

Linwood News



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Quarterly School Newsletter | December 2017

Happy Holidays from Linwood!

Dear Parents and Guardians,

The holiday season is fully upon us now! It's easy for us to get caught up in the hustle and bustle of the season, but there is one special event you definitely don't want to miss—our **5th Annual Winter Concert!** The concert is scheduled for **Thursday, December 21st at 1:00pm**. The students are preparing a special performance for you, with group and solo musical performances. After the show, there will be light refreshments and snacks served, and the students will be visited by a very special guest—Santa Claus! We hope you can join us for the fun!

As a reminder, we just completed Term 1 of our 2017-2018 school year. You should have received your child's progress report earlier this

month. As usual, if you are interested in discussing your child's progress or meeting with any member of your child's team, please contact your teacher to set this up. We are always happy to talk to parents.

Lastly, we welcome your input to the newsletter. Please submit any comments or additions to your child's teachers. We thank you for your continued support of Linwood School, and we want to wish you and your family a very happy holiday season and a very bright new year!

— Diann Butler, M.S.
Education Director

Inside the Classroom

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

Ms. Colleen's Class can't believe fall is almost over! Fall has flown by with the hustle and bustle of the harvest season. The class has enjoyed making trips to the grocery store, visiting the pumpkin patch, and making fall recipes in cooking class, such as pumpkin pie! In the classroom, the students have been busy using their AAC devices to interact with other classmates. They are practicing asking and requesting and using pronouns to label different people. As the winter holidays approach, the class will be learning about different holiday traditions and making their own traditions in the classroom! Happy holidays to all!

Ms. Jamie's Class had a great start to the new school year! The students enjoyed an exciting field trip to a local pumpkin patch and went on a thrilling hayride. In addition, students had fun participating in the Halloween celebration at school, including the haunted sensory room and trick-or-treating. In the classroom, the students have continued to learn about adding, subtracting, and identifying coins and their values. They have also worked on their handwriting skills on dry erase boards and on gel baggies. The class is looking forward to another great term this winter!

Ms. Karen's Class welcomed two new members to their teaching team this term, Lucas Greene and Courtney Bassnett, and the students really enjoy working with them! The class has been focusing on vocational skills by working at Linwood's Adult Day Program two afternoons a week. The students clean the cafeteria, do data entry, clean bathrooms, and vacuum. One morning a week, they also work at the Linwood Boutique in downtown Ellicott City, most recently making soap that is sold in the store. Stop by the Boutique to see their creations and other great holiday gifts made by Linwood students! The class has also been working on vocational skills that they would need if they worked in a restaurant, such as rolling cutlery in napkins, filling salt and pepper shakers, and setting and clearing tables.

In Language Arts, the students are focusing on expressing angry feelings appropriately and practicing relaxation techniques. They have also been writing emails to each other, helping them practice composing their own sentences and questions. The students would love to receive an email from their parents! Contact Ms. Karen to get your child's email address.

The class is very excited about the holidays. This year, the boys will participate in a Secret Santa exchange, using money that they have earned to buy one of their classmates a gift!

Ms. Katie K.'s Class has had many exciting changes this quarter, and they are getting settled into their new routine! The students took advantage of the last few warm days of fall by going on nature walks and spending time learning outside. They also continued to work on vocational skills outside of the classroom by visiting the Linwood Boutique, where they have created soaps, Autism Awareness ornaments, and bath bombs for sale at the store. It is wonderful to see how much the students enjoy being a part of the community!

Ms. Katie W.'s Class enjoyed autumn, and they are ready to welcome winter! This fall, the class took a field trip to the pumpkin patch, where the students chose their own pumpkins to take home and decorate. Back in the classroom, the students have been learning about the human body systems and maps, and they are working on math and reading at their individual levels. The class also started social skills/speech groups recently, and they have been making great progress at learning how to understand and work with others! The students like to include music, movement, and games into these groups, as social thinking can be very difficult

and they work harder when things are fun and naturally rewarding. Throughout December, the class will learn about the holidays and ways to celebrate! In the new year, they will begin learning about hibernation and forms of transportation.

Ms. Rebecca's Class has been settling in to the routines and changes of new school year. The students have continued to work on a variety of pre-career skills, and they enjoyed a trip to the pumpkin farm and getting back into the kitchen. The class has also continued to work on identifying and understanding the value of money in preparation for shopping trips and community outings. In addition, they have

been working on vocabulary and comprehension skills during a five senses unit and now a winter traditions unit. As they enter the next term, they are looking forward to learning the skills they need to go out into the community for shopping and other field trips!

Mr. Sam's Class is excited for winter and the holidays!

Winter is coming
There's a chill in the air
That won't stop Linwood
Awesome students are everywhere!

Reading is all about the holiday season
Snowflakes may appear
Learning has to continue!

We can't cancel classes for the school year!

With temperatures changing
Science will be about weather
Linwood does not work alone
We work together!

With the holidays comes fun
But don't forget math
Fractions can be taught funny ways
Let's bring on the laughs.

