

WHY DO WE NEED SOFT SKILLS?

Soft skills are crucial for everyone, including individuals with special needs. These skills enhance personal and professional development, improve relationships, and support independence. Soft skills help individuals navigate the world more effectively, gain confidence, and foster meaningful connections. These skills are especially important when promoting Independence. Skills like problem-solving, decision-making, and time management empower individuals to live more independently. They can handle daily activities and challenges with less reliance on others.

STAFF HIGHLIGHT

MELISSA THOMPSON

Melissa has dedicated 14 years of service to Gramon School, working in various roles including classroom assistant, job coach, and driver. As a true team player, she consistently goes above and beyond to ensure her students are engaged in meaningful activities throughout the day. Melissa is highly adaptable, always ready to step in wherever needed—whether at an off-site job location, in the classroom, or behind the wheel of the van. On a daily basis, she transports students to the business office, where she helps them develop independence through clerical and custodial tasks. If necessary, Melissa takes the initiative to create additional tasks for students to work on during their time there and supervises them at our restaurant job sites. Back on campus, she contributes to seasonal craft projects that enhance the school's environment and brings her infectious enthusiasm and school spirit to every aspect of her work.



COMMUNITY BASED INSTRUCTION

This month, students embarked on an exciting journey by train to explore the world of transportation! The trip gave them a hands-on opportunity to learn about how transportation connects our communities. The experience was a fun, interactive way for students to gain confidence in navigating public transportation. It was a day filled with learning, adventure, and new experiences that will stay with them long after the trip!



QUICK INFORMATION

The Gramon School
24 Dwight Place, Fairfield, NJ 07004
Phone: 973-808-9555

Principal: Lisa Mulhall
Supervisor of Special Ed: Jodie Corforte

POLICE DEPARTMENT VISIT

Students had the opportunity to visit their local police department, engaging with officers and learning about the important work they do to keep the community safe. This field trip offered valuable insights into public service and fostered a sense of community connection.



THERAPIST CORNER

"Have any loose change at home? Our students took this change and cashed it in for yummy treats! Let me tell you how we did it! Our students and staff members collected spare change for the entire month of January. Then, in small groups we sat at the table and separated the coins into quarters, dimes, nickels, and pennies. Once all separated, our students looked up how many coins were needed to fill a specific roll. For example, there are 40 quarters in a \$10 roll. Once all the change is rolled, we headed to TD Bank and exchanged the coins for cash. We then headed next door to Dunkin to purchase yummy treats for our class. This lesson targeted categorizing, collaborating with peers, money management, budgeting, ordering items, and conversing with community helpers. What a functional way to earn a snack!"

Samantha Cifelli, M.S., CCC-SLP

Speech-Language Specialist

WHAT'S HAPPENING NEXT?!

3/17 - St. Patrick's Day

3/21 - World Down Syndrome Day

3/27 - Early Dismissal

4/14 - 21 - Spring Recess



CAREER READINESS

GFS WELCOMES A NEW VOCATION



In Maplewoodshop, students will be given the opportunity to thrive through meaningful, hands-on work. This job site is specifically designed to offer a supportive, accessible environment for individuals to engage in the assembly of small wood projects. Through this job site, individuals with disabilities are empowered to showcase their talents, gain valuable experience, and contribute to the production of wood projects, all while enjoying a positive, inclusive, and empowering work environment.