

St. Johns County School District

Life Work Transition Program.....What Are We Up To Now?



We are busy making ourselves known around our new location at First Coast Technical College. The Lifework Transition Program has been familiarizing ourselves with our new home through tours of the individual programs of study and trying to find ways to get our students involved as a means to expand and explore student interests. While on campus, our students have been gaining valuable employment skills through hands on experiences working in the bookstore, cafeteria, culinary department, and working with the preschoolers in Tech Tots. The faculty and staff at FCTC have been extremely helpful and welcoming and we are thrilled to be a part of this excellent college campus.

In the classroom, we have been working to get our young adults ready for Community Based Work Experiences. The students are learning how to be work ready through practicing proper personal hygiene, changing into work uniforms, and maintaining their work clothing. We started our "Travel Training" program with the Sunshine Bus Company and have begun traveling off campus via public transportation. The students have been studying route maps and schedules and learning how they can utilize public transportation to get to and from desired work locations. The students have also been studying career interests, independent living options, and recreation/leisure activities which they would like to explore.

GOALS:

-Our goals for the year are to prepare students for competitive employment through student centered planning and supported employment skills practice throughout the community. We are constantly working to develop additional partnerships throughout the community to provide students a variety of locations and work experiences while they search to discover their personal career interests and skills.

*Contributed By: Adam Ringwood, ESE Teacher,
Life Work Transition Program*

Important Dates:

9/26, 6:30-8:00 pm– Gifted Parent Advisory
Committee Meeting, St. Augustine High School

10/10, 5:30-7:30 pm– Parent Advisory Committee
Meeting, Fullerwood Center,
10 Hildreth Drive

Renaissance World Gold Village Partners with Project Search

Our Renaissance World Golf Village is hosting an internship with a group called Project Search. The goal of the internship is to teach competitive, marketable, transferable skills for people with disabilities. The acquisition of these skills should lead to competitive employment here or with another community employer. The intern will also learn employable skills and the workplace culture to assist in the transition from an intern to a successful employee.



Renaissance article contributed by: World Golf Village Renaissance St Augustine Resort Atrium Hospitality Refresh newsletter

World Golf Village Renaissance St Augustine Resort Project SEARCH

The World Golf Village Renaissance St. Augustine Resort family has been amazingly caring and supportive of Project SEARCH. Since being welcomed into the Renaissance family, program staff (Byron Pennington, ESE Teacher and Job Coaches Lisa Marringer and Hassan Mansaray) have had in-depth collaboration with the General Manager Larry Cooper, with HR's Brandi Broadway and Vikki O'Brien and with several Department Supervisors. Project SEARCH staff were basically given freedom to roam and access every department for our own personal department development. Since then we have identified and developed 20 different internships for our interns. Internships include House Person, Concierge, Floor Care Utility, Public Area Attendant, Resort Shop and Barista, Kitchen Steward, Front Desk Clerk, Villagio Restaurant Host & Hostess, Banquet Server, Housekeeping, Bellhop, Laundry Attendant, Villagio Restaurant Busser, Accounting, Human Resources, Villagio Line Cook and Banquet Food Prep, Banquet Set-Up, Villagio Restaurant Waiter and Waitress, Sales Assistant, and Engineering.

For our first internship rotation, our interns have expressed interest in the following departments; Accounting, Barista/Guest Shop, Engineering, Human Resources, Kitchen Steward, Banquets, Hotel Lobby Check ins and housekeeping. The interns were prepared in depth for their interviews and undergone a staggered interview/start process and seven of the eleven students have met with department supervisors and successfully completed an interview. Our final four, in the third rotation, will be interviewing next week and everyone will be in an internship by our Internship Start Date, Sep-

tember 5th. They will also undergo a background check following their interview and after passing, they will receive an acceptance letter, department uniform, nametag and Renaissance pin. VocFit Assessments were conducted which basically allows us to see the strengths, interventions, and needs for each intern compared to each of the 20 internships in order to ensure their success. Countless *Task Analysis* have been developed for the numerous tasks/jobs here at the hotel and we have also had in-depth lessons on team building, communication, conflict, motivation, setting attainable goals, interpersonal skills and more.

We will continue to develop our interns and prepare them for their upcoming 4.5 hours a day internships, create Job Development Plans and prepare them for their first employment planning meetings. Our list of goals continues to grow everyday but it's safe to say our main goals are: teaching our interns professional skills for the workforce, helping them gain competitive paid employment and making sure they learn how to maintain employment once they leave the program. Every day is new, different and more exciting than the day before. We truly could not ask for a better group of interns and we have confidence that each and every one of these young adults will be a success story by the end of Project SEARCH's first year.