The fall months went by
They are in the past
The winter months are ahead
Save the best for last!

Mr. Stephen's Class has been enjoying the fall season with weekly community outings, both



recreational and vocational! Some of these trips included going to the grocery store to practice purchasing snacks and visiting Linwood's Adult Day Program to practice vocational skills. The students have also had the opportunity to practice vocational skills in the community by dropping off bubble piecework and making monthly deliveries for Meals on Wheels. In class, they are learning about math, money, and social skills, in addition to completing art and cooking projects. They are looking forward to an enjoyable holiday season and a fun winter!

Ms. Terre's Class had a great fall term. They began with a field trip to Clarke's Farm, where they learned about the local farm animals in our community. The

students also enjoyed an outing to Lariland Farm, which included a hay ride and picking their own pumpkins for Halloween.

This term, the class also started working at Linwood Boutique in Old Ellicott City. At the Boutique, the students practice their community and vocational skills, creating arts and crafts for sale at the store. In the classroom, the students learned to cook fall-themed snacks, including their favorite—grilled cheese and tomato soup!

The class is in charge of running the school store on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The students enjoy setting up the store and selling snacks to fellow students and staff. They are also learning about money and making

change in the process.

The class looks forward to the upcoming holidays and New Year, where they will continue to learn new ways to practice their independence and build on vocational abilities.

Ms. Tracey's Class has been doing a lot of fun things this holiday season! In reading group, they have been learning about different family traditions that take place around the holidays. The class even incorporated holiday fun into science class by experimenting with different ways to dissolve candy canes! The students have also been working hard in music therapy practicing their songs for the holiday concert. They are excited to see what's in store for 2018!



Holiday Gift Guide

Our Related Services Team share tips for creating holiday wish lists and choosing practical and fun toys

The holidays are a time for family and friends to come together and celebrate. A fun holiday tradition for children is writing a wish list to communicate what he or she may want to receive. Below are some ideas for how to involve your child in creating his or her own wish list this year! We have also included a few of our recommendations for toys that are fun and facilitate physical, social, and cognitive skills development.

How to help your child create a holiday wish list:

- Print or cut out pictures of toys/items for your child to choose from. Put only 3-4 out at a time and see what interests them. Talk about what you do with each one.
- Look at holiday fliers together and cut out what he or she likes and paste it on paper.

Toy recommendations:

- The Widget Writer Fidget Pen



- Crazy Aaron's Thinking Putty



- Super Sorting Pie



- Elefun



Tips for selecting toys:

- Ditch the batteries – Toys that make noises are fun, but we want the children to be doing the noise making. Model the noises and encourage your child to imitate.

- Pick open ended toys – Toys that have no beginning, middle or end can be used in a variety of ways and allow your child the freedom to be experimental and inventive.
- Pick traditional toys – These toys tend to promote pretend play and are more open-ended in nature. For example: Mr. Potato Head, doll houses, tool sets, tea sets, train and train tracks, etc.
- Pick toys that encourage movement – Making forts and tunnels is great for pretend play that includes gross motor activity.
- Forget the gender norm – Don't limit girls to dolls and boys to toy cars. Encourage girls to play with tools and boys to play with kitchen sets—this can build a whole new vocabulary that hasn't yet been introduced to your child!

Happy holidays from your
Linwood Related Services Team!

- Alison, Becca, Kendra, Laurie,
Maddy, and Susan

**Adapted from "10 Tips for Selecting Toys for Your Speech Delayed Child." Friendship Circle Special Needs Resources Blog.*

Behavioral Strategies: Available/Not Available

Linwood’s Behavior Specialists share insight on the strategies they use daily when working with students

This term, we present information on a behavioral intervention strategy known as “**available/not available**.” Many times, children may ask for things that we have decided are not available (i.e. “iPad is finished”) or things that are not feasible or truly unavailable (i.e. a cereal that is not in the house.) Quite often, if we tell a child “no” to a preferred item or activity, negative behaviors such as crying or tantrums may occur. However, if we have a method for letting the child know in advance what is or is not available, then this may help ease the blow to “accept no.”

As an example, we may say, “iPad is not available, but you can have a puzzle or a book.” If the child accepts the alternative, then specific praise should follow, such as “Great job choosing a toy that is available.” If the alternatives do not appear to be acceptable, it is critical to follow through with the contingency. This means that the unavailable item must stay unavailable not matter the outcome. As with most strategies, this requires teaching and exposure. It is okay if it does not go perfectly the first time. Over time, consistency and exposure to

the options will result in improved outcomes.

One way to practice this strategy is by using a piece of paper that is half red and half green with the words “Available” on top of the green side and “Not Available” on top of the red side. You can create this chart with a list of written items or activities (like in the example below) or with icons that symbolize those things. If you use icons, you may also need blank ones along with a dry erase markers for adding icons not already prepared.

The items on the chart may switch from side to side depending on a variety of factors, such as how much time the child has already

had the item. For example, the iPad may be on green for 30 minutes and then on red for the rest of the night. Switching up the items from the red side to the green side will also help maintain a good rotation of items/activities so that you are providing a variety of leisure activities.

