

DAY SCHOOL HAPPENINGS

A MESSAGE FROM THE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM

BY ANGELINA STRUM, DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

Dear Families,

We are a little over a month into the school year and it has already been an exciting start to the year in many ways! Giant Steps introduced our new Day School Mission and Vision, along with Organizational Values at the start of the school year which clearly articulates WHAT we do, HOW we do it, WHERE we see ourselves going/growing into the future, and what we BELIEVE in. It is not difficult to find evidence of our students and staff living out our mission statement and GS CARES values every single day they come to Giant Steps. The belief in our mission statement along with an emphasis on 15 key essential skills (pg.4) is what helps us create pathways and foundations for success with new transitions, new experiences, and new expectations for our students. We are looking forward to using this newsletter as a way to provide families with information about programming in the Day School and share stories of the many successes and wins that occur throughout the school year!

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IS YOUR CHILD UNABLE TO COME TO SCHOOL TODAY?

Please call our student absence hotline if your child will miss school, **630-864-3800 x 3**.

Calling prior to 8am significantly helps us plan our staffing for the day!

When leaving a message please leave your child's name, your child's teacher/classroom, as well as the reason for their absence.

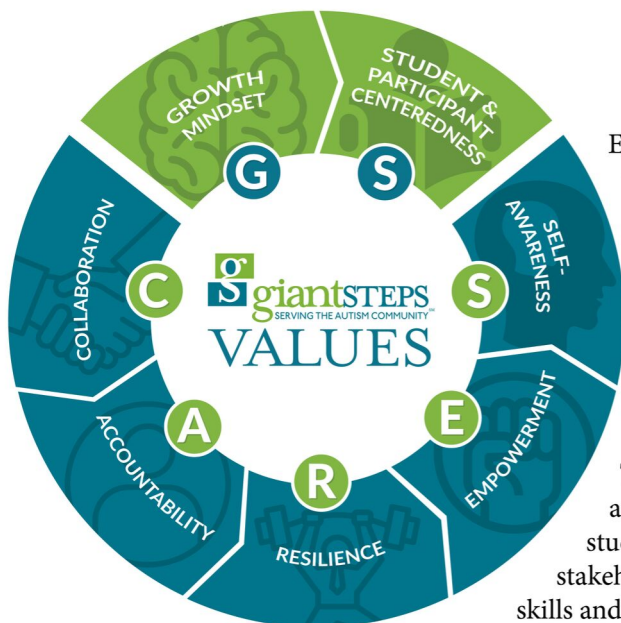
Thank you!

DAY SCHOOL MISSION

Equipping and empowering students to be academically successful and to independently participate in their community to the fullest extent possible both now and into adulthood.

DAY SCHOOL VISION

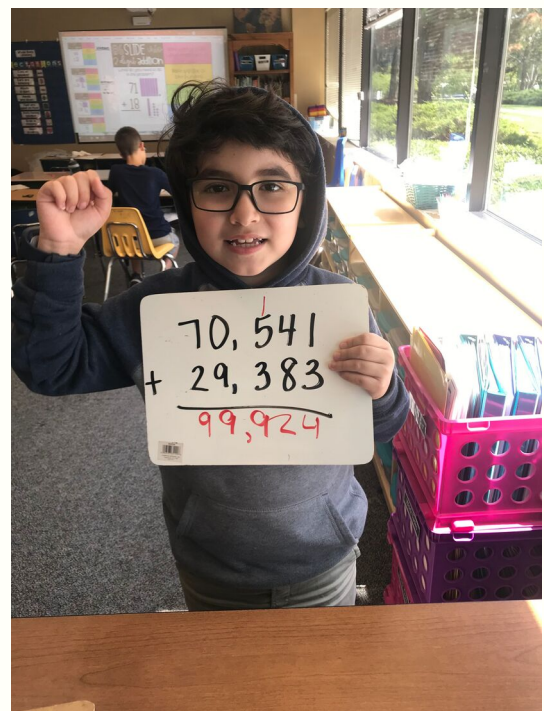
To serve as a leader in the field of autism education through dynamic student-centered collaboration with key stakeholders focused on building essential skills and reducing maladaptive behaviors.



ELEMENTARY SPOTLIGHT: CLASSROOM A

BY KATIE LUCADO, CLASSROOM A TEACHER

Classroom A has been hard at work learning new routines and building independence this school year! Each morning our students start the day by completing a morning meeting. Students take turns leading the group through the meeting with jobs like greeting helper, weather helper, and math helper. Each week we switch our theme and this month the students are so excited to start talking about pumpkins, apple picking, and Halloween! During Community Based Instruction we have been working on social skills at the playground. During our various park outings we work on taking turns, exchanging greetings, and expanding leisure and gross motor skills! Our favorite park was Nike Park in Naperville - ALL of the students enjoyed the zip line! Classroom A students are all working hard in their academic groups and are building their communication and coping skills daily! Here's to a great start to the school year!

