

Linwood News



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Quarterly School Newsletter | February 2018

Happy New Year from Linwood!

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Winter is here, and we have had four weather-related school closings thus far. As you know, we are required to make up these days. After we get far enough into the season, I will send home a list of makeup dates. Unfortunately, it will cut into our spring break and some of our June summer break as well.

The month of December was very busy! Staff attended the MANSEF (Maryland National Association of Special Education Facilities) conference, which brings together non-public special education schools. The day was filled with learning and team building opportunities for our staff. Thank you for being supportive when we close school for professional development!

I also want to thank all of our wonderful families

for the big turnout for our 5th Annual Winter Concert in December—it was a huge success! We hope you truly enjoyed all of the student performances and the entire event.

Lastly, we just completed Term 2 of the school year. You should receive your child's progress report with this newsletter. As usual, if you are interested in discussing your child's progress or meeting with any one of your child's team members, please contact your teacher to set this up. We are always happy to talk with parents.

Please remember that it is cold/flu season. Wash hands, stay warm, and take care of each other!

— 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 hasn't slowed this winter season! The cold weather may keep the class inside, but they have done a lot of motor movement to keep their muscles growing. Coming up with ways to stay active in the school has been important and the class has also been following their fitness journal. In reading, the students have been identifying different feelings and items that are associated with those feelings to help them understand what their bodies are telling them. The class is keeping up with their monthly grocery store trips, and they have been making fun recipes with their ingredients. As winter hopefully comes to an end soon, the students look forward to getting out into the community with field trips for more authentic learning experiences!

Ms. Jamie's Class had a great winter term. In December, they loved participating in holiday festivities. They did an amazing job performing at the Winter Concert, and they really enjoyed the visit from Santa Clause. The class was also introduced to cooking this term. In December, the students made reindeer cookies as a holiday treat. In January, the class started learning about their bodies and healthy eating. They created models of themselves using a

circle cracker for the head, a square cracker for the body, and tearing apart cheese sticks to make legs, arms, hair and facial features. The students enjoyed eating both treats! In math, the class has been learning about two-dimensional shapes by identifying shapes around the room. They look forward to another great term this spring!

Ms. Karen's Class is ready for spring, and they are eager to get outside! One of the class's priorities this term was physical fitness. Every day, the students go to the walking track to work on different stations, such as wall push-ups and squats. In January, the class also got to go bowling. They had a great time and even got a few spares!

In early February, the class had a Super Bowl Party and invited Mr. Sam's class. They ate a lot of yummy food and practiced their conversational skills! The students focused on conversation starters and asking questions. The class also started a Black History unit in Social Studies to coincide with Black History Month in February. The students will be researching African American scientists, leaders, athletes, and performers. At the end of the unit, they will present the information that they learned to the class.

The students are still making weekly visits to the Linwood Boutique to work on vocational skills. Recently, they learned how to sand! If you need anything sanded, please let them know!

Ms. Katie K.'s Class is trying to stay warm this winter. They welcomed a new student who transitioned into the classroom, and everyone has been doing a great job getting to know each other! The class is learning new vocational skills while working at the Linwood Boutique, and they were very lucky to be able to go on a field trip to Play N' Learn this term. The students are also doing a wonderful job expressing their emotions, which they have been learning about during reading group.

Ms. Katie W.'s Class had a busy winter season! The class participated in the school-wide Winter Concert, as well as other group activities for the holidays. Throughout the month of January, the students learned about the ways that animals deal with winter—migration, hibernation, and adaptation. They also learned about many types of transportation vehicles, both common and uncommon. Some of the social skills the class has recently focused on are big problem/little problem, back-and-forth conversations, recalling personal information in order to answer questions, and how/why to avoid asking obvious questions.

The class started new units of study for February. In science, the students are learning about force and motion. They hope to take a field trip to the Maryland Science Center in early March, as they have a lot of hands-on exhibits for the class to try out. In the meantime, the students are conducting lots of in-class experiments! For social studies, they are studying the lives and contributions of various African Americans through history. They have learned about George Washington Carver and are beginning to discuss Sojourner Truth. In early February, they took a trip to the Benjamin Banneker Museum and Historical Park, where they learned about

Banneker's contributions to society and got some hands-on experience with colonial life.

Ms. Lisa's Class has been learning about vocational jobs, including how to take care of their personal hygiene for the work environment. The class also learned about the Kids' Fitness Challenge, an obstacle course that goes from city to city across the country to encourage kids to exercise. They also completed a science project in which they saw the effects of soda on teeth using a hard boiled egg and learned the importance of brushing teeth. The students will put these lessons to work as they go out on community-based learning trips.