If you are interested in trying this method at home and need help, please feel free to reach out to Linwood’s Behavior Team.

Happy Holidays!

- Rachel Maher
- Erika Greszler
- Daniel Marshall
- Amanda Tincknell

Not Available	Available
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• iPad• Chips• Pool	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Books• Tickles• Swing

When & How to Wash Your Hands

Linwood's Health Team shares important guidelines for proper handwashing this winter

Keeping your hands clean through improved hand hygiene is one of the most important steps we can take to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others. Many diseases and conditions are spread by not washing hands with soap and clean, running water. Below are some guidelines for when you should clean your hands and how to properly and thoroughly clean them.

When should you wash your hands?

- Before, during, and after preparing food
- Before eating food
- Before and after caring for someone who is sick
- Before and after treating a cut or wound
- After using the toilet
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste
- After handling pet food or pet treats
- After touching garbage



How should you wash your hands?

- Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold) and apply soap.
- Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
- Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the “Happy Birthday” song from beginning to end twice.
- Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.
- Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

We hope you have a safe and healthy holiday season!

- Linwood Center Health Team

**Adapted from “Handwashing: Clean Hands Saves Lives.” Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.*

Star Staff

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

- ★ **Ms. Sandra, Instructional Assistant** – our Employee of the Month for October & November! Sandra has worked as an Instructional Assistant for over two years, and her passion and dedication to the students is exemplary. She comes to work each day with an incredible attitude, which undoubtedly sets her students and her classroom team up for success!
- ★ **Ms. Teresa, Instructional Assistant** – our Employee of the Month for December! Teresa has worked both in the classroom and in our Children’s Residential program, which has allowed her to develop an incredible rapport with many students, from our elementary classrooms to our high school population. Her versatility and flexibility make her a valuable asset to Linwood School, and we’re beyond lucky to have her as part of the team!
- ★ **Ms. Lorielle, Office Assistant** – Thank you for juggling endless tasks at the front desk with such a positive attitude and wonderful smile! We are so glad you joined our team, and we’re grateful for your hard work every day!
- ★ **Mr. Chris & Ms. Flor, Kitchen Crew** – Thank you from the entire staff for your endless devotion to providing our students with delicious, nutritional meals! We truly appreciate you!

Helpful Resources & Events

Upcoming opportunities and resources for students and parents recommended by Linwood staff

Baltimore Autism Society and **Howard County Autism Society** offer activities, events, and therapeutic groups for families. Learn how to become a member and check out what opportunities are available near you at www.baltimoreautismsociety.org and www.howard-autism.org.

Pathfinders for Autism offers a variety of free, helpful workshops for individuals living with autism and their families. Find and register for events and workshops at www.pathfindersforautism.org/calendar.

Here are a couple of great opportunities coming up around the area:

- Sensory Friendly Santa – Sunday, December 17 at The Mall in Columbia
- Special Needs Parents Meetup – Thursday, December 28 at the Hereford Library
- Financial Planning for Special Needs Families – Wednesday, January 10 at HCAS in Columbia
- Sensory Friendly Film: Finding Dory – Saturday, January 13 at the Hereford Library
- Special Needs Summer Camp Fair – Tuesday, January 23 at Cedar Lane School in Fulton
- Night at the National Aquarium – Saturday, February 24 in Baltimore

School Calendar

December 2017:

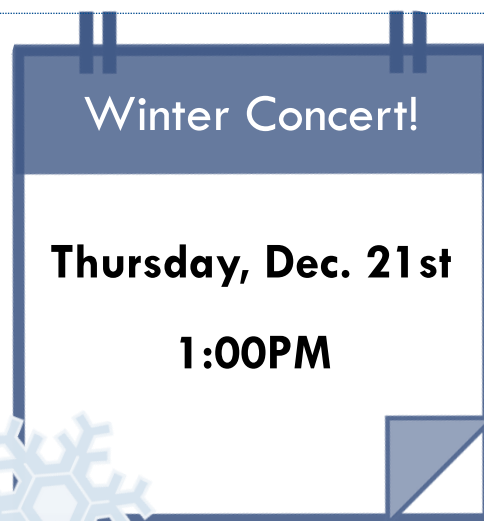
12/21	Winter Concert & Santa Visits!
12/22	In-Service for Staff (School closes at 12pm)
12/25-1/1	Winter Break – School Closed!

January 2018:

1/2	School Reopens – Welcome Back!
1/12	In-Service for Staff (School closes at 12pm)
1/15	Martin Luther King Jr. Day – School Closed
1/26	In-Service for Staff (School closes at 12pm)

February 2018:

2/6	Term 3 Begins
2/12	Progress Reports Released
2/16	In-Service for Staff (School closes at 12pm)
2/19	President's Day – School Closed
2/23	In-Service for Staff (School closes at 12pm)



Contact Information

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“ Positivity creates change. ”

– Colleen Martin, Linwood Teacher