services Foundation announced the four recipients of the 2019-2020 scholarship awards for \$1,000 each towards post high school education and training. The receipts were: Axel Bentancourt Community Service Award, Daniel Calado Technical/Vocational Training Award, Erik Garcia Outstanding Scholar Award, and Apryl Rubio Most Improved Scholar Award.

Ms. Gonert, shared School Counselor with Hillcrest Academy North Campus, continued to monitor each student's academic progress. Ms. Gronert met with students via Google Meets and helped motivate students to complete their required courses and credit retrieval courses to ensure their graduation status. Ms. Gronert made phone calls to the parents and guardians daily to update them on their progress. The School Counselor worked alongside the support staff and teachers to ensure the grading policies were clear. Ms. Gronert has enrolled students into summer school and has made sure every student is aware of what is required of them over the summer months.

Ms. Gilchrist, Social Worker, continued to spend the school day contacting students regarding their final grades and year end close out procedures. This was accomplished by text, phone calls from an HAS cell phone, and emails. Ms. Gilchrist also took part in the “Great Hillcrest Chromebook Retrieval Program” by assisting the principal with contacting students and families in real time in order to improve the probability of success. 63 out of the 70 Chromebook distributed were collected by Dr. Balsamello, HAS Principal, as he and two Transportation Department drivers rode throughout Elizabeth over three days. The Social Worker also assisted students who individually contacted her and required a personalized intervention whether it be for academics or other social-emotional needs. The Social Worker continued to prioritize all students in Special Education and DCF students by contacting them weekly and provided individual services. This was documented on her weekly logs that she forwarded to the Principal. She completed all the DCF post tests and has participated in a virtual DCF meeting with the DCF team. Ms. Gilchrist attended all staff meetings and participated in a daily meeting with the Principal and the School Counselor. She assisted all seniors in completing their college essays for the UCESF’s scholarship fund.

The HAS Google Attendance Classroom, facilitated by Ms. Clark continued to serve as a successful means for students to log in for attendance purposes and to reflect on the HAS Quote of the Day for their Success Seminar course. We continued to maintain our strong connections with our HAS students and families through daily communication in the form of phone calls and emails. Through this, we were able to both encourage and affirm our student’s efforts in overcoming their challenges, while striving to meet their academic goals. We are so proud of our HAS community and for the resilience and perseverance they demonstrated during this year. As this historic school year comes to a close, one of the highlights for the HAS Community Service Program was when two HAS students were presented with a Presidential Volunteer Service Award at this year’s Virtual Awards Night held 6/10/2020. In order to earn this prestigious award, students needed to volunteer a minimum of 100 hours in their community over the course of the school year. We are very proud of these students and how richly they have served their community over the course of this school year.

Ms. Rubin, School Nurse and Health Education teacher, provided the HAS students with online lessons about communicable diseases and how to prevent them and to stay safe all summer long. Ms. Rubin and Mr. Barone, Physical and Health Education teacher, have been in contact with students via live communications every Wednesday and Friday through Google Meet. She was able to get updates from students and touch base about their lessons and general well-being. Ms. Rubin, along with assistance from Ms. Clark, made absence calls daily, when a student did not respond to the Quote of the Day in the HAS Attendance Google Classroom. All communications have been documented in PowerSchool and daily updates were sent to Dr. Balsamello, Ms. Gilchrist, Ms. Gronert, and Mr. Young. They were also alerted to any immediate concerns with students and their families. Ms. Rubin has been in contact with Ms. Prieto and the administration to prepare for a return to school in the fall. She placed orders for protective equipment and supplies for the health office with Ms. Foppert.

