

PARENTS AS PARTNERS

St. Johns County School District

Volume 10, Issue 3



Happenings at St. Augustine High School



Ms. Arnow's class built a garden in front of the Media Center at St. Augustine High School. They named their project "Buddies Garden". Their next endeavor is to build a raised vegetable garden outside their classroom. Students will grow, harvest and prepare healthy, homegrown food as part of their Biology and Career Prep Studies. The class sends a special thank you to the St. Johns River Water Management District for awarding them a grant to fund this learning project.





**THE ESE PARENT ADVISORY
ST JOHNS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION**

WELCOMES

LISA D. BAILEY, PH.D

FOR A DISCUSSION ON:

**ATTENTION DEFICIT
HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER
(ADHD): DIAGNOSTIC CRITERIA,
SYMPTOMS, & STRATEGIES**

*GOAL: To provide parents of ESE, Gifted,
and 504 students with information to
increase their understanding of ADHD
and manage related symptoms.*

Join on your computer or mobile app
[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Or call in (audio only) 904-420-0831
Phone Conference ID: 442 747 864#

**ESE PARENT
ADVISORY**

**ST JOHNS COUNTY
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**EXCEPTIONAL
STUDENT
EDUCATION**

**LISA D. BAILEY,
PH.D**

FEBRUARY 2, 2021

**This meeting will
be held via
Microsoft Teams
platform**

6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

Project SEARCH & Life Work

The St. Johns County Transition Programs had the opportunity to update the School Board, Mr. Forson, and other invested stakeholders on Tuesday, January 26th. Since the inception of the programs in the 15-16 school year, almost 150 students have been served by the dedicated teachers and job coaches of Life Work and Project SEARCH. Life Work has provided various community work opportunities through On the Job Training experiences which has led to paid competitive employment for over 30 students. Those students not competitively employed through Life Work either went on to become successfully employed with assistance from Vocational Rehabilitation or Project SEARCH. Project SEARCH has won national awards for having employment rates between 80 and 90% every year.

The Transition Programs have continued to help students reach their employment and independent living goals year after year. Additionally, the programs are helping to close the employment gap between students and young adults with disabilities as there are 43.8% fewer working-age people with disabilities employed than working-age people without disabilities. If you are interested in learning more about our Transition Programs, please see the ESE Transition Services website, <https://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/ese/programs/transition/>.



Leigh Ann Hale, Transition Program Specialist would like to send a very heartfelt and special “Thank You” to the Transition Program Staff:

Adam Ringwood and Tracy Holland- Life Work Teachers

Byron Pennington- Project SEARCH Instructor

Ami Brennan, Brandi Gilbert, Anthony Major, Tracy Munoz, and Marty Thacker- Life Work Job Coaches

Tara Hurt- Project SEARCH Job Coach



STAFF Spotlight

Lisa Thacker is an ESE Program Specialist in St. Johns County School District. She supports students with Autism Spectrum Disorder, Access Points curriculum and self-contained Access Points units. Mrs. Thacker also supervises the Registered Behavior Technicians throughout the district. A proud Alumna of Marshall University (GO HERD!), she received her Bachelor's Degree majoring in Exceptional Student Education (K-12) and General Education (K-6). She also holds a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership from the University of West Florida. Mrs. Thacker, her husband and twin son and daughter moved from the cold weather in West Virginia to sunny Florida over 10 years ago. They enjoy the beach and anything outdoors.

Mrs. Thacker's career goals have always been to support students with Autism Spectrum Disorder, their parents, and the teachers working with them. She feels blessed to be able to have her dream job in the St. Johns County School District.





Interested in becoming a Foster Parent?

The Children's Home Society of Florida Foster Care Programs

Specialized Therapeutic Foster Care Program

Services Provided

- Weekly In-Home Therapy
- Monthly Community Observations
- Psychiatric Services and Medication Management
- 24-hr Staff Support for Foster Parents

Medically Involved Special Needs Foster Care Program

Services Provided

- In-Home Visits and Case Management
- Psychiatric Services and Medication Management
- Program Nurse Support
- 24-hr Staff Support for Foster Parents



Contact us: (904) 493-7711 or
northeastlicensing@chsfl.org

CHILDREN'S HOME SOCIETY OF FLORIDA RECOGNIZES THAT SOME OF OUR CLIENTS MAY HAVE PARTICULAR COMMUNICATIONS NEEDS. WE WILL MAKE AVAILABLE AUXILIARY AIDS, SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS AT NO CHARGE IN ORDER TO MEET THESE NEEDS. TO REQUEST SUCH ASSISTANCE, PLEASE CONTACT CHILDREN'S HOME SOCIETY OF FLORIDA AT LEAST 48 HOURS PRIOR TO THE DATE THE ASSISTANCE IS NEEDED.

