

Spring 2008

Superintendent's Newsletter "Believe and Succeed"

Superintendent's Perspective

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

COSAC - Offers free workshops at MCG Academy on April 1st, 8th and 29th 2008.

Spring Transition Fair scheduled for April 2008.

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We're approaching spring of a very successful year. Our schools are constantly improving, providing greater quality in all areas of academics and social education. We have been the recipient of an E-Rate Grant over the last few years which has enhanced the quality and depth of our technology for students and staff. We were audited and passed with flying colors. We have had CPR and CPI (Crisis Prevention Intervention) workshops for all staff. These workshops were provided by our own certified staff. This is an ongoing process of training and reinforcement.

Mt. Carmel Guild School and Preschool are currently accepting new students with openings at the three, four and five year old levels. We conducted a workshop "Using Music and MIDI Technology in Therapy". It is a

coordinated effort mixing occupational therapy, speech therapy and music therapy. We're preparing to move to our new location at St. Valentine's School in Bloomfield, N.J. The staff is looking forward to the new more spacious facility.

Mt. Carmel Guild Academy are presently close to capacity but still are taking referrals. Our Learning Consultant (Frank DiStefano), Speech Therapist (Tamara Huth) made presentations to staff during an in-service. The topic "Learning and Language Disabilities" was well received.

Mt. Carmel Guild High School is accepting students at the this time. We received approval for an 8th grade contained class for students in transition from elementary to high school. In addition, two

senior class members have completed a six week introduction to the CCS Workforce Development Training Program. One student chose to go beyond the six weeks. He will continue until he is prepared to take his food handlers certificate test. Acquisition of this certificate will facilitate employment for him upon graduation. We will provide a program entitled "Heightened Independence and Progress". Ms. Marion Padilla will meet with our senior class to work on Self-Advocacy, Resume Development and Interviewing skills. Our Spring Transition Fair is scheduled for April 2008.

Our Distance Learning Program is beneficial to all of our schools. All of our schools are set-up to use Distance Learning for educational school trips and staff meetings between schools.

Mt. Carmel Guild School & Preschool

Toys for Tots supplied our program with wonderful toys for Santa to distribute on December 19th. As usual, our children made all the decorations for the Christmas tree.

In January, the children were visited by "Curious George" which was a big hit.

Barbara Dziublenski, COTA and Melissa Taveras our music therapist presented a very informative and educational workshop. "Using music and MIDI technology in therapy".

Plan NJ gave a comprehensive presentation at the January Parent meeting which was very

well attended.

Our entire staff has completed CPR training thanks to Elisa Rosello, RN.

February celebrations included the 100th Day of School and Valentine's Day.

MT. CARMEL GUILD ACADEMY

Since the end of November, students and staff have been working hard. There were nine students who participated and have completed their participation in the State's APA assessment program. These students, whose cognitive functioning does not allow them to take the State Wide NJ ASK testing, have worked hard at completing a variety of tasks designed to demonstrate growth and development in many areas. Students in grades 3 and 4 have been preparing to take the Statewide test NJ ASK 3-4 in early March. Students in grades 5 through 8 will be taking their respective tests in April and May. Mr. DiStefano our Learning Consultant has nine

students participating in a 10 week, internet based contest—"THE STOCK MARKET GAME". Competing against students from schools throughout New Jersey, students select stocks on the New York Stock Exchange and "invest", monitoring their stocks daily and buying and selling. After the first two weeks of the contest, our "stockbrokers" are in first place ahead of 120 other schools. The students have gone on various trips including ice skating, bowling and look forward to going to the movies and having an in-house assembly on recycling and animals.

In January, Cary Stone ran a program "Jump Rope For Heart" sponsored by the Heart Foundation. He set-up different stations; jump rope, obstacle courses, long jump and blood pressure taken by Mrs.

Ferrone our school nurse. Students and staff participated.

We welcome Jenna LaMarca, teacher assistant to our staff.

Students continue to work hard. As of the end of the 2nd marking period, there were 19 students on Levels II and III. These students have achieved a high level of success behaviorally and academically and serve as role models for their peers.

*Every student
can learn, just
not on the
same day or
the same way.*

George Evans

Mt. Carmel Guild High School

.After the completion of the first marking cycle, the school conducted a parent teacher conference. We would like to express a special thank you to the parents/guardians who participated in the conference and to the districts that provided transportation for the parents.

During the holiday season, the school had two successful food drives. Eight of our families were the recipients of our food drive.

During the first marking cycle, we were approved for an eighth grade self-contained class. We officially started the class during the second marking period. Mr. Paul Bey a veteran and respected teacher, teaches this class. The class exposes eighth graders to the elective curriculum format and provide them an opportunity to experience a high school like environment.

Since the first marking period, many of our students have earned enough points to reach level II of the Behavior Management System. While on level II they have participated in activities such as movies, special Spanish meals, Chinese New Year celebration, Mexican food day and bowling trips. Besides participating in the different incentive activities, students have visited the school to cash in their

points. Also, the transition program has sponsored several trips for the senior class. The seniors have the opportunity to visit their local community colleges and technical schools.

During the month of December, the program coordinator of NJ Building Trades Transition To Work Program met with our juniors and seniors to provide an overview of the program. Approximately twenty trades were discussed as well as program requirements.

In addition to the various trips and special events that the school sponsored outside the classroom, a significant amount of interesting activities took place in the classroom. In our Building trades class, students started working on building a special cabinet to store the distance learning apparatus. Once that project is completed, students will be working on remodeling a storage space to move the school store.