The students in Mr. Barone’s Physical Education classes have been learning about nutrition during the month of June. Some of the topics included general nutrition, nutritional guidelines and nutrition labels and food safety. Students learned about MyPlate and learned the importance of eating a well-balanced diet and getting enough of each nutrient. In Health, students learned about mental health, particularly coping with stress, and expressing their emotions. In addition, students learned about communicable diseases and what they can do to prevent them. Mr. Barone provided his students with other school activities for

students to complete during the last few days of school, after technology was picked up, as well as over the summer to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Ms. Ferrari, Math teacher, communicated with her students and families on a daily basis. In addition, parents and students have been sent very detailed emails in regard to assignments that were both completed and missing. The majority of parents and students have been very receptive to the reach out and have worked hard to be successful. A detailed list of expectations, the HAS Staff Distance Learning Expectations Guide, was kept in hand when communicating with parents in effort to answer all questions. Several students have attended every video conferencing offered via Google Meet with a theme that was based on the concept for the day. For example, one Google Meet was titled Writing Linear Equations in Slope Intercept Form. Students viewed problems projected on a marker board at my home. The students who chose to attend the video conferencing classes also reviewed any HAS Classroom updates together. The videos and assignments have been posted by 8:30 am on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The majority of the students handed in their Google Form assignments. Algebra students have viewed and completed assignments on the coordinate plane, intercepts and linear equations, slope and rate of change, graphing using slope intercept form, graphing linear functions, writing linear equations in slope-intercept form, and using linear equations in slope intercept form. Geometry students have viewed videos and completed assignments on transformation and rigid movement, reflections, rotations, translations and vectors and dilations. Codecogs was utilized to import rational equations into GoogleForms. Students completed multiple choice questions and analytical long text questions on their assignments. Pictures were also imported into Google Forms which included but was not limited to exponential and linear graphs, two dimensional and three-dimensional figures, and pictures of mathematical applications of various careers.

All of Mr. Sobieniak math students utilized Khan Academy to complete their assignments. If needed students could watch Khan Academy videos, read articles and get hints to assist them to better understand the work. There has been ongoing communication with students and their parents about Hillcrest Academy South student expectations for Student Distant Learning. Students and parents have been sent emails about students' achievements and distant learning expectations. Students whose parents completed the Video Conferencing Consent Google Form were invited to video lessons every Tuesday and Thursday. Students in Algebra II classes learned properties of exponential and logarithmic functions. Students of Probability and Statistics classes learned more properties of probability, about independent and dependent probabilities and probability of compound events. Students investigated many real-life applications problems and were advised to complete extra work on Khan Academy to help them improve and develop their mathematics skills.

Several students in Ms. Holden's English classes volunteered to test a computer distance learning website and give feedback to her. The IXL website was a site that Ms. Dattilo, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, wanted the teachers to try out with the possibility of the district purchasing the program. In order to hook the students into the day's activities, Ms. Holden started her classes off with a rap which introduced the topic she presented. Students studied source evaluation, primary and secondary sources, fake news, and plagiarism. As the only Special Education teacher at HAS, Ms. Holden advocated for the 10 students in Special Education. She continually reached out to those students and their parents to help them navigate the Distance Learning Program. Ms. Holden actively enlisted her students' participation in her live video conferences which were held twice a week. Calls were continuously made to parents and students alike. All the parents that Ms. Holden contacted were extremely interested and supportive of her efforts in educating their children.

Ms. Cioffi's students in her English courses continued distance learning for the month of June and finished learning the skills and content of Unit Three of the English Curriculum. The teacher continued to use the class prototype via distance learning that students were accustomed to in class. She posted video modeling skills and assignments and then students practiced the same skills and assignments independently. Students learned the skills and content of Unit Three by applying their knowledge to poetry. Students read and analyzed a variety of poems with different elements and themes. They then created a culminating Google Slides presentation where they analyzed a poem by Langston Hughes. Students showcased their mastery of the skills learned by analyzing important elements of the poem and creating a final Google Slides presentation.

In Ms. Arora's Forensic Science class, students worked on Fire Basic science. In this unit, they learned how to collect evidence from a house that caught fire and analyzed the reasons for the fire. They also watched videos depicting the most common reasons of arson, how to prevent them, and in case it happens what is the best escape plan from the fire. In the Biology class, students learned about Genetics. In this unit they researched how traits and diseases were inherited from parents to offspring. They also learned why some individuals express some genetic disorders even though their parents do not. In Credit Retrieval, two seniors completed all their Biology assignments and earned a 94% and 73%. Ms. Arora used Google Voice and emails to communicate with her science and advocacy students. This provided detailed information to the parents on each students' work. As a result, students put forth additional efforts to complete their assignments. Ms. Arora utilized Google Meet every Tuesday and Thursday for each class. Students who attended the live sessions used the information to enhance their follow up assignments.

