

Family Focus



For families who have a child on an IFSP or IEP and as a courtesy to families who have a child on a 504 plan for the purpose of informing and assisting parents as they participate on their child's education team.

SPRING FLING 2016

By: Carole Hibbard

The Spring Fling is a much anticipated prom for students with special education needs in the Anoka Hennepin School District. This year at Andover High School the festivities began with the Grand March around the school followed by pictures and a meal donated by Chick-fil-A. The students then got onto a bus that took them to Bunker Hills Activity Center where the "Red Carpet" was rolled out for the students from all the district's high schools. DJs provided music for the dance. The day ended back at school to wind down with dessert and picture viewing. Kudos to all the teachers, paras and volunteers that worked hard to make the day very special.



Students enjoy dancing at the Spring Fling.



Andover High School students ready for the Spring Fling.



Staff and volunteers prepare for the luncheon at Andover HS.



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If you would like a translated version of this document and/or further assistance, please contact your child's school or the Family Welcome Center (763-433-4684).

Yog koj xav tau ib qhov txhais ua lus rau daim ntawv no thiab/losyog kev pab ntiv, thov cuag nrog koj tus menyuam lub tsev kawm ntawv los yog qhov Chaw Tos Txais Tsev Neeg (Family Welcome Center) (763-433-4684).

Si desea una versión traducida de este documento o más información, haga el favor de ponerse en contacto con la escuela de su hijo/a o el Centro de Bienvenida a la Familia (Family Welcome Center) (763-433-4684).

Haddaad u baahatid dokumiintigaan noocisa turjuman iyo/ama caawimo dheeraad ah, fadlan la xariir dugsiga ubadkaaga ama Xarunta Soodhoweynta Qoyska (Family Welcome Center) (763-433-4684).

PUBERTY AND SPECIAL NEEDS – RESOURCES

By: Beth Ziesmer

Puberty is a hard topic for any parent to discuss with their child, even more so when your child has special needs. This article provides different types of learning resources that I hope you find helpful. An important tip for parents that I picked up while writing this article was: pre-read any book, pre-watch any video you give your child and be ready to answer questions!

Books for Boys:

"What's Happening to Tom?" (for student with Autism) by Kate E. Reynolds

"On Your Mark, Get Set, Grow!:
A "What's Happening to My Body?"
by Lynda Madaras

"What's Happening to My Body? Book for Boys: The New Growing-Up Guide for Parents and Sons" by Lynda Madaras

"The Guy Book: An Owner's Manual"
(Paperback) by Mavis Jukes

Books for Girls:

"What's Happening to Ellie?"
(for student with Autism)
by Kate E. Reynolds

"The Body Book: It's A God Thing!"
(Paperback) by Nancy N. Rue

"Ready, Set, Grow!: A What's Happening to My Body?"
by Lynda Madaras and Linda Davick

"The Care & Keeping of You: The Body Book for Girls (American Girl Library)" by Valorie Schaefer and Norm Bendell

Magazine:

Parenting Special Needs to subscribe:
<https://parentingspecialneeds.org/>

Websites:

<http://www.friendshipcircle.org/blog/2013/11/18/how-to-discuss-puberty-with-your-child-who-has-special-needs>

<http://kidshealth.org/> (I find this site extremely helpful!)

http://thestir.cafemom.com/tweens_teens/111885/the_birds_bees_special_needs

(this site has information on creating your own social story!)

AFTER SCHOOL TEEN DANCES

Information Provided by Donald Jackson,
Founder of Quincy's Fresh Beat Clubhouse

I have been working hard to look for after school activities for teens that have special needs. I have teamed up with Gigi's Playhouse, Our Dance Place and Hmong International Academy to host after school dance and music options. I'm still working on some logistics to this option, but wanted to let you know that soon more after school options may be available for teens with and without disabilities.