Contributed By, Byron Pennington, Project SEARCH Instructor, St. Johns County School District





Preparing for the Solar Eclipse at Pedro Menendez High School



Ms. Bonvallet's and Mrs. Bowker's Pedro Menendez High School classes prepared for the solar eclipse by constructing pinhole viewing boxes, making eclipse cookies and eating moon pies!

*Contributed By: Ms. Bonvallet, ESE Teacher,
Pedro Menéndez High School*



St. Johns County Special Olympics Takes State



This picture comes from ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex in Disney World. St. Johns County Special Olympic Athletes competed in the Florida State Track and Field Division (Pentathlon, 100M Run, 400M Run, 100M Walk, Shot Putt, Long Jump, High Jump, and Softball throw). Participants included various high schools, middle schools and a few graduates in the county.

Contributed by: Celeste Bowker, ESE Teacher, Pedro Menendez High School



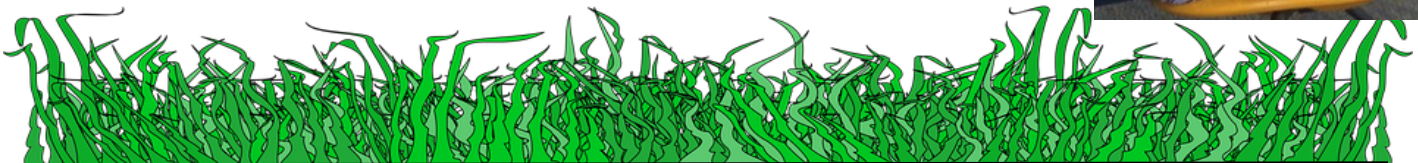
Motivated By Money

Students in Mr. De Vos and Mrs. Argentina's classrooms at Pacetti Bay Middle School are learning about money. Deputy Bagby, our school resource officer, talked to our students on the importance of making good choices.

We have implemented a token economy system using money to help teach students financial literacy skills. Students earn "money" for making good choices and are able to purchase preferred items and activities with their earnings.

Students are making good, responsible choices while following the Wildcat Way – being responsible, active learners at "The Bay!"

Contributed By: Mr. Devos, ESE Teacher, Pacetti Bay Middle School



Dessert Wars Success at Murray Middle School

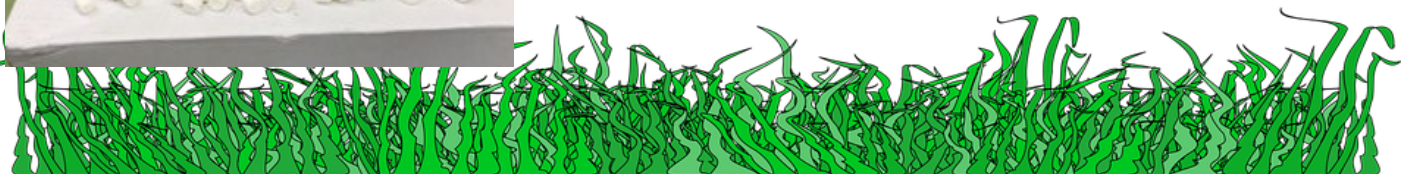
Murray Middle School students teamed up with Mrs. Lime, Assistant Principal, Mr. Robinson, Dean of Students, and Mr. Tagliarini, Behavior Specialist with a “Dessert Wars” event. This took place at the end of last school year. Students could use their LiveSchool Reward Point to purchase an entry ticket into the event. We use LiveSchool as our school wide reward system recognizing excellent behavior, *Character Counts!*, and academic achievement. Visit this link to learn more about LiveSchool: <https://liveschoolinc.wistia.com/medias/1z26dno6n4>

Our first school wide event was our Video Game Competition that took place in February. See Video of Event <http://ustre.am/Acd>. Our second event was “Dessert Wars” which took place the end of April and the next event will be an after school “3 on 3 Basketball Tournament!”

Under the leadership of Assistant Principal, Melissa Lime, Dean of Students, Anthony Robinson, and Behavior Specialist, Darren Tagliarini, these events have made a positive impact on our students and staff at Murray Middle School. As a PBIS School our staff continues to look for events that promote and reward a positive culture at Murray that celebrates our kids.



*Contributed By: Tom Schwarm,
Principal, Murray Middle School*



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Questions Parents and Educators Can Ask to Start Conversations About Using Terms Like *Learning Disabilities, Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, and Dysgraphia*

When parents and educators use the same terms to describe a child's challenges, it's easier for them to communicate and work together.