Mr. Reichman's Chemistry students have been learning about how elements bond together by looking at characteristics of elements and their subatomic particles and have begun looking at how atoms can share electrons. His Forensic Science students investigated forensic psychology, including defining and categorizing sociopaths, psychopaths, and serial killers, and understanding how those issues can be considered when analyzing crime scenes. His Computer Science students have been working with aspects of programming computer games, including plotting, and drawing shapes, using random numbers and variables, and using sprites to organize data about objects by completing lessons on code.org.

June brought the end of the 2019-2020 academic year and it was certainly an unprecedented ending for Ms. Duarte's students. Regardless, students continued to delve into subject matter that directly tied into the issues taking place within the United States at the moment. In Economics this included the way in which market economies operate, how governments assist in time of need, and the way in which businesses operate. Students were able to conclude the year by coming up with their own business ideas modeled after the ABC television show, Shark Tank. In USII students studied the various protest movements that took place throughout the 1960's including the Civil Rights Movement, Women's Rights Movement, and the Vietnam protests from the time period. This study of protest and change parallels what was happening currently within our nation and spoke to the continued fight for civil rights within marginalized groups. Thus, despite not being able to see each other in person, we have been able to continue touching upon subject matter that remained at the center of students' experiences.

Ms. Wrzesinski contacted every parent of her advocates as well as her students in Social Studies classes via Google Classroom, email, Google Meet, and by phone. She reviewed grades, gave progress reports, and answered any questions. U.S. History I students continued and completed their Reconstruction unit. This unit followed the life of people after the Civil War, predominantly in the South of the United States.



Students were able to see the hardships that African Americans faced every day after the 13th-15th amendments and Emancipation Proclamation. This unit actually occurred at a pivotal point in our own society today and we were able to link the Reconstruction unit to current events. Students also looked more in depth at laws passed to keep former slaves without rights such as Black Codes, Jim Crow laws, and segregation. To tie up this entire unit that included Manifest Destiny, Civil War, and Reconstruction, the students completed two final assignments that brought all three together. This helped students understand how one would not have happened without the other. The final assignment proposed alternate scenarios to see if the Civil War and segregation would occur if actions were completely different. U.S. History II students continued with their Cold War and Communism unit. Students learned about how the Cold War, that meant no physical fighting, was actually accomplished and that tensions were high. Students learned about the differences between communism and democracy, the United States policy of containment, the Marshall plan, the divide between East and West Berlin, the Berlin Wall, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the space race, the nuclear arms race and PSAs of the Cold War. The PSAs of the Cold War were their final assignment to show students that anxiety and tensions were real during this time and America and Soviet Union could go to war at any moment. Modern World History students discussed the topics of genocide and globalization. Students learned about the Rwandan and Darfur genocides. They learned about how the term genocide was created and what needs to occur in order for an event to be labeled a genocide. Students looked in depth at the different groups involved in both genocides and what their reasoning for genocide was. Students learned about globalization for their last week of lessons. They also learned about how everything in the world is interconnected through trade and because of this trade we have a transfer of ideas and culture all over the world. The last lesson focused on the collapse of Rana Plaza in Bangladesh due to unsafe working conditions, the presence of multinational corporations in developing countries and how they unfairly employed the citizens. Specifically, students looked at the Disney Corporation in Haiti, China, and Vietnam as well as Nike's use of child labor.