MARY LUNDEEN

Mary Lundeen spent her 39 years as an educator leading the way in the development and implementation of numerous innovative programs in the Anoka- Hennepin School District. Mary was hired in 1977 to teach the one student identified with Autism in the district. Early in her career she realized the importance of constantly building the capacity of staff to meet the needs of special education students with Autism and challenging behaviors. Mary was instrumental in bringing Autism programming that included teacher, para, and parent training to Anoka-Hennepin. She led teams of other teachers and educational staff to develop the behavior analyst program and the preschool Autism program. Mary brought the ADOS, collaborative mental health programs with Fraser, and Parent Child Interaction therapy to the district. Each time she learned a new skill or evidence based practice, she implemented pilots and established long running programs that met the needs of the Anoka-Hennepin Students. In addition to being a Licensed Psychologist, Mary has numerous teaching licensures including DCD, Vision, and Early Childhood Special Education. She was awarded the MN CEC Division of Early Childhood Professional of the Year in 2012. Mary not only contributed her wisdom and skills to Anoka-Hennepin, but she made lasting contributions to the field of Autism throughout the state. Mary was hired, by the MN department of education, as the first Autism consultant in 1986. While in this position she established the educational criteria for Autism and began a data collection system to get an accurate state child count of learners with Autism. She also formed the state and metro Autism specialist networks from 1986-1996. Mary has been a board member of the Twin Cities Autism Society and an advisory board member at Fraser. Mary has presented nationally, conducted a study of parent child interaction therapy as a pre-referral intervention, and is currently involved in research for children with Callous Unemotional traits. Mary has been a mentor to staff throughout her career. Mary is an inspiration and an amazing example of a truly dedicated educator. Thank You Mary for your Mentorship and Leadership in the Anoka-Hennepin School District!



DIRECTOR'S CORNER



It is hard to believe it is already May and we are finishing up another school year! As we wrap up the school year our students and staff tend to be busy with track and field, finishing up work towards classes and credits. Some are anticipating graduation but all are looking forward to break.

The District's special education department is very excited about an opportunity that is just starting that will carry on over the next school year. Recently our school board authorized the District to conduct a Special Education Audit. As Dr. Jinger Gustafson shared with staff in a recent e-mail, "The purpose of this comprehensive Special Education Audit is to review special education programming, communication systems, and academic outcomes for students with disabilities, and staffing. We are asking for information that will help us prioritize, plan, and implement special education services that align with best practices research and the needs of the students."

The audit will be conducted by the Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement (CAREI) at the University of Minnesota during the 2016 – 2017 school year. We will be working with Dr. Kim Gibbons, Associate Director for Innovation and Outreach at CAREI, throughout this project. Dr. Gibbons will assemble a team of experts that will assist and formulate recommendations based on the audit results.

The audit work plan, which will be conducted in two phases, surrounds questions in the areas of leadership, design efficiency, operational fidelity, professional learning, and student outcomes by program type and will be conducted under the framework of the continuous improvement model. Some of the activities that are proposed to accomplish our goal surround on-site structured interviews, focus groups, direct observations of classrooms by program area, literature review of best practices by program area, and surveys.

As a District, we are very proud of the work our staff do to serve students with special needs. We look forward to celebrating our successes while getting the data necessary to help us create a roadmap to help move our school district to the next level of performance. This process acknowledges that all systems can improve and that opportunities for improvement are built upon our school district's current strengths, history, structures, and resources.

The audit will look at our continuum of services from Birth to age 21. We will be examining the range of services, the use of research-based best practices, our staffing models and staff expertise as well as our student outcome data by program area. Audit recommendations will be shared with the school board as well as with our parents and communities. We are convinced that the audit results will help us to better serve your children.

As we wind up the year and begin summer break, please take the time to enjoy the beauties that Minnesota can bring. Have a very happy and healthy summer. We look forward to welcoming back each of your children in the fall!

Cherie Peterson

Director of Special Education

Please Join Us!

The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) meets the first Thursday of each month (October-May) at the Staff Development Center in Anoka. Dinner and networking starts at 5:30 p.m. Meeting is from 6 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Childcare available upon request, you must RSVP. mary.gale@anoka.k12.mn.us or 763-506-1362.

SEAC EMAIL

To contact SEAC parent co-chairs write to: mary.gale@anoka.k12.mn.us
We welcome speaker suggestions, questions and concerns.