Parent Tips for AAC iPad Use

If the iPad is in a backpack and your child rides a bus, **that backpack must not be placed on the floor of the bus!** Tell this to the driver as we have had several iPads stepped on and screens shattered.

Always keep a charge on the iPad as when it powers down, “guided access” will stop working. We want to keep devices as a communication tool, not a toy.

Implementation Strategies for successful device use:

“Aided language Input” is merely modeling, modeling and more modeling! The more exposure to the placement and categories where symbols are located, the more successful your son/daughter will be in navigating the app for things they would like to communicate!

This site explains and describes the communication app, Proloquo2Go.

<https://www.assistiveware.com/blog/new-to-proloquo2go-training>

This 15-minute video demonstrates how to manipulate and program the app for your son/daughter’s needs.

<https://www.assistiveware.com/blog/new-to-proloquo2go-training>

This is a great series of modeling tips, do’s and don’ts.

<https://coreword.assistiveware.com/t/modeling-videos/109>

Remember, when you finish programming and editing for your son/daughter, **always disable the two editing tools the (pen and cog icons) and enable guided access so your son/daughter does not have access to those.** If access to those tools is left available, someone could inadvertently and unintentionally wipe out all the editing that you and staff have done.

If you have any questions, you may always email the Assistive Technology Services Team:

Melissa.Weeks@stjohns.k12.fl.us

Melissa.Ley@stjohns.k12.fl.us

Whitney.Ussin@stjohns.k12.fl.us

Megan.Roberts@stjohns.k12.fl.us

Jennifer.Whalen@stjohns.k12.fl.us



Physical Therapy & Occupational Therapy Programs

*Is school-based therapy all
that your child REALLY needs?*



St. Johns County School District
Exceptional Student Education

40 Orange Street

St. Augustine, FL 32084

(904) 547-7672

Lisa Bell, Director

Tina Powell, Assistant Director

If your child is eligible for special education, you or any member of the school team may request an evaluation. It should be requested when IEP goals/objectives cannot be met or addressed appropriately by the special educator, classroom teacher or core school faculty/staff without the support of a therapist.

Results of the evaluation and recommendations will be shared with the IEP team which will then determine if your child needs school-based therapy to benefit from special education.

How does the IEP Team decide if therapy is needed?

The team discusses the student's educational goals and desired outcomes and then determines if any related services are explicitly necessary for the student to progress toward these goals.

How can consultative therapy services be beneficial for my child in school?

Consultative occupational and physical therapy services support inclusion and provide the least restrictive environment for educating your child.

Consultative therapy services enhance the knowledge base of all members of the team so that more members are positively influencing your child's educational outcome.

Does my child need a doctor's prescription before he/she can receive physical therapy?

Yes, all exceptional student education students referred to physical therapy must have a current Florida prescription. Once a student is staffed into physical therapy, a new prescription for physical therapy has to be obtained when there is a medical change.



Learning Knows No Bounds

PHYSICAL AND OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PROGRAMS (continued)

The services of an occupational and a physical therapist are available to exceptional students who need specialized assistance in developing fine and gross motor skills to assist them in achieving specific objectives within the classroom setting and are not intended to be rehabilitative. The service must be clearly necessary for the child to have access to an appropriate education to experience educational benefits.

The occupational therapist may evaluate students currently eligible for exceptional education services to determine if the development of fine motor skills would help the student achieve his or her educational goals.

The physical therapist works under a physician's orders to improve motor development to help the student achieve educational goals. Prior to receiving services for physical therapy, parents will be asked to obtain a prescription from the child's physician and provide it to the therapist, or assistance principal at their child's school.

Therapy Services

Consultative and/or direct therapy services may be provided depending on each student's disability and the amount of time the student is participating in other special programs.

What is the difference between school-based therapy and private therapy?

