

# Linwood News

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Quarterly School Newsletter | November 2016

## Welcome from Linwood's New Education Director

Hello, Linwood families!

We are very pleased to announce that the Linwood School newsletter is up and running again starting with this edition! We hope this newsletter will help us keep you posted on what is happening at your child's school and maybe even bring you a smile or two as you read it.

I want to express my excitement at being here as Linwood School's new Education Director. We're very happy that Genese Neal is still a part of the school as one of our IEP and Assessment Coordinators. We have also welcomed a new social worker, Erin Lee. She brings a wealth of experience and knowledge with her, and I'm sure you'll see her around when you come to visit us.

Since the last edition of this newsletter, the school has continued to grow and we now have ten classrooms. We project an additional classroom may be added after the holidays. As our student population grows, we experience growth in staff as well. Some staff have moved on and other new staff have joined us. Everyone adds to our school team and its wealth of experience. We feel good about providing so many students and families with quality education services.

In November, we will have lots of fun Thanksgiving festivities for the students. They have already gone to the pumpkin farm and participated in many fall activities, like pumpkin painting and carving.

In December, we will be holding

our annual winter musical show! Of course, Santa will stop by to bring gifts to the students. The event will be held on Thursday, December 22. Keep an eye out for a flyer in your child's book bag for more details.

As we work on revamping our quarterly school newsletter, we welcome your input and feedback. Please submit any comments or additions to your child's teachers. We thank you for your continued support of Linwood School, and we look forward to celebrating all of our wonderful students, families and staff this holiday season. We have so much to be thankful for!

– Diann Butler, Education Director

# Inside the Classroom

Linwood Teachers share what has been going on inside of their classrooms this term

**Ms. Brooke's Class** has been having so much fun! They really enjoyed their field trip to Larriland Farm, where they picked their own pumpkins. Back in the classroom, the class has been perfecting their skip counting and sight words. The students have been doing such a great job working together in groups and taking turns during games. Ms. Brooke is proud of all their hard work and looks forward to seeing the progress they make throughout the rest of the year!

**Ms. Cierra's Class** loved going out into the community this term. The class started the quarter by practicing safety signs, which helped them recognize people, places, and things during field trips. The first class trip was to Walmart, where students used their money to purchase two items of their choice. Next, the class went to the Baltimore Zoo. They got to feed some animals at the petting zoo, ride the train, and pretend to be frogs while playing on lily pads! Lastly, the class visited the pumpkin patch to take a hayride and pick pumpkins. Back at school, the class carved their pumpkins and included them in their Halloween door decorations, which won first place in the door decorating contest! The class is excited about the

next term with their new teacher Mr. Stephen.

**Ms. Colleen's Class** has been keeping very busy this fall! They have been discussing the change of the seasons and all the fun that brings. In reading, the class has been learning about the different objects and colors associated with fall. In science, they have been learning about the life cycle of a pumpkin, and they even got to go to the pumpkin patch to make it real! In math, they have been using their counting skills to understand what it means to have more or less of something (they have learned that 6 cookies are better than 2 cookies). The class is excited to dive into the holiday season and learn about giving and taking turns. They hope to explore more places in the community as well!

**Mr. Craig's Class** has a daily schedule that includes Unique Learning System Reading and Math lessons as well as leveled instruction geared to each student's individual learning style and abilities. They also have weekly lessons in Social Studies, Science, Art, Music and Physical Education, and they participate in school-wide vocational programs that help them build important life skills. In October, the class went

to Larriland Farm to pick their own pumpkins. Then, they brought the pumpkins back to class to decorate them before taking them home!

The class had to say goodbye to Ms. Katie, but they were excited to welcome Ms. Katherine and glad to have Ms. Ashley back after she was out for a while. And of course, Mr. Thomas continues to be the glue that holds the high-energy team together!

**Ms. Katie's Class** has been welcoming the cooler weather and change of the seasons! In September, they took a field trip to the Maryland Zoo in Baltimore to wrap up their animal classification unit. Some of the class favorites were the penguins and the polar bear—they even got to see the polar bear catch and eat a mouse! In October, the class went to Larriland Farm where they enjoyed a hayride and talked about the differences in the pumpkins—there were still quite a few green ones! Then, the students had a lot of fun dressing up during Spirit Week at the end of the month, especially for Halloween and pajama day!

Looking forward, the class is starting a new unit on the solar system in science and will also go on nature scavenger hunt walks weekly. The students have been doing great with paying attention to the small details of seasonal changes, and they are all increasing their ability to work independently.