Parents and educators may have different opinions about specific terms like *dyslexia* or more general terms like *learning disabilities*. Understanding these terms and agreeing on which to use can help prevent confusion and conflict. It can also lead to a shared understanding of a child's needs. Eleven diverse national organizations joined together to develop ideas for having this conversation. We hope this resource will add clarity so terminology doesn't get in the way. Then parents and educators can work together to provide the instruction, services, and support every child needs to succeed.

1. How is the term specific learning disability different from a term like dyslexia?

Specific learning disability (SLD) is a term used in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). It describes children who have a disability in reading, writing, or math.

Using the term SLD is important because it's the term used in IDEA. It needs to be used when identifying a student as eligible for special education services. Other terms may be used to describe a particular area of need such as dyslexia (a type of reading disorder), dyscalculia (a type of math disorder), and dysgraphia (a type of writing disorder).

In some schools, other terms may be used to make it clear where a student is struggling. For example, the school may refer to *word level deficit* or *decoding challenges*. Sometimes parents and educators use a combination of terms: "Hannah has dyslexia, a specific learning disability in reading, with primary challenges in decoding and auditory discrimination."

When parents and educators address this question together, they have an opportunity to better understand why, when, and how they will use the term specific learning disability and when they might also choose to add a more specific term, like dyslexia, in a student's evaluation and during the IEP process. It's also important to consider the views of the student and whether the terms used to describe his or her learning disability have any social, emotional, or self-advocacy impact.

SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITY

READING: dyslexia and/or specific reading comprehension deficit

WRITING: dysgraphia and/or disorder of written expression

MATH: dyscalculia

SLD may also co-occur with challenges with skills such as: organization, focus, listening comprehension, social skills, motor skills, or a combination of these.

WHAT LAWS COVER STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES?

- IDEA
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
- Americans with Disabilities Act

[Learn more about these laws.](#)

Some **states** have laws about dyslexia, dysgraphia, and dyscalculia.

[Learn more about state laws.](#)

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Questions Parents and Educators Can Ask to Start Conversations About Using Terms Like *Learning Disabilities, Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, and Dysgraphia, cont...*

2. Can a school identify a specific learning disability and then use terms like dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia in its evaluation?

Yes! School psychologists and other specialized instructional support personnel, in collaboration with parents and educators, use a [comprehensive evaluation](#). This has multiple assessment measures to identify [specific learning disabilities](#), which can include [dyslexia](#), [dysgraphia](#), and [dyscalculia](#), as well as other challenges.

Specific terms – such as dyslexia – can appropriately be used to capture and share information about the child’s instructional and behavioral needs.

3. Can terms like dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia be useful in a child’s evaluation and IEP?

Yes! Specific terms can help describe a child’s learning disability and his or her strengths and needs.

Educators and parents can discuss why terms like [dyslexia](#), [dyscalculia](#), and [dysgraphia](#) may help communicate a child’s strengths and challenges. For those who are reluctant to use specific terms, it may help to explain how the child will still receive necessary services.

4. Are there legal reasons for a school to avoid terms like dyslexia, dysgraphia, or dyscalculia?

No! The [U.S. Department of Education](#) has made it clear that nothing prevents a school from using terms like *dyslexia*, *dysgraphia*, or *dyscalculia* in the [evaluation, eligibility determination](#), or [Individualized Education Program](#) (IEP) process. The department has encouraged states to review their policies, procedures, and practices to make sure they do not prohibit the use of these terms.

IDEA uses the term *specific learning disability* (SLD) to cover many learning issues that can co-exist. These include trouble with reading (such as dyslexia), writing (such as dysgraphia), and math (such as *dyscalculia*). According to current law, the term *specific learning disability* must be used when identifying a student as eligible for special education services.

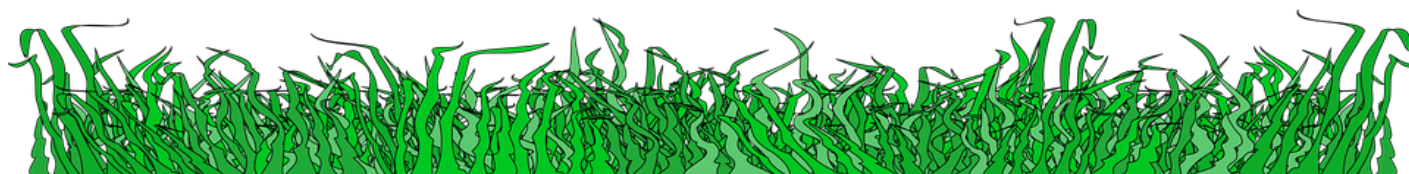
However, it’s permissible to also use more specific terms, like dyslexia, during the evaluation, eligibility determination, and IEP process, or when describing the student’s particular area of need, such as: “Thomas has dyscalculia, a specific learning disability in the area of math. More specifically, he struggles with basic math facts and visual spatial representations of numbers.”