Special Education Administrative Team

Director and Assistant Director:

Cherie Peterson - Director of Special Ed.

and Hoover 763-506-1353

Marsha Polys - Assistant Director of Special Education

and LAUNCH 763-506-1359

Special Education Supervisors:

Jill Kenyon - Early Intervention Program, Andover Elementary, Madison, Oxbow Creek 763-433-4801

Emily Rustman - Early Childhood Special Education (3-5) and Johnsville 763-506-6101

Kathy Ferguson - Pathways, Andover HS, BHS and CPHS 763-506-7601

Lori Olson - Bridges, AMS, CRMS, JMS, NMS, OVMS and RMS 763-506-7501

Erin Jensen - Compass, AHRHS, AHTHS, STEP and Step Ahead 763-506-1361

Heather Johnson - River Trail Learning Center/LO Jacob, AHS and CRHS 763-506-1920

Stephanie Diaz-Celon - River Trail Learning Center 763-506-1901

Melissa Hayes - Evaluation Team, Sandburg, Franklin and Wilson 763-506-1579

Carey Raph - Setting III EBD, Crooked Lake, Eisenhower, Epiphany, Evergreen, McKinley, Mississippi, Monroe, Morris Bye, and University 763-506-1358

Dr. Jennifer Babiracki - ESY, Adams, CBPA, Dayton, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lincoln, Ramsey, Rum River, Sand Creek 763-506-1367

Special Education Teacher and Learning Specialists:

Carol McDonald 763-506-1351

Kathy Steffens 763-506-1418

Rachel Wick 763-506-1531

Bill Underwood 763-506-7827

Special Education Coordinator of Staffing and Finance:

Darcy Doko 763-506-1360

CLIP & SAVE

Special Education Administration Structure

If you have a concern about your child's special education program or would like to speak to one of the administrative team, please feel free to call:

Director of Special Education:
Cherie Peterson763-506-1353
Hoover

Assistant Director of Special Education:
Marsha Polys763-506-1359

Special Education Supervisors:
Jill Kenyon763-433-4801
Andover, Madison, Sorteberg Early Childhood Center, Oxbow

Emily Rustman763-506-6101
Johnsville, Riverview Early Childhood Center

Kathy Ferguson763-506-7601
Andover HS, BHS, CPHS, Pathways

Erin Jensen763-506-1361
Compass, AHRHS, AHTHS, STEP, Step Ahead

Lori Olson763-506-7501
Jackson MS, Northdale MS, Oakview MS, Roosevelt MS, Anoka MS, Coon Rapids MS, Bridges

Heather Johnson763-506-1920
River Trail Learning Center, AHS, CRHS

Stephanie Diaz-Celon . .763-506-1901
River Trail Learning Center

Carey Raph763-506-1358
Crooked Lake, Monroe, Morris Bye, Epiphany, Evergreen, Eisenhower, McKinley, Mississippi, University

Melissa Hayes763-506-7921
Franklin, Wilson, Sandburg, Eval Team

Dr. Jennifer Babiracki .763-506-1367
Adams, Hamilton, Ramsey, Rum River, Dayton, Jefferson, Lincoln, CBPA, Sand Creek

My Child's Casemanager is:

Phone No. _____

PARENT RESOURCES...

This section includes resources that parents may want to access depending on the needs of their child.

American Society of Deaf Children

800 Florida Ave. NE, #2047, Washington DC 20002
800-942-2732 www.deafchildren.org asdc@deafchildren.org

The ARC Greater Twin Cities

2446 University Ave. W., Suite 110, St. Paul, MN 55114
952-920-0855 www.arcgreatertwincities.org info@arcgreatertwincities.org

Autism Society of Minnesota

2380 Wycliff St., 102, St. Paul, MN 55114
651-647-1083 www.ausm.org info@ausm.org

Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

8181 Professional Place, #150, Landover, MD 20785
800-233-4050 www.chadd.org

Children's Home Society and Family Services

1605 Eustis St., St. Paul, MN 55108
651-646-7771 www.chsfs.org welcome@chsfs.org

Cystic Fibrosis Foundation

8011 34th Ave. S., Suite 116, Bloomington, MN 55425
651-631-3290 www.cff.org minn@cff.org