**Mr. Reggie's Class** is currently exploring the varied modes of transportation. So far, they have learned about the ever-present and oh-so-familiar friend known as the school bus as well as the magical metal birds of the sky we call airplanes! The class also took a trip to Larriland Farm, where they went on a hayride and picked pumpkins of their very own.

**Mr. Sam's Class** loves fall and wrote a poem to show it!

Fall is here,  
Pumpkins are growing!  
Watch our students,  
Keep going and going!

To Larriland Farm,  
To the Baltimore Zoo.  
Linwood is exploring,  
Watch out for this crew!

But while we are traveling,  
No end to learning.  
Linwood strives for excellence  
Our ideas keep churning!

So,  
Lets bring in the colors,  
Lets bring in the fall.  
Linwood School is ready,  
Time for roll call!

**Ms. Symone Class** has been enjoying many adventures out in the community, such as shopping at Walmart, volunteering for Meals on Wheels, and visiting the zoo. The class closed out October with a Halloween celebration and welcomed November with a fall scavenger hunt. The month of November will be focused on community support services such as the police department. The class is also going to explore leisure activities such as bowling

and board games. Happy Thanksgiving from the class!

**Ms. Terre's Class** hatched tadpoles from eggs this summer and released them as cute tree frogs in the beginning of October—they didn't know it would take that long! The class also enjoyed their trip to Larriland Farm, and they have been working hard organizing clothes and houseware for the reopening

of the Linwood Boutique in Old Ellicott City.

**Ms. Tracey's Class** has been enjoying fall in the classroom as they learn about how apples and pumpkins grow. They even got to make a tasty apple pie and take a trip to Larriland Farm to pick their own pumpkins! At the end of October, the class was excited to talk about Halloween and show off their costumes!



# Behavioral Vocabulary

Linwood's Behavior Specialists share insight on the vocabulary they use daily when working with students

As this is the very first Behavioral Vocabulary column, we think it is appropriate to start with a greeting and introduction. Hello! We are Rachel Maher, Erika Greszler and Daniel Marshall, the Behavioral Specialists at Linwood School. We are also all BCBAs (Board Certified Behavior Analysts). The requirements to become a BCBA are complicated enough that they would take up too much space here, but if you are interested, you can find more information at <http://bacb.com/bcba-requirements/>.

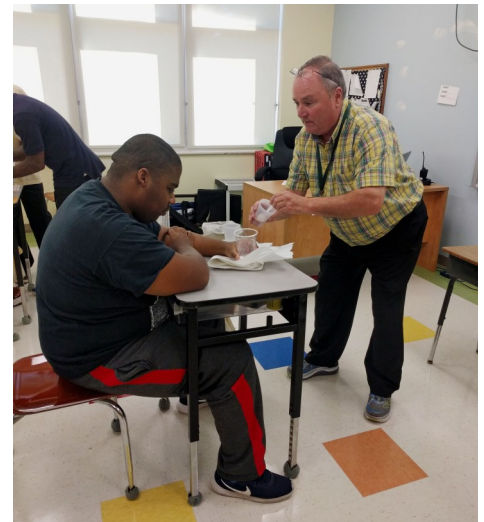
You may have noticed that the BCBAs you interact with have a peculiar vocabulary that they use. Sometimes we use strange words and sometimes we use regular words in strange or irregular ways. The goal of this column is to give you some insight into our vocabulary, including what the words mean and why they are important to us.

The best starting point is to define what we mean when we talk about a behavior. A behavior is:

“that portion of an organism's interaction with its environment that is characterized by detectable displacement in space through time of some part of the organism and that results in a measurable change in at least one aspect of the environment.”<sup>1</sup>

What does that mean? It's a very technical way of saying that a behavior is what people do. The most important part of that definition, to us, is that it has to be measurable; there needs to be some kind of change that we can measure. In order to accurately measure a behavior, we first have to ensure we are able to observe the behavior in some way. We then train everyone responsible for working with a student to see a specific behavior (and therefore take data on that behavior) in the same way. If one person's impression of what “aggression” looks like for a particular student doesn't match another person's impression, we will not have consistent or accurate information.

The question of whether or not we can measure something is a good litmus test as to whether it would be a behavior your behavior specialist could help with. If you wanted your student or child to “be nicer” or “be safer” we may come back and ask you what that might look like. How would you measure “nice” or “safe”? While we may not be able to measure those exact concepts, we can measure the amount of times someone says “please” or the amount of times someone kicks another person.



