

Mid-Valley Special Education Cooperative Newsletter



December, 2012

Notes from the Executive Director

Many thanks to the Sunshine Committee and those of you who sent get well wishes my way last week. I appreciate everyone's extra effort and your patience as I work hard to catch up this week. Thanks also for the extra cookies left over from the cookie exchange! My husband and my hips are grateful! I understand that there was a small but enthusiastic group at the Shelby Transition Center. Thanks to all of the Transition staff and students who decorated and make the occasion very special.

We are really looking forward to attending the many special events that you all have planned for this holiday season. We can't wait to see you and the students! Then, we need pictures! There's not a single picture in this edition!!

Holiday Hours

Mid-Valley's Administrative Offices will be closed from December 22 through January 1st. The offices will be open on January 2, 2013. No staff members may enter the school side of the building because there will be asbestos removal during the winter break.

Holiday Party

We have lots of folks who will be attending the holiday party on Thursday, December 13th, from 4:00-