Ms. Rebecca's Class enjoyed the winter concert and even had a couple of soloists from the class perform. One of the students sang a song, and one played the keyboard. The class just finished a reading unit on health and fitness where they learned about eating healthy, drinking water, and exercising. In math, the students have been working with money, using the dollar up strategy and counting coins and bills. They are excited to be going on their first shopping trip soon and using these skills to buy a reusable water bottle and some snacks. The class has continued to enjoy cooking and art projects and will be working on more pre-career experiences next term.



Mr. Sam's Class is braving the winter weather!

Gee is it cold!
But where is the snow?
Linwood stays warm
We light up the show!

With Olympics in February
And African American History
Month too
Lets read about our great
country
And hold back on the Boos!

The flu season is upon us
How do we not get sick?
Covering your mouth is a start
Also washing your hands will
do the trick

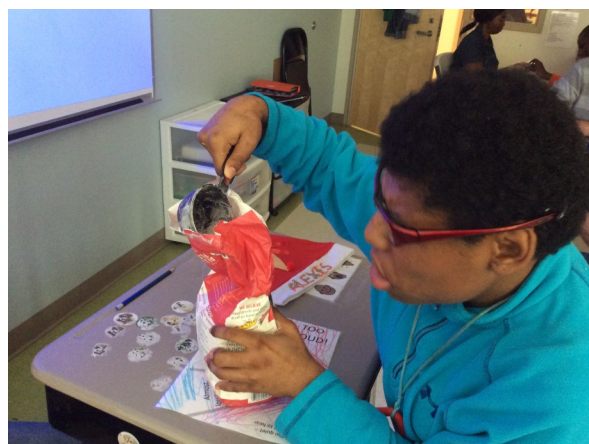
Linwood always stays positive

We look out for each other
You know what they say
Birds of a feather flock
together!

Mr. Stephen's Class has been making the most of this cold winter season with weekly outings in the community. The class has been to the grocery store to practice purchasing snacks, items for the classroom, and ingredients for cooking projects. The students have also continued to practice their vocational skills in the community by dropping off bubble work and making monthly deliveries for Meals on Wheels to help those in need. In the classroom, they are learning about time, counting, money,

vocational, and social skills, in addition to completing art and cooking projects. The class is looking forward to the warmer weather ahead!

Ms. Tracey's Class has been enjoying the winter months! In reading group, the class has been learning about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and President's Day. In math, the students have been learning about shapes and where we see them in our environment and community. They continue to work very hard on their individual goals and objectives each day! Although they have been enjoying their snow days, the students are looking forward to spring weather in the near future!



AAC Funding Resources

Our Related Services Team shares resources for attaining funding assistance for AAC systems

Can you believe graduation is just a short four months away? While some of you get ready to celebrate the progress and achievements your child has made over the years at Linwood Center, it's also important to prepare for the upcoming changes. If your child has an **Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)** system, it will need to be returned to the providing county upon graduation. Below are some resources to assist with funding your child's own personal AAC so they can continue to communicate via the methods they have worked so hard to establish.

1. **NAA's Give A Voice Program:** Provide communication devices to qualifying individuals with autism who are non-verbal or minimally verbal

www.nationalautismassociation.org/family-support/programs/naas-give-a-voice-program/



2. **Small Steps in Speech:** Partner with Childhood Apraxia of Speech Association of North America to award grants for speech therapy to families of children with apraxia
- www.smallstepsinspeech.org/grant-application/



3. **The Eric Fund:** Grant needed assistive technology and equipment to help children and adults with disabilities live on their own terms in the community

www.ericfund.org/apply/



4. **Prentke Romich Company:** Provide assistance in submitting requests for AAC devices through Medicare, Medicaid or private insurance.

www.prentrom.com/funding



Even if it is not your child's graduation year, it is never too early to prepare for your child's functional communication system for the rest of their lives. Contact your child's Speech Language Pathologist if you have any questions.

- Alison Brady
- Kendra Reines
- Laurie O'Connell
- Maddy Baer

Behavioral Strategies: Task Analysis

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 “**task analysis**.” Often times, we ask our students to complete tasks that, to us, may appear simple. However, to our students, these are quite complex and involve a number of not-so-apparent steps. For instance, teaching a child to brush their teeth involves a minimum of eight steps:

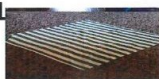







1. Get toothbrush
2. Turn on water
3. Wet toothbrush
4. Put toothpaste on brush
5. Move brush along teeth
6. Spit out toothpaste
7. Rinse Mouth
8. Repeat as needed

The point to be made here is that the hold-up in teaching new skills may involve a variety of factors related to these steps—the student may be unfamiliar with all steps in the process; the student may be unfamiliar with a portion of the steps in the process; or the student may be unsure of the order of the steps. In order to increase the likelihood of skills mastery, it is important to keep the following aspects in mind:

- Stick to only the most essential of steps—don’t get lost in the nuances of perfection.
- Always practice in the same order.
- Create a visual support to go along with the teaching process (*see example to the right*)
- Consider if there are prerequisite skills that need to be taught before introducing these skills.
- Chaining may be an important part of this process