As you can see, even a simple word like “behavior” can have a complex definition. We understand that the language we use is not always the easiest or most intuitive to pick up. But our hope is that, as this column progresses, we can build up a shared vocabulary that you can use with us at school and with any technicians or support staff you may utilize at home or in the community.

*Rachel Maher  
Erika Greszler  
Daniel Marshall.*

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<sup>1</sup>This definition was obtained from Johnston, J.M. & Pennybacker, H.S. (1993). *Strategies and tactics for human behavioral research* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Hollsdale, NJ: Erlbaum from a citation in Cooper, J. O., Heron, T. E., & Heward, W. L. (1987). *Applied behavior analysis*. Columbus: Merrill Pub.

# Gift Guide for Holiday Shopping

The Related Services Team provides fun holiday gift recommendations

As the holiday season is quickly approaching, many of us are starting to think about what presents to get for our children. With so many options available, it can be difficult to decide what toys to buy.

Play is an integral part of the learning process where physical, social, and cognitive skills develop, and it can be supported through selecting thoughtful gifts with your child's strengths and needs in mind. We are sharing our recommendations for toys that are both developmentally appropriate and fun!

## Wind-up toys

- Great for improving:
  - Understanding of cause and effect
  - Communication skills!
    - ⇒ Asking for help
    - ⇒ Turn on, spin, twist, and push!
- Visually engaging with lights and sounds

## Felt Food – Pizza Set

- Great for improving:
  - Pretend and imaginative play
  - Development of functional sequencing skills

- Good pre-requisite to real meal-preparation tasks

## Light Bright

- Great for improving:
  - Fine motor development
  - Visual motor skill development
- Visually stimulating!

## Marble Run

- Great for improving:
  - Fine motor development
  - Gross motor development
  - Motor planning
- Assists with problem-solving skills!

## Hungry Dog

- Great for improving:
  - Fine motor development
  - Visual motor development
  - Developing a mature pencil grasp

## Spot It!

- Great for improving:
  - Visual perceptual skills
  - Language development

Below are additional resources that provide great ideas for holiday shopping:

- Toys R Us: Toy Guide for Differently-Abled Kids
- National Autism Resources: Toy & Gift Guide for Autistic Kids and Teens
- The Inspired Treehouse: Pediatric Therapists' Favorite Toys for Kids

We wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season!

*Rebecca Brew, MS, OTR/L*  
*Alison Brady, MS, CCC-SLP*  
*Maddy Baer, MS, CCC-SLP*  
*Laurie O'Connell, MS, CCC-SLP*  
*Cierra Thames, MS, OTR/L*  
*Kate Fischer, MS, CCC-SLP*





# Flu Symptoms & Prevention

Linwood's Health Team shares tips on identifying and preventing the flu this winter

Seasonal and temperature changes are upon us, and with these changes comes cold/flu season. We are already beginning to see stuffy noses and fevers circulating. The best way to stop the spread of contagious illnesses is to wash hands frequently with soap and water!

Please be advised as to when you should keep your child home from school. Once a child has a fever, vomiting, or diarrhea, keep the child home until symptom free and fever free for 24 hours.

Keep your child home from school for:

- Signs of pink eye (conjunctivitis): red, irritated eyes with pus or clear liquid.
- Rashes (especially with a fever)
- Strep throat or a sore throat with white spots in the throat (with or without fever)
- Stomach pain / vomiting / diarrhea
- Temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or more.

– *The Linwood Center Health Team*

## Star Staff

Thank you to these staff members for going above and beyond to help our students succeed

- ★ **Mr. Thomas** – for going the extra mile (literally!) to ensure one of our students made it to school every day. Thanks for caring and making a difference!
- ★ **Ms. Michelle** – for keeping staff on track with paperwork and running organized, supportive IEP meetings for parents and staff. You are so very appreciated!
- ★ **Ms. Rachel** – you shine so often, but especially when you helped a student who needed someone to attend an extra meeting to support his needs. Thanks for stepping up to the plate!
- ★ **Mr. Reggie & Ms. Symone** and their classroom teams – for supporting your students during a staff transitional period. Hats off to you!
- ★ **Mr. Chris** and the cafeteria staff – congratulations on a fantastic inspection. The school passed with flying colors thanks to your efforts!