School-based physical and occupational therapies are related support services covered under IDEA 2004 (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act). IDEA is the federal legislation that determines rules and regulations for services to students with disabilities in public schools. A student receiving therapy services outside of school may or may not qualify for the same services (type and frequency) in school.

School-based occupational and physical therapy as described by IDEA must be educationally relevant. Educational relevance means that the service must be needed to allow the student to benefit from the educational setting. The focus in the school environment is function, not medical diagnosis.

Private therapy encompasses therapy provided in a rehabilitation center, private clinic, or by a home health care company. Their focus is your child's medical diagnosis and the rehabilitation of your child. Therapy may include: post surgical therapy, treatment of disabilities that are acute or chronic in nature, etc.

How can school-based physical and occupational therapy help my child?

School therapy is designed to enhance students' ability to be successful in the educational environment. The physical and occupational therapist may assist by developing and/or providing interventions for students as well as training the team members. The team could include the student, parents, teachers, paraprofessionals, bus drivers, dietary service providers, etc. School system physical and occupational therapy services may address:

- functional fine and gross motor skills for performing class activities
- functional mobility around the school
- need for assistive and adaptive learning devices to perform school tasks
- transfer and positioning techniques or equipment needs
- modifications of the educational setting
- training for team members to assist with follow through activities

What are the reasons for discontinuing therapy from my child's program? If he/she is dismissed, can he/she ever receive therapy services again?

Discontinuance of therapy will be discussed when:

- Therapy is no longer needed to help your child meet educational goals.
- Your child's curriculum with modifications and accommodations will meet IEP (Individual Education Plan) goals without therapy intervention.
- The IEP team determines when therapies may be added (with a reevaluation) and discontinued at different times as the need arises.

How do I request an occupational or physical therapy evaluation for my child?

Your child must be eligible for special education before being considered for related services covered under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

BROOKSTM Rehabilitation **Pediatric Recreation**



Where the Wild Books Are!

Interactive Storytime

Visit the wild world of books with Ms. Laura as she takes your child on a language enriching, thematic journey while developing important literacy skills.

The story time will engage students by modeling reading strategies such as visualization and drawing.



Wednesdays
January 20th-March 10th
4:00-4:30 (Ages 5-7 y/o)
5:00-5:30 (Ages 8 and older)



This is a virtual 8-week session.
All classes will be held through Zoom meetings.
Once registered, you will receive the meeting ID and password.

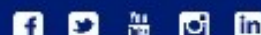


To register please call (904) 345-7501 or email PediatricRecreation@BrooksRehab.org

3500 University Blvd S. | Suite 2105 | Jacksonville, FL 32216

www.BrooksRehab.org

#WeAreBrooks



[REGISTER HERE AGES 5 - 7](#)

[REGISTER HERE AGES 8 & UP](#)

Upcoming CARD Events

CARD Tackling Social Hurdles – Support Group

February 1, 5:00 PM – 6:00 PM, A support group for adolescents with Asperger's Syndrome who want to practice social skills and overcome social worries. For more information please contact Katrina Ressa at 904.633.0765 or email katrina.ressa@jax.ufl.edu. Click [here](#) to register online.

CARD Young Adult Support Group (Virtual Meetings)

February 8, 4:30 – 5:30 PM, A virtual meeting place for CARD constituents ages 17 to 25, where participants can learn, share, and understand one another through common, comparable experiences and receive helpful guidance. Registration is required. After registration you will be sent the ZOOM meeting link and password. Download a flyer for this event [here](#). Click [here](#) to register (multiple days available.) For more information contact anne.wilson@jax.ufl.edu.

Social Skills – Game group

Biweekly, Tuesdays, 5:00 PM – 6:00 PM, The CARD/FDLRS-MDC Game Group is a bi-weekly opportunity for quality social interactions with peers. The focus is on social communication, career exploration, everyday life discussions and building meaningful relationships within the group. All this while engaging in game play! Prerequisite Requirements: Teens must be between ages of 13-19 years and registered with CARD or FDLRS-MDC. Speak with your CARD/FDLRS-MDC point of contact in order to determine if your teen meets the prerequisite skills needed to partake in this group. All group meetings are now held online via Zoom. CARD and FDLRS-MDC are discretionary projects of the Florida Department of Education. These grant funded programs do not charge for their services. For more information please contact Gina Bauer at 904.633.0769 or email gina.bauer@jax.ufl.edu. Click [here](#) to register online.