To expand on the process of “chaining” to support teaching skills through task analysis, you should understand that there are two types of chaining—forward and backward chaining. Chaining involves pairing certain skills or tasks in combination and reinforcing the sequence and flow. For some learners, it may be important to start with forward chaining where you teach each step in sequence from first to last. For other students this may be more complicated, and they may need exposure to the terminal skill before the breakdown of skills. This alternative approach is called backward chaining. Both

Rolling Silverware

-  Lay napkin out seams up... Points up and down.
-  Fold the bottom point to the top point.
-  Lay a butter knife toward the edge of the fold.
-  Lay your fork, tines up, on top of the knife.
-  Pinch the napkin with utensils and roll one full rotation until the knife is back flat against the surface.
-  Fold the point of the right side in towards the middle.
-  Fold the point of the left side in towards the middle.
-  Now roll from the bottom up.

strategies can be helpful and support the learning process.

If you are interested in trying this at home and need more support, please feel free to reach out to the Behavior Team here at Linwood.

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

Spread the Word, Not the Germs

Linwood's Health Team shares important guidelines for staying healthy during the cold & flu season

With cold and flu season rearing its ugly head, we wanted to remind everyone how to prevent, treat, and manage the flu virus. Please keep the guidelines below in mind when deciding whether or not to send your child to school. This will help control the spread of infectious diseases at school and give your child the best opportunity to learn and grow.

Students should remain home for the following reasons:

- A rough night—if your child didn't sleep well the night before, seems more tired than usual, or just doesn't seem like themselves
- A temperature greater than 100 degrees—children should be fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever medicine!) before returning to school
- Diagnosed with a strep infection by a doctor—students need to be on an antibiotic for a minimum of 24 hours, fever free, and feeling well before returning to school.
- Vomiting or having persistent diarrhea during the night or in the morning before school.
- Ear pain with a fever or drainage/ leakage from the ear.
- Not eating or drinking for 24 hours.
- Heavy, moist cough, chest

congestion, discolored nasal drainage, or stuffy nose.

- Pinkeye (conjunctivitis), redness, irritation, and crusty drainage affecting one or both eyes—students need to have finished 24 hours of medication and have no redness or discharge before returning to school.

Prevention: Please remember about the importance of preventing illness as well by following these tips:

- Frequent hand washing (with soap and water or anti-bacterial hand sanitizer)
- Using disinfectant wipes that kill cold/flu viruses (Lysol wipes or sprays) on door handles, light switches, sink faucets, toilet handles, phones (*very important!*), toys, chairs, etc.
- Eating healthy/natural foods, drinking lots of water, getting proper amount and quality of sleep, not touching your face with your hands, staying away from people who are sick, getting adequate exercise, and proper use and disposal of tissues

If your child becomes sick before school, please notify the School Nurse about the reason for your child's absence. We will alert staff



of illnesses to help prevent and control the spread of infection at school.

Flu Shots: While Linwood does not offer flu shots, it is recommended that you talk to your child's pediatrician about obtaining a flu vaccine. If your child does receive a flu shot, please send a copy of the documentation from the healthcare professional in a sealed envelope to the attention of Linwood's School Nurse.

Thank you for your attention to these important matters concerning the health of our students! Please feel free to contact the Health Office with any questions or concerns.

- Linwood Center Health Team

To learn more about this season's flu outbreak, check out the CDC's website: www.cdc.gov/flu/index.htm

Staff Spotlight – Kahlilah Brooks

Ms. Kali, our Music Therapist, was the brains and talent behind our 5th Annual Winter Concert in December

How did you first get involved with Linwood Center?

I moved home to Maryland from Memphis, where I was the sole music therapist for the Memphis City/Shelby County school system for over 8 years. I have specialized in pediatric autism throughout my entire 10 year career, and I wanted to find a place where I felt my passion as a music therapist could really make a difference.

How did your background prepare you for this job at Linwood?

As a student, I had a six month internship at a Fairfax County Public School that made me realize my passion for working with children living with autism. After my internship, I moved to Memphis to work as a board certified music therapist at an autism treatment center. There, I was trained to work as a behavioral technician under the direct supervision of Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs) and simultaneously developed the center's first music therapy program.

My knowledge of various applied behavioral analysis (ABA) techniques and music therapy interventions has equipped me

with a unique skill set for working with children with autism. My passion also led me to complete advanced training to become a Certified Neurologic Music Therapist and pursue a Master of Arts in Music Therapy.

What has been your greatest experience at Linwood?

The Winter Concert hits the mark! If you were there for the concert, you saw what I experience everyday—Linwood at its best. Every single person came together to create a wonderful experience for the students and their friends and family.

What do you hope to achieve in the future?