Down Syndrome Association of Minnesota

656 Transfer Rd., St. Paul, MN 55114
651-603-0720 www.dsamn.org dsamn@dsamn.org

Epilepsy Foundation of Minnesota

1600 University Ave. W., Suite 300, St. Paul, MN 55104
651-287-2300 www.efmn.org

Girl Scouts River Valleys

5601 Brooklyn Blvd., Brooklyn Center, MN 55429
800-548-5250 www.girlscoutsrv.org

Minnesota Association for Children's Mental Health

165 Western Ave. N., St. Paul, MN 55102
800-528-4511 www.macmh.org info@macmh.org

Minnesota Organization-Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (MOFAS)

1885 University Ave., Suite 395, St. Paul, MN 55104
651-917-2370 www.mofas.org info@mofas.org

Minnesota Speech-Language-Hearing Association

1000 Westgate Dr., Suite 252, St. Paul, MN 55114
651-290-6292 www.msha.net office@msha.net

National Council on Disability

1331 F St. NW, #850, Washington DC 20004
202-272-2004, TTY 202-272-2074 www.ncd.gov ncd@ncd.gov

PACER

8161 Normandale Blvd., Bloomington, MN 55437
952-838-9000, TTY 952-838-0190 www.pacer.org

Polaris-Special Needs Scouting, Northern Star Council BSA

763-231-7244 www.polaris.nsbbsa.org samberg@northernstarbsa.org

United Cerebral Palsy of Minnesota

1821 University Ave. W., Suite 180N, St. Paul, MN 55104
651-646-7588 www.ucpmn.org info@ucpmn.org

BEING A GIRL SCOUT

By: Lauren Ziesmer

I have been a Girl Scout since I was 6 years old; I am now 13. I started as a Daisy, bridged to all the required levels (Brownie, Junior), and now I am a Cadette. I will have the opportunity to be a Senior (9th, 10th grade) and an Ambassador (11th, 12th grade) through my high school years. I like Girls Scouts because there are many activities that I enjoy. I really like day camp, earning badges/patches and doing community service.

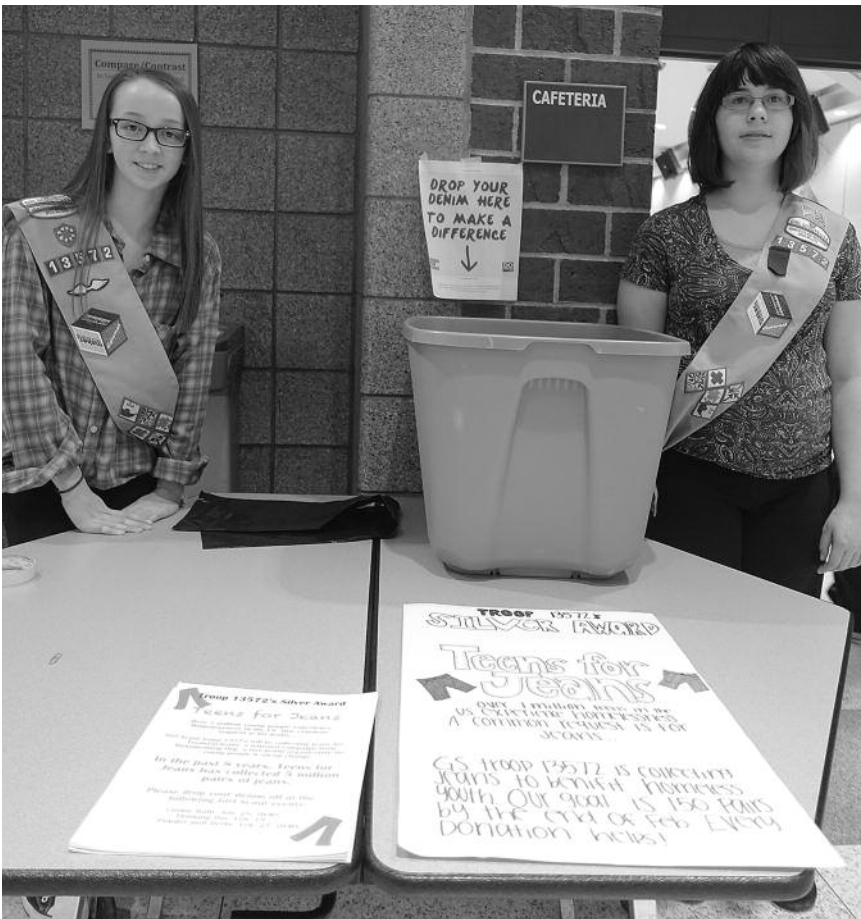
Day camp is one of my favorite activities. At day camp there are crafts, horseback riding, learning activities, experiments, and days at Bunker Beach! Now that I am considered an 'older' Girl Scout I am learning how to be a Caddie for Camp. Being a Caddie allows me to plan and organize events at day camp. It may include teaching younger Girl Scouts how to perform Flag Ceremonies, camp songs, games, activities like going to Bunker Beach!