Early conversations about these terms can help build strong and lasting partnerships between parents and educators. Being on the same page about what is allowed by law can add clarity to these conversations.

5. How can using specific terms like dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dysgraphia impact the interventions selected for a child?

IDEA requires that interventions be evidence-based and address the child’s individual needs. When a student has been identified with a particular challenge, such as a specific learning disability in reading, like dyslexia, this information helps the IEP team choose which interventions to try. But there are other considerations as well. The IEP team should analyze which areas a child struggles with as well as identifying where he or she has strengths. In some cases, IEP teams will include specific instructional strategies or methods within the IEP.

Most students with specific learning disabilities spend the majority of their day in the general education classroom. Being specific about what a child is struggling with is an important step in making sure the interventions – whether provided through general or special education – will meet the child’s needs. It’s important for *all* educators, not just special educators, to know about instructional strategies that support students with learning disabilities.



Upcoming Events

Microsoft Gaming Party - September 9, 9:00 A.M.-10:00 A.M. Join us for a Gaming Party at the Microsoft Store at the St. Johns Town Center. Xbox One consoles will be set up in the theater space for gaming. While the children are gaming, the parents have a breakout session on internet safety and parental controls. 40 spots available on a first-come, first-serve basis. Register online by clicking <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/microsoft-store-gaming-party-tickets-22917527943>

2017 Annual Fall Family Festival- October 21, 11:00 A.M.-2:00 P.M., This year's Fall Family Festival takes place on Saturday, Oct 21st, at the UF Developmental Pediatric Center. The festival is an awareness event for all families with special needs. Join us for music, games, snacks, and balloon art for what promises to be our biggest festival to date. We'll have face painting, a magician, the Trick or Treat Lane, a performance by the drumline ensemble, and much more. Admission to this event is at no cost to the individual. Parents must supervise their children at all times.

****New** Scholarship Opportunity Deadline - 25th Annual CARD Conference in St. Pete Beach- September 25,** On January 12-14, 2018, the 25th Annual CARD Conference will be held in St. Pete Beach, FL at Tradewinds Island Grand Resort. The conference will offer a series of breakout sessions and keynote presentations by experts in the field of autism and related disabilities. For more information, visit the website: <http://card-usf.fmhi.usf.edu/CARDconference/>. The University of Florida - Jacksonville, Center for Autism and Related Disabilities is offering several scholarships to parents and educators who would like to attend the 2018 Annual CARD Conference. Interested individuals should complete the application and follow the directions carefully. We are looking for individuals who can attend the conference and then bring back knowledge to share with others. Applicants who have been awarded a scholarship will need to register for the conference and make their own travel and accommodation arrangements. Following the conference, you will need to submit your receipts and then you will be reimbursed by the university for up to \$500 of your conference-related expenses. For more information contact autumn.mauch@jax.ufl.edu. Click <https://hscj.ufl.edu/calendar/attachments/4372/cardconferencescholarship2018.pdf> for the application.

CARD/FDLRS Satellite Clinic – St. Johns County (Valley Ridge Acad.)- October 9, 9:00 A.M.-3:00 P.M., The UF-Jacksonville Center for Autism and Related Disabilities (CARD) and the UF-Jacksonville Florida Diagnostic & Learning Resources System Multi-Disciplinary Center (FLDRS-MDC) offer clinics to outlying counties in order to more effectively serve their constituents. Sign up for a consultative appointment with clinicians who specialize in child psychology, behavior therapy, academic interventions, Autism Screeners, Transition, and more. Appointments are at no cost to the family. Location: Valley Ridge Academy (Nocatee). To schedule an appointment please contact chanel.baldwin@jax.ufl.edu, (904)633-0816.

Online Module – Preventing Seclusion and Restraint for Students with ASD-The CARD centers have produced a training module for educators on Preventing Seclusion and Restraint for Students with ASD at the request of the FDOE. This module teaches the foundational skills for positive behavior support and setting students up for success. It takes about 1.5 hours to complete and will provide a certificate of completion to those passing the quiz with 75 percent or above. To register, visit http://usf.adobeconnect.com/sr_reg/event/registration.html.