In Ms. Picciano's art classes students learned about Function and Aesthetics in Design. In this unit we discussed the role of necessity being the "mother of invention" and how design and art is everywhere from mugs, chairs, to product packaging and park benches. The objective was to promote the practice of seeing everything in the world that is made by humans as a piece of art from now on. Students learned the role of both function and aesthetics in everyday design and how we rely on aesthetics for different purposes. Art is part of the human condition that sets us apart from other species. In the assignment students had to analyze certain objects and point out their design characteristics and aesthetic ones and tell why they were included in the design. We also watched a Ted Talks on Simone Giertz who is known for making inventions that fail intentionally but talks about how she learns from each and how the goal of "failing" takes the pressure off of her performance anxiety. Students also fleshed out a personal invention based on a need of their own. The latest assignment analyzed the use of hands in artwork and their importance as symbols and non-verbal communication. Students were shown art throughout the ages that included hands as messages starting with ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics to the Renaissance. The masters relied heavily on hand gestures in order to give the viewer messages about the scenarios in the artwork or to direct the eye. In modern art, students were shown how the use of hands and gestures amplified the meaning of the messenger emotion in the work. The gestures of hands, origins in natural human functioning and meanings in different cultures. This led to its use in art that is produced for activism. We studied Banksy, Shepard Fairey, and Jacob Lawrence. For each used their art to bring awareness of social injustices or are used in activism. Each artist projected their messages to the public in different ways, but the objective was the same, to force the viewer to reflect on society and their stance in social issues at the same time. This lesson was designed to address the recent riots and society's response to police brutality in the form of art rather

than violence. Other social issues addressed in the lesson included themes like environmental awareness and women's rights.

### **HILLCREST ACADEMY NORTH:**

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| <b>Enrollment as of:</b> 6/19/2020<br><b>Actual:</b> 87<br><b>Changes:</b> 1 student dropped to pursue his GED | <b>Referrals:</b> work in progress<br><b>Drills:</b> Last Fire Drill: 2/24/2020 |
|--|---|

Mrs. Machado's Algebra classes were shifted over to a new platform, IXL.com. In June, Algebra students' distance learning activity increased by 200% from May to June. This new platform allowed students to work on assignments directly from their phone. This helped with the obstacle of distraction, limited time, internet connection and other technical difficulties. Constant communication was attempted with all students to help them complete the school year. Mrs. Machado provided video conference support three times a week and encouraged students to join just to maximize student success.

US History 2 and Civil Liberties ended the school year by focusing mainly on current events, specifically the protests. Students broke down the documentary "13th," various videos and articles giving context to the issue of police brutality. Students then regularly engaged in video meetings with myself where we discussed the protests, the history of mass incarceration, and overall oppression of people of color in the United States.

During the final month of the school year, students in Mr. Van Cleef's Social Studies classes applied the knowledge and skills they have learned to their final projects. Economics students created a "Personal Finance Guide" for themselves to use as they enter adulthood. These guides have information about how to decide which credit card is right for them, how to budget money and how to make financial decisions like car purchases. In US History I, students created "My Rights as an American" that empowered them with the knowledge of their rights and the ability to assert their rights in given situations.

In English, students have been analyzing poetry. Students finished out their poetry unit by writing their own poem. Then students moved over to recent events. This was a subject (racial equality, confederate statues, equality in healthcare, etc.) we discussed as a class at the beginning of the year. Students reflected on recent events, analyzed a James Baldwin quote, and came up with ideas on how to solve the policing problem if they were given a magic wand. Students have continued to complete English assignments on Google Classroom. Students finished the year with two final assignments that reflected all of the major reading and writing skills taught over the course of the school year using a story, a poem, a non-fiction article, and a Pro/Con article. Students also completed an end of the year reflection of the course and compared and contrasted regular school with distance learning. Finally, students shared their summer plans and plans for next year and explained whether or not those plans have been affected by Covid-19.

In Creative Writing, students have been using Khan Academy to revisit grammar they previously learned. They have worked on Syntax: Conventions of Grammar, and Usage and Style. Students have been watching the videos KA provides, doing the exercises, and completing the assessments.

Probability and Statistics covered networks, matrices, and probability with combinations. The final lesson recalled their knowledge of bell curves from the first semester. It examined the idea of “flattening the curve” in relation to the present pandemic.

Students in Geometry also covered all the topics we normally covered in our consensus maps. They started with quadrilaterals and ended with transformations and areas of compound shapes or shaded regions.

Mr. Kaplan finalized the virtual yearbook which commemorated the year and displayed all of the yearbook members' hard work over the course of the school year. Advocates continued working to contact students and parents regarding the distance learning process, attendance, grades, technology, and any other issues or concerns our students might be experiencing. Advocates kept track of parent contact, technology and student involvement in courses on Google via a Google sheets tracker. Advocates maintained a close monitoring of seniors' progress ensuring they graduated.