I like to earn Girl Scout badges and fun patches. There are different badges for different things and levels. When I was younger, in Daisies and Brownies, we earned badges for studying bugs, planting flowers, and cleaning up parks, one park was the Coon Rapids Dam. As an older Girl Scout I have earned babysitting, cooking, and first aid badges. There are a lot of fun patches we earn too (roller skating, ice skating, swimming, pass candy out at the Andover parade, and cookie sales).

Finally, I like Girl Scouts because we provide community service. A few of the projects my troop and I have done include: made 20+ blankets for



Girl Scout Lauren Ziesmer earned a cooking badge by making her great grandmother's Rhubarb Strawberry Jam. She gave this jar of jam to her bus driver!



Hope for Youth, collected 80+ pairs of jeans for Teens for Jeans foundation, volunteered at Feed My Starving Children a few times, baked 5 dozen cookies for a homeless shelter and made 15+ blankets and toys for the Coon Rapids Humane Shelter. (I earned my Bronze and Silver award by doing community services- this goes above and beyond badge work). Whew!

All of these have been super fun, and great learning experiences. I have made many friends too! I probably would not have done all this without Girl Scouts.

For more information and registration go to: <http://www.girlscoutsrv.org/join-us/>

Girl Scouts Annika Hall and Lauren Ziesmer are seen collecting jeans for their Silver Award.

SENIOR HANA FRANCE, BLAINE HIGH SCHOOL

Hana France, a student from Blaine High School was recently awarded the Athena Award. The Athena Award chooses one girl from each high school who represents excellence in sports and academics. Hana represented Blaine High School at a banquet held May 6th.

Hana was adopted from South Korea at age 3. She was withdrawn and fearful of being touched by everyone but her adoptive mother. Hana was assessed for and received early childhood special education services until age 5. Hana had difficulties with her vision and was partially deaf. Hana received glasses and a hearing aid.

She started Kindergarten at Eisenhower Elementary and was on an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) plan. Hana quickly thrived and was a hard and determined worker. In 9th grade Hana joined the adaptive sports team for Anoka-Hennepin, and she quickly proved that she was a fighter in the adaptive sports world and coed sports led her to take on boys and girls who were twice her size without fear! Hana is 4' 6" tall and has incomplete arms and hands. Hana has helped lead her team to 2 state championships and the team is currently working on a third title. In 10th grade Hana no longer needed an IEP and now just has a 504 plan. She has been on the National Honor Society for 2 years, has been awarded Academic Excellence for 4 years, has attended PSEO at ARCC for 2 full years and is on their Dean's list. Hana has volunteered over 200 hours in her community. She has been involved in Blaine's Bengals in action and support team for students in action. She was also in Hosa for 1 year. Hana attends the Concert and Chamber Choirs at BHS. Hana also works part time.