I would love to provide individual sessions for students who need additional support in certain skill areas, particularly expressive/receptive communication. I would also love to develop a sensory program focusing on vibroacoustic therapy through the use of a "Somatron."

In what ways does music therapy benefit our students?

Music is very reinforcing. Through the use of familiar music and various instruments, music therapy provides additional



support in achieving a wide range of goals and objectives. These could include increased attention span, decreased response time, gross and fine motor skills, increased eye-contact, and areas of language development. Because we work in a group setting, music therapy also gives our students the opportunity to work on social development and positive self-image.

Describe Linwood in 3 words.

A Loving Family

What do you do in your free time when you're not working?

I spend time making music with my family! I have two young kids (ages 4 and 5), a puppy, an old cat, two guinea pigs, and an English husband (who claims he's still 29).

Fun fact people may not know about you?

I used to be the lead singer and guitarist of a hard rock band that performed in the DC/MD/VA areas and parts of the East Coast, including New York.

Star Staff

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

- ★ **Ms. Leah, Administrative Assistant** – Our Employee of the Month for January! You have quickly become a very integral part of organization-wide operations. From classroom needs to administrative needs across departments, you are always ready and willing to lend a helping hand, and you do so with immense positivity. We are so lucky to have you!
- ★ **Ms. Aleia, Instructional Assistant** – Our Employee of the Month for February & March! You are one of the most dedicated, motivated, and encouraging IAs on the Linwood team. You are so skilled in your position, and you bring such a level of positivity to your job. Your students love working with you and look forward to seeing you each day!
- ★ **Mr. Thomas, Instructional Assistant** – Thank you for stepping up and helping your classroom during this transition stage! You are making sure the students have routines to their day, lots of educational activities, and all the things they need to learn and grow. You are wonderful!
- ★ **Ms. Lisa, Teacher** – Thank you to one of our newest teachers for setting up lessons and activities that meet the needs of your students every day and working hard to ensure your class is running smoothly and effectively. Your students love you!
- ★ **Ms. Katie K., Teacher** – Thank you to another one of our newest teachers for working hard to get to know your students and setting up clear routines and activities that benefit them. You and your team are always trying new things to help the students, and your students love you!

Helpful Resources & Events

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

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 Movie: Peter Rabbit – Saturday, February 24 at The Mall in Columbia
- Azure Family Concert – Sunday, February 25 at Baltimore Hebrew Congregation in Pikesville
- Volunteer Social Group for Young Adults with ASD – Tuesday, February 27 at SPCA Shelter in Baltimore
- Brown Bag Workshop: Maryland ABLE Accounts – Wednesday, March 14 in Columbia
- Sensory-Friendly Easter Bunny at Columbia Mall – Sunday, March 18 at The Mall in Columbia
- HCAS Transition Symposium – Saturday, March 24 at Cedar Lane School in Fulton
- Honestly Autism Day – Saturday, April 14 at the Radisson North Baltimore Hotel

School Calendar

February 2018:

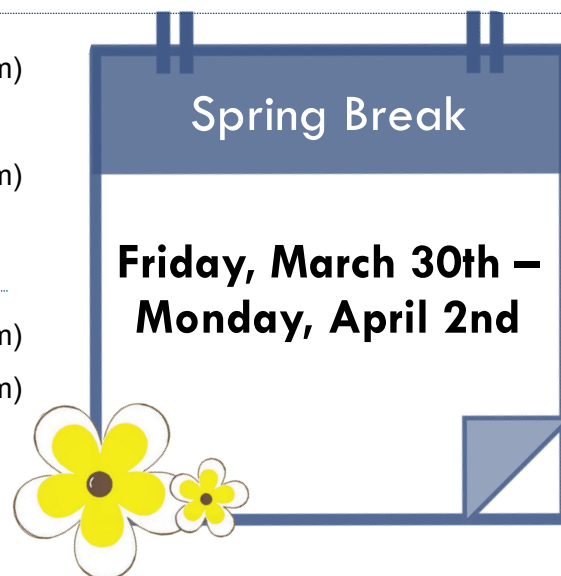
2/16	In-Service for Staff (School closes at 12pm)
2/19	President's Day – School Closed
2/23	In-Service for Staff (School closes at 12pm)

March 2018:

3/9	In-Service for Staff (School closes at 12pm)
3/23	In-Service for Staff (School closes at 12pm)
3/28 & 3/29*	Snow Make-Up Days
3/30-4/2	Spring Break – School Closed

April 2018:

4/3	School Reopens – Welcome Back!
4/13	In-Service for Staff (School closes at 12pm)
4/23	Progress Reports Released
4/27	In-Service for Staff (School closes at 12pm)



*There will be at least two more Snow Make-Up Days. We will inform you when we determine those days.

Contact

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“ Positivity creates change. ”

– Colleen Martin, Linwood Teacher