This month in health class, the students continued the substance abuse unit. The students learned about myths about marijuana and prescription drug abuse. In PE, students continued to reach their fitness goals through fitness videos of proper exercise form.

The month of June found Chemistry, Biology, and Forensic Science students finishing their school year and hopefully their online distance learning journey. Chemistry students finished their year strong by learning about the differences between ionic and covalent bonds and how these bonds are used to create many common substances throughout our universe. Biology students wrapped up their year by learning about the most basic forms of life - the prokaryotes. Forensic Science students solidified their knowledge of physical evidence types and collection techniques and their applicability to the successful resolution of criminal cases. Next year, we all hope to be back to learning face-to face.

We have all become more comfortable with distance learning procedures and applications. Every effort was made to engage the students. Phone calls were made weekly to parents, whether to our advocates, our seniors, or anyone struggling with assignments. Google Meets were set up for at least twice a week with students whose parents gave consent. One of the advantages of online learning was timing. Students could work on assignments any time during the day or night. This was really helpful to those students who had to take full time jobs to help out their families. They also made attempts to get in many past assignments when they could. Late is still better than never.

June 2020 marks an end of a school year that made history without any doubt. Despite not having the chance to physically congratulate our graduates and say "good bye" to our underclassmen, we are happy to end this year knowing that we did our best to provide them with the necessary skills to go to the next level. We hope next year everything goes back to normal and have our students return the classroom where best practice achieves greater results.

## **NONPUBLIC DEPARTMENT:**

Nonpublic Department Teachers, Speech Therapists and Child Study Team members finished the school year serving the nonpublic schools in the following districts: Berkeley Heights, Cedar Grove, Clark, Cranford, Elizabeth, Hillside, Kenilworth, Linden, New Providence, Plainfield, Roselle, Scotch Plains, Springfield, Summit, Union and Westfield. The teachers from the Nonpublic Services Department worked collaboratively with their peers in the nonpublic school they serve utilizing a distant learning model.

Consultation meetings for 2020-2021 school year for 192/193, IDEA, Nursing, Technology, Security and Title I programs were held via Google Hangouts.

Nonpublic Case Managers continued to meet mandated timelines for annual reviews. Teachers and parents participate in meetings either by Google Hangouts, Zoom or conference telephone calls. All reevaluations and initial evaluations will take place once schools reopen.

Without notice, the Department of Education shut down Additional Funding for the months of May and June. It appears that the DOE will not provide funding for these two months. After consulting with all of the Educational Commissions in New Jersey, while we will be preparing to meet the guidelines from the Department of Education to complete in-person evaluations, no nonpublic evaluations will be scheduled until the Department of Education releases the funding amounts for the 2020-2021 school year.

## **TRANSITION DEPARTMENT:**

Work Readiness Academy Student Enrollments: 11 (Max 12)

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

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

The Work Readiness Academy wrapped up its 2019-20 school year this month. The program made a successful transition to a distance learning model in March after the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic forced UCESC schools to unexpectedly close.

The distance learning program utilized both the Google Classroom and the Workplace Readiness Online Program through the Conover Company. Students logged into the Google Classroom at 9am each day to complete a morning assignment posted by the instructor. Then at 9:30, they joined their teacher for a live web-based call through Google Hangouts Meet. The virtual meeting allowed time for the teacher to provide a “mini-lesson” and answer any questions the students may have had about the assigned work. The students were then assigned an additional two hours’ worth of work to complete independently. The teacher was available in the Google Hangout during this time in case students need one-on-one support. The students also participated in weekly, virtual yoga class with Ashrams for Autism yoga studio.

To celebrate the class of 2020, the Work Readiness Academy held a virtual livestream graduation ceremony on Friday, June 19th. The ceremony included:

- Live speeches from WRA’s program director Josh Bornstein, UCESC Superintendent Terry Foppert, and the program’s instructor, Ms. Sharlene McQuade.

- Video taped messages from the WRA staff
- The presentation of the WRA's Employer Partner of the Year Award to Children's Specialized Hospital in Mountainside, NJ.
- The presentation of the WRA's Support Professional of the Year Award to Ms. Marguerite Bennett.
- A video montage that included images of our students at their internships from throughout the year.
- A final video tribute to the class of 2020 (6 graduates).