Thank you for our new printer!  
From, the more efficient Related  
Services Team

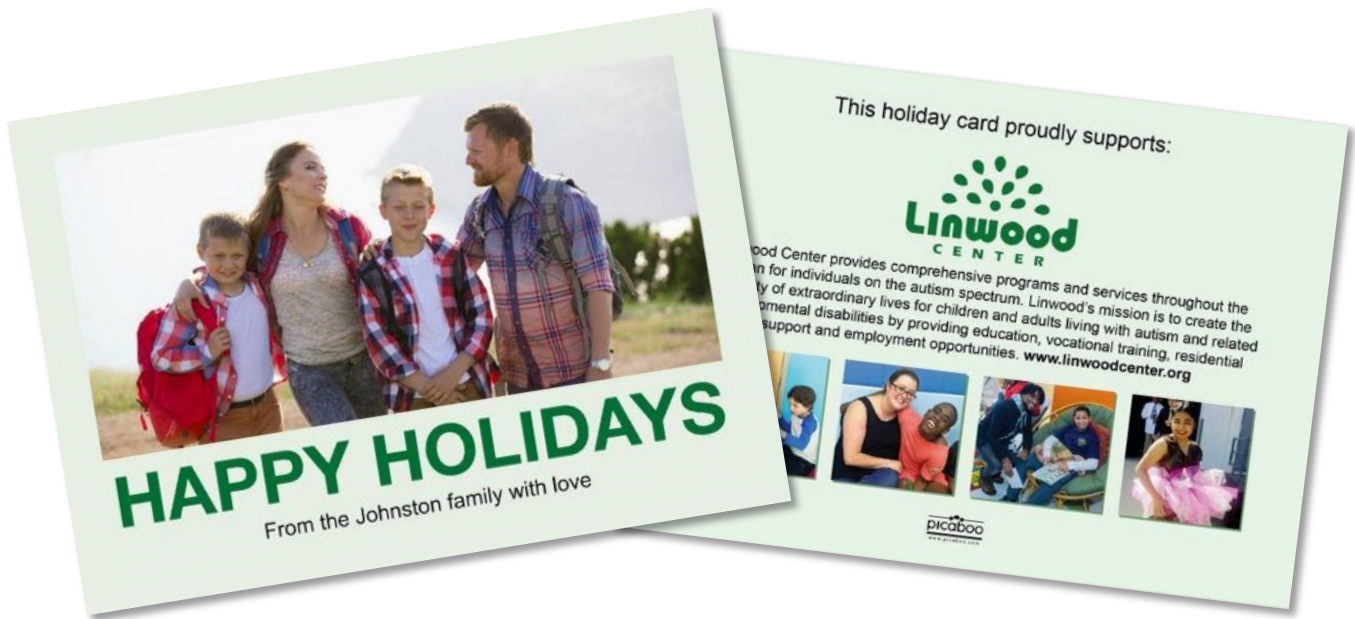
Our staff is the best—so appreciative of the little things!

# Linwood Holiday Cards

Create custom holiday cards to send to your family and friends while supporting Linwood!

Linwood is excited to be partnering with Picaboo this holiday season to provide our families and supporters with custom holiday cards to send to your loved ones! You will be able to customize the cards with your family photos while supporting and sharing our mission. 50% of your purchase will go directly to Linwood!

Create your cards at [www.picaboo.com/non-profit-holiday-cards/linwood-center/](http://www.picaboo.com/non-profit-holiday-cards/linwood-center/). If you have any questions, please contact Peyton Plummer at [pplummer@linwoodcenter.org](mailto:pplummer@linwoodcenter.org) or (410) 465-1352 x228.



## Helpful Resources & Workshops

Upcoming workshops recommended by Linwood's Social Worker, Erin Lee.

**Pathfinders for Autism:** Offer a variety of free events for families. Browse and sign up for events at [www.pathfindersforautism.org/calendar](http://www.pathfindersforautism.org/calendar). Below are some upcoming events:

- **11/19, 12/3, 12/17:** Free Yoga for Children and Teens with Autism at The Yoga Center of Columbia
- **12/1:** Managing Challenging Behaviors at Home at Worcester County Board of Education
- **12/8:** Managing Tantrums and Meltdowns at The Arc of Frederick County
- **12/21:** Sensory Social Time for Teens at Perry Hall Branch Library

# School Calendar

## November 2016:

11/23	In-Service for Staff (School closes at 12pm)
11/24-11/25	School Closed for Thanksgiving Holiday

## December 2016:

12/22	Annual Winter Musical Show
12/23	In-Service for Staff (School closes at 12pm)
12/26-12/30	School Closed for Winter Break!

## January 2017:

1/16	School Closed for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
1/27	In-Service for Staff (School closes at 12pm)

## February 2017:

2/3	Progress Reports Released for Term 2
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# Contact Information

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**“Positivity creates change.”**

– Colleen Martin, Linwood Teacher