In a cooperative learning exercise, the health teacher and art teacher collaborated on a project with students to promote maintaining a healthy heart for the month of October. Students created a poster on how to maintain a healthy art and made heart pins and necklaces out of clay.

In Social Studies, students engaged in

lessons to learn about the primary elections. and the historical significance of the 2008 Presidential election.

Additionally, the school sponsored two virtual field trips with the Newark Museum. During the virtual field trips, students displayed great enthusiasm and interest as they found themselves learning and being engaged by another instructor miles away. Hooray for Distance Learning!!

In conclusion, during the first marking period, the school made great strides to improve the overall learning experience for the students and more is to come in the third marking period. We would like to welcome former teacher, Mrs. Rose Moy and Mr. Paul Bey Sr. to the MCGHS family

Mount Carmel Guild Cares

At Mt. Carmel Guild Cares, things are going according to plan!

Our 3 and 4 year old children are currently taking trips to the North End Library. During their visits, the children engage in book readings, storytelling and puppet play which will enhance their literacy skills.

We have received our Brigance Post-Test Scores and we are very proud to say that the children's scores have improved from the beginning of the year. Congratulations to the children and to all our teachers' and teacher's assistants.

Our parents are very important to us. To show our appreciation, we held a "Stress Management" workshop for them presented by Azelea Howard (Family Worker Supervisor).

It was a healthy turnout and the feedback from the parents was remarkable. They enjoyed learning different tips and techniques on how to relax and be stress free. The workshop allowed the parents to open and connect with fellow parents and Mount Carmel Guild Cares staff.

To keep with the theme of connecting, the MCG Cares staff has implemented a weight-loss program to promote good health and nutrition. We feel that this is an excellent form of team building and will bring staff members closer together by using each other as motivation to tackle one of today's most serious issues...obesity.

There is a brilliant child locked inside every student.

Marva Collins

MCG LITTLE SCHOOLHOUSE

As we look forward to the season of Spring, the Little Schoolhouse pupils are anxiously starting to plant their seeds for their outside garden and to present plants that they took the time to seed and nurture on Mother's day. Our assortment of flowers will surely put a smile on our visitors as well as their mom's faces. For the month of March, we are also preparing for Dr. Seuss's Birthday by lin-

ing up a week filled with fun activities that all will enjoy!

We also have guest speakers from Community Coordinated Child Care of Union County to come in and talk to us about health and nutrition and also wellness during the month of March.

The Little Schoolhouse also anticipates participating in and being actively involved during

the week of the "Young Child", April 1–19, 2008.

I, Ms. Shomone, would like to extend a "thank you" to the staff of The Little Schoolhouse, a NAEYC Accredited Program for their full cooperation, passion and commitment for making the Little Schoolhouse one of the best community providers in the district of Elizabeth.

MCG CHILD STUDY TEAM

Our Case Manager, Adria Goldenkranz, has been helping the teaching staff in our sub-contracting schools to adapt instructional strategies to meet the needs and the learning styles of individual students. Teachers have been learning ways to reduce disruptive classroom behaviors. Unfortunately, the time students spend reading has been significantly reduced in our media-ready world. There's little student interest

and building the reading habit is more challenging than ever. Mrs. Goldenkranz has been working with teachers and parents to increase academic learning, specifically focusing on the value of Independent Reading, thus enabling students to become life-long readers. Family is an integral part of student learning. Strategies were given to staff and parents to provide environments where reading is valued, encouraged,

and promoted. This includes extending classroom book collections and home "libraries" as well as informing teachers and parents of books and reading materials that appeal to specific ages and students' interests which can make independent reading successful.



About the Mount Carmel Guild Schools

Programs are available for children between the ages of 3 and 21. The educational and clinical components of each program are tailored to students' individual goals and needs. Within each school, a behavior-management system specially designed according to the developmental level of students promotes optimal, social, emotional, and educational growth, helping to prepare them to become contributing members of their school communities.

In addition, the MCG Guild Schools operate two Abbott pre-schools in Elizabeth and Newark, New Jersey.

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"Autistic Program Highlights"

Mt. Carmel Guild Academy Autistic Program Headlines

Several staff members from the Academy participated by walking and/or donated to the fifth annual North NJ Walk Now for Autism. We would like to thank everyone for being a part of this great event. The total raised was almost \$500.00!! Autism Speaks is dedicated to increasing awareness of the growing autism epidemic and to raising money to fund scientists who are searching for a cure.

We are pleased to announce that together with COSAC we will be offering free workshops in April. These workshops are designed for families within the community seeking information

about ways to increase appropriate behavior, addressing challenging behavior and learning more about their child's educational rights.

Through POAC (Parents of Autistic Children) our committed staff receives on-going training the areas of ABA (Applied Behavioral Analysis), functional academics and verbal training as well as paired group instruction.

We continue to work closely with Douglass Outreach Center. They continue to assist us with consultation services on a monthly basis as well as maintaining an open line of communication via e-mail or phone to deal with on-going behavior problems.

We are very proud to announce

that our children has made progress in the areas of verbal communication, social and academic skills. Every skill that our children accomplish no matter how small is rewarding. Our program has been very successful and growing steadily. We are in the process of opening a new classroom for students ages 10-14. The primary objective and philosophy for this new classroom is to teach the students functional and social skills (which includes awareness of appropriate social boundaries and interactions, and social cues) the ability to communicate effectively and to increase personal independence so they may enjoy a healthy and fulfilling adolescences.

In addition we have two classes at the Mt. Carmel Guild School and Preschool. We are starting a secondary class at the high school (students ages ten to fourteen years old.)