Students and their families, WRA staff, and community partners were all able to watch the livestream ceremony via UCESC's YouTube Channel.

Families of students who are graduating from our program this June were referred to agencies for continuation of services including the NJ Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, the NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities, and the New Jersey Travel Independence Program at Rutgers.

Additionally, we have provided families with information related to available mental health services, stress-reducing family activities, and resources on how to speak with their children about the current COVID-19 pandemic crisis.

*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 last September. Nine student interns were selected from an application pool of 20 candidates.

Project SEARCH wrapped up its 2019-20 school year this month. The program made a successful transition to a distance learning model in March after the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic forced UCESC schools to unexpectedly close.

The distance learning program utilized both the Google Classroom and the Workplace Readiness Online Program through the Conover Company. Students logged into the Google Classroom at 9am each day to complete a morning assignment posted by the instructor. Then at 9:30, they joined their teacher for a live web-based call through Google Hangouts Meet. The virtual meeting allowed time for the teacher to provide a "mini-lesson" and answer any questions the students may have had about the assigned work. The students were then assigned an additional two hours' worth of work to complete independently. The teacher was available in the Google Hangout during this time in case students need one-on-one support. The students also participated in weekly, virtual yoga class with Ashrams for Autism yoga studio.

To celebrate the class of 2020, Project SEARCH held a virtual livestream graduation ceremony on Monday, June 23rd. The ceremony included:

- Live speeches from Project SEARCH's program director Josh Bornstein, UCESC Superintendent Terry Foppert, Nikki Sumpter, the Senior VP and Chief HR Officer at Atlantic Health System,

Cornelia Gilpin, the Manager of Nursing Education at Overlook Medical Center, and the program's instructor, Ms. Jourdan Spencer.

- Video taped messages from the Project SEARCH staff.
- Video taped messages from the team of mentors at Overlook Medical Center.
- A video montage that included images of our students at their internships from throughout the year.
- A final video tribute to the class of 2020 (9 graduates).

Students and their families, Project SEARCH staff, and Overlook staff were all able to watch the livestream ceremony via UCESC's YouTube Channel.

Families of students who are graduating from our program this June were referred to agencies for continuation of services including the NJ Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, the NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities, and the New Jersey Travel Independence Program at Rutgers.

Additionally, we have provided families with information related to available mental health services, stress-reducing family activities, and resources on how to speak with their children about the current COVID-19 pandemic crisis.

*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.

UCESC is currently delivering a virtual model of the Job Exploration Counseling services.

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

## **TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT:**

The Transportation Department is awaiting guidance from the Department of Education regarding transporting the students safely in the upcoming school year. We anticipate there will be guidelines and may require complicated bus routing and schedules and possibly the need for more buses. We will work closely with the districts to set expectations for their transportation needs in accordance with the guidelines received.

For the extended school year, we currently have no routes set up to provide transportation. Most schools will be practicing in distance learning and districts have made the decision to enter into parental contracts for schools that will hold extended school year programs in the traditional school setting.

Payments to our bus contractors have been delayed since the statewide shutdown occurred back in Mid-March. A3904/S2337 was passed in Mid-April allowing for districts to continue to make payments to vendors including bus contractors. We have entered into negotiations with our contractors and have collected data to support our recommendations. The data was presented to our districts and based on the data we arrived at a 35% reduction to the contractors. The districts have countered with a 65% reduction and we continue to work with our contractors to come to an agreement. The majority of the contractors have rejected the 65% reduction. We are hoping to have a resolution shortly.

### **TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT:**

The Technology Department continues to work with administration to prepare for distance and blended learning in case the need arises in the 2020-2021 school year.

We are training on and configuring our new asset management system.

We have invested in a video conference platform to host our virtual board meetings.

We trained on and configured a streaming production service to host our schools' graduations ceremonies. They were live streamed on YouTube and Facebook for all families to enjoy.

Our IT staff continues to assist the entire UCESC team but have also extended our support to the students and families of Union County. We remain grateful for the staff's support and flexibility during these straining times.

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