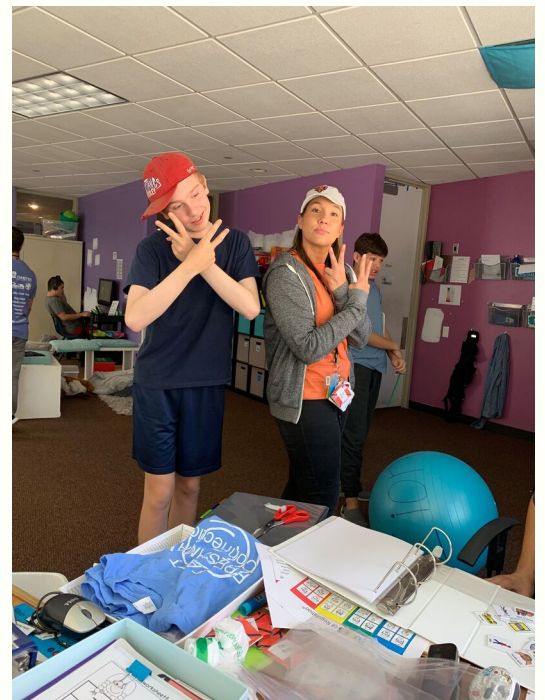


SECONDARY/TRANSITION SPOTLIGHT: CLASSROOM ZION

BY LILY WEI, ZION TEACHER

Hello!

Zion has been included in the high school circle! We are so proud of our students for making a smooth transition from junior high to high school. Everyday is a new day for us to showcase our amazing talents during academic groups and out in the community. We are a class that loves to laugh and joke around! If you hear laughter and giggles, it's mostly likely coming from Zion! Our favorite part of the week is when we visit our community. We love to know where we are going next and even make suggestions to our favorite places. The boys of Zion continue to grow physically and academically. We welcomed old and new friends this year and started friendships that make the days go by with smiles!



STAR STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



PRIMARY STAR STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Zuri Fonseca - Elem C
For her growth in participating in groups of 5+ people, communicating her needs more independently and transitioning out of pull-ups!



INTERMEDIATE STAR STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Makhai Bezik - Explorers
For his growth advocating for his wants/needs, problem solving and being more independent with personal care routines!

SECONDARY/TRANSITION STAR STUDENT SPOTLIGHT:

Andrey Kuzmenko - Union
For demonstrating an emerging ability to follow directions from known staff and developing the skills to communicate spontaneously!



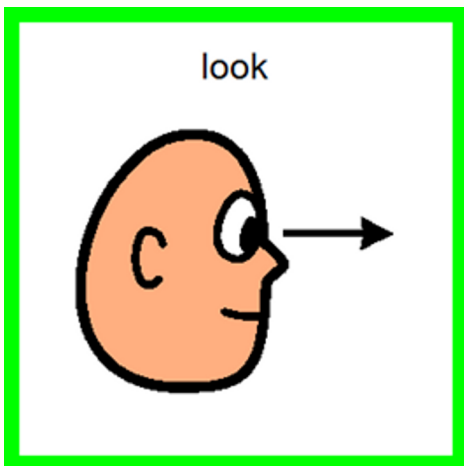
ESSENTIAL SKILLS

Essential Skills

1. Possesses and utilizes an identified **reliable, spontaneous communication** method
2. Demonstrates **self-management** of behavior
3. Safely **participates in groups** of 5+ individuals
4. Completes **personal care** routines independently (e.g., clean hands/ face, brushes teeth, hair combed/brushed, etc.)
5. **Follows spoken and visual direction**
6. Respects and maintains **appropriate boundaries** of self and others (physical and otherwise)
7. **Follows directions from multiple people**
8. **Manages bodily functions** independently (e.g., toileting, wiping nose, covering cough, etc.)
9. Demonstrates **choice-making**
10. **Waits appropriately** for 10 minutes
11. Possesses and utilizes skills/strategies to **manage emotions and/or sensory needs**
12. Demonstrates **problem solving**
13. Safely **engages in a recreational/leisure** activity for 15 minutes
14. **Reads and writes functionally**
15. **Advocates for him/herself**

COMMUNICATION SKILLS OF THE MONTH

CORE WORD:
LOOK



SOCIAL LANGUAGE SKILL:
WHOLE BODY LISTENING



REMINDERS

DATES TO REMEMBER

Early Release (1:40): 10/2

"Be My Hero" 5K Walk: 10/5

Homecoming Week: 10/7-10/11

Columbus Day/No School: 10/14

End of 1st Quarter: 10/21

Trunk or Treat: 10/25

Halloween: 10/31

Parent/Teacher Conferences: 11/7

NURSE'S CORNER

BY: JILLIAN HILDEBRAND, RN

Cold & Flu season officially starts in October. At Giant Steps we are focusing on teaching our students the proper hygiene steps to make sure we are not spreading germs around the school. We are focusing on teaching our students the property cough/sneeze etiquette (sneezing/coughing into a tissue or your elbow instead of your hands). We appreciate your help at home by joining in teaching your child this behavior so we can all stay healthy at school!

If your student has any of the following symptoms please keep them home from school: Fever of 100 or higher paired with symptoms, strep throat, diarrhea, vomiting (2x in 24 hour period, pink eye, rash impetigo, or untreated lice.

HOMECOMING WEEK: 10/7-10/11

DRESS UP THEMES (ALL STUDENTS ARE WELCOME TO PARTICIPATE!):

MONDAY - PAJAMA DAY

TUESDAY - LUAU DAY

WEDNESDAY - HARRY POTTER DAY

THURSDAY - DECADES DAY

FRIDAY-SCHOOL SPIRIT DAY

Elementary/Explorers Activities:

Homecoming Court Ballots & Voting Process

Classroom STEAM Football Field Goal Challenge

Indoor Spirit Festivities

Parade - Friday October 11

Volley/Soccer Game - Friday October 11

Secondary/Transition/Voyagers Activities:

Homecoming Court Ballots & Voting Process

Classroom STEAM Football Field Goal Challenge

Indoor Spirit Festivities

Homecoming Dance - Thursday October 10 from 6-8 PM

Parade - Friday October 11

Football Game - Friday October 11