CARD/FDLRS-MDC – Parent Support Group (Virtual Meetings)

February 8, 5:00-6:00PM, A Parent Group hosted by the UF Jacksonville CARD and FDLRS-MDC, with the goal of helping parents/primary caregivers strengthen the parent-child relationships, while learning about resources and supports from professionals and other parents within the CARD and FDLRS-MDC communities. Click [here](#) to register (multiple days available.) For more information contact marlena.jenkins@jax.ufl.edu.



Care Connect with Flagler Health assists people get plugged into existing community resources.

If you are looking for help, please visit the website www.stjohnscareconnect.com to get connected to a Community Health Associate.

BROOKSSM Rehabilitation **Pediatric Recreation**

Brooks Children's Choir

No auditions or experience required to join!

This group targets socialization and participation through song and movement in a fun, noncompetitive environment. Participants will show off their singing, movement, listening, and engagement skills with their peers. Choir participants will work towards an end of the year recital!

**Thursdays
January 21st – April 29th, 2021**

Junior choir (K-2nd grade)

5:00-5:30pm

Senior choir (grades 3-8)

5:45-6:30pm

This is a virtual class and will be held through Zoom meeting. Once registered, you will receive the meeting ID and password.



To register please call (904) 345-7501 or email PediatricRecreation@BrooksRehab.org

3535 University Blvd S. | Suite 21105 | Jacksonville, FL 32216

BrooksRehab.org

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[REGISTER HERE FOR BROOKS CHILDREN'S CHOIR K - 2ND GRADE](#)

[REGISTER HERE FOR BROOKS CHILDREN'S CHOIR 3RD - 8TH GRADES](#)



Save the Date—The 23rd Annual Family Café

The 23rd Annual Family Café will be in Orlando on **June 11-13, 2021**. The Annual Family Café brings together thousands of people with disabilities and their family members for three days of education, training and networking each year. There will be a great range of individual breakout sessions, a packed exhibit hall with dozens of vendors, and a series of special events, including Keynote speakers and The Governors’ Summit on Disabilities. The Annual Family Café offers families exposure to a range of public and private resources on a grand scale, opportunities to find support by networking with other families, and unprecedented access to policy-making officials. Online registration for The 23rd Annual Family Cafe will be open on **February 15, 2021**. To view the 2021 Registration Brochure, go to <https://familycafe.net/new/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/2021-Family-Cafe-Registration-Brochure.pdf>. For more information about The Annual Family Café, go to <https://familycafe.net/>.



Wilma Rudolph (1940–1994). The “fastest woman in the world” wasn’t always fleet on foot. Wilma survived premature birth but endured several early-childhood illnesses. Recovery from infantile paralysis and a loss of strength to her left leg and foot was long and arduous. After being home-schooled for many years, when she was in high school, Wilma tried out for several sports teams; her coach was astonished by her speed. Although she was defeated at the 1956 Summer Olympics in Melbourne, she became a legend four years later, at the 1960 Summer Olympics in Rome, earning her admiration worldwide.



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) 547-770 (office)

George.Freeman@stjohns.k12.fl.us

Emotional Behavioral Disorders, Mental Health Counseling, Behavior Specialists, Private Instructional Personnel

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, Parent Advisory Meetings

Leigh Ann Hale, (904) 547-7678 (office)

LeighAnn.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

Kristen Logan, (904) 547-7709 (office)

Kristen.Logan@stjohns.k12.fl.us

Curriculum

Jennifer Sparks, (904) 547-7580 (office)

Jennifer.Sparks@stjohns.k12.fl.us

Elementary Curriculum

Lisa Thacker, (904) 547-7530 (office)

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Autism Spectrum Disorders, Access Points Curriculum

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

Lisa Bell, Director

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Tina Powell, Assistant Director

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OT/PT, Assistive Tech, 504, McKay Scholarships

CHARACTER COUNTS!



Jill Sumner, Executive Secretary

(904) 547-7672 Jill.Sumner@stjohns.k12.fl.us

Carlyn Whitty, Confidential Staff Secretary

(904) 547-7712 Carlyn.Whitty@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/ese/>