One of the most beloved singers alive today, Stevie Wonder is a musician, singer, and songwriter who was born blind. He was born six weeks early. The blood vessels at the back of his eyes had not yet reached the front and aborted their growth, hence his blindness. Considered a child prodigy, Stevie signed with his first record label at age 11, Motown's Tamla label, and he's been performing since. Over his wildly successful music career, Stevie had recorded more than 30 U.S. top ten hits, including his singles, "Superstition", "Sir Duke" and "I Just Called to Say I Love You."

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/10/22/famous-people-with-disabilities_n_4142930.html



Jill Tabala, Executive Secretary
(904) 547-7672 Jill.Tabala@stjohns.k12.fl.us

Program Specialists

Lynn Adkins (904)547-7697 (office)
Lynn.Adkins@stjohns.k12.fl.us
Specific Learning Disabilities, Learning Strategies,
Other Health Impaired, FSA/EOC Waivers

Helen DiMare, (904) 547-7692 (office)
Helen.Dimare@stjohns.k12.fl.us
Gifted Services

George Freeman, (904) 547-7704 (office)
George.Freeman@stjohns.k12.fl.us
Emotional Behavioral Disorders,
Mental Health Counseling, Behavior Specialists

Avery Greene, (904)547-7557 (office)
Avery.Greene@stjohns.k12.fl.us
Hospital Homebound, Orthopedically Impaired,
Traumatic Brain Injured, Visually Impaired, Virtual
School, Surrogate Parents, Private Instructional
Personnel, Parent Advisory Meetings

Leigh Ann Hale, (904)547-7678 (office)
Leigh.Hale@stjohns.k12.fl.us
Transition, Intellectual Disabilities, Alternate
Assessment, Diploma Options/Deferrals

Sonia Howley, (904) 547-7543 (office)
Sonia.Howley@stjohns.k12.fl.us
Speech/Language Impaired, Deaf Hard of Hearing

Lisa Thacker, (904) 547-7530 (office)
Lisa.Thacker@stjohns.k12.fl.us
Autism Spectrum Disorders,
Access Points Curriculum

St. Johns County School District **Exceptional Student Education Department**

Lisa Bell, Director
Lisa.Bell@stjohns.k12.fl.us
(904) 547-7672 (office)
(904) 547-7687 (fax)

Tina Kennon, Assistant Director
Tina.Kennon@stjohns.k12.fl.us
(904)547-7546 (office)
OT/PT, Assistive Tech, 504, McKay Scholarships

CHARACTER COUNTS!



Sarah Coffin, Confidential Staff Secretary
(904) 547-7712 Sarah.Coffin@stjohns.k12.fl.us

Mission Statement: To identify and meet the unique educational needs of exceptional students and to provide support and resources to enhance educational opportunities so they become productive citizens.

ESE programs and services address the unique needs of students who are gifted in kindergarten through 12th grade and those with mild, moderate and severe disabilities from age three until they graduate with a regular diploma or until their 22nd birthday. ESE programs and services are designed to assist students in reaching their educational goals through the use of instructional and behavioral approaches which are research-based and exemplify best practices. Technology is used in many creative ways to meet student needs as well.

ESE services are available at all district schools for gifted students and students who have mild to moderate disabilities. PreK students with disabilities and students with more significant disabilities are served in cluster programs at selected sites. Program support is provided to students, parents and school personnel by program specialists based at the district office. Students with disabilities who are not eligible for services through the ESE program may be eligible for an accommodations plan under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

We hope that you find this newsletter informative and useful. *Parents As Partners Newsletters* are posted to the St. Johns County School District web site at <http://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/e/se/>

The ESE Department would like to welcome Lynn Adkins to our office. She is our SLD Program Specialist. She has an extensive background in reading disabilities. After graduating from Florida Atlantic University, she began her first classroom position in 1995 as a Pre-Kindergarten-ESE teacher. During those early years, she discovered a passion for helping students express themselves and develop their pre-academic skills for success in their transition to Kindergarten. For over two decades, since those early days, she has worked with students in a variety of classroom settings, working through the mechanics of academic skill development. Her favorite years, have been the ones where she was given the opportunity to focus and train on the reading-writing connection.

Her personal educational journey has taken her through her Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in Specific Learning Disabled, she has also obtained a Master's Degree in Educational Administration. Teaching and being a part of the learning process is the ultimate reward for any educator. Mrs. Adkins shared "I look forward to working with you as we help the learners of today become the leaders of tomorrow!"