*"So when you are told that your child cannot do a lot of things in life remember a girl named Hana and say yes they can!"
– Hana's Mother*

SEAC

SEAC is a group of parents and staff within the school district working together to strengthen our Special Education Community. Everyone is welcome.

We have three goals we'll continue next year:

- Increasing Anoka-Hennepin staff involvement with the committee
- Gathering Parent Input about SEAC through a Parent Survey
- Developing and Distributing two Family Focus Newsletters

SEAC meets the first Thursday of each month, October through May. Dinner and childcare are provided. Questions about SEAC can be sent to Mary Gale at Mary.Gale@anoka.k12.mn.us or 763-506-1362.

Look for your SEAC flyer to come home with your child(ren) each month. If you are not getting the SEAC flyer, please contact your child(ren)'s case manager.



The SEAC group at the May 2016 meeting celebrating a great year together!

ANOKA-HENNEPIN'S PARENT RESOURCE CENTER IS FOR ALL DISTRICT FAMILIES



The Anoka-Hennepin Parent Resource Center (PRC) is a self-service lending library of book, DVD and CD resources for families with children both young and old. All staff, families and community members of the Anoka-Hennepin School District can use it at no charge.

Topics include:

Parenting strategies, student success, development, social issues, kids health and more

Special Education Topics include (but are not limited to): ADD/ADHD, Anxiety, Asperger's, Autism, Emotional and Behavioral Disorders, Executive Functioning, Learning Disabilities, Sensory Processing, School Success, Social Skills and Speech and Language

Some titles related to special educations school success:

The IEP from A to Z: How to Create Meaningful and Measurable Goals and Objectives by Diane Twachtman-Cullen

The Complete Guide to Special Education: Expert Advice on Evaluations, IEPs, and Helping Kids Succeed by Linda Wilmshurst, Ph.D. and Alan W. Brue, Ph.D.

Parents and Professionals Partnering for Children with Disabilities: A Dance that Matters by Janice M. Fialka, Arlene K. Feldman and Karen C. Mikus

The PRC is located at the district's Educational Service Center, 2727 N. Ferry St. in Anoka, and is managed by the district's Parent Involvement Program. It has an extensive and up-to-date collection regarding families and parenting.

Contact Amy Hoseck, 763-506-1567, for more information.



WALK IN
Door 1 on the west side of the Educational Service Center
2727 N. Ferry St., Anoka, MN 55303

LOG IN
opac.libraryworld.com
Library Name: AHPRC (no password)

CALL IN
763-506-1567 or 763-506-1278

VISIT US ON THE WEB
anoka.k12.mn.us/PRC



EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION (ECSE) SPRING FOOD DRIVE

The ECSE spring food drive was a huge success! Students, families, and staff collected over 450 items for the ECSE Sharing Shelf at Sorteberg Early Childhood Center (SECC) throughout the week of March 28th and at the ECSE Family Fun Night at Riverview Early Childhood Center (RECC) on March 31st. The Sharing Shelf assists many ECSE families, about 50 different families so far this school year, with food, formula, toiletries, diapers, and clothing. The contact for the Sharing Shelf is Megan Lagasse, ESCE School Social Worker (763-433-4883). Thank you so much to all who participated and supported the Sharing Shelf!



Special Education Department

2727 N. Ferry St.
Anoka, MN 55303

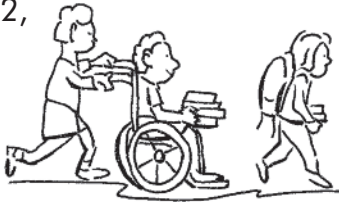


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The **Family Focus** newsletter will be mailed out approximately two times a year to Anoka-Hennepin Schools parents of students on IEP's and 504 plans.

- If you know someone who would like to receive this newsletter please call 763-506-1362, leave name and complete address.
- If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please call 763-506-1362, leave name, complete address and state you do NOT want this mailing any more.



FAQ - Email us!

In future Family Focus editions we will answer questions from our readers in the areas of school services, community services and family services. If you have a question you would like addressed email us at: **mary.gale@anoka.k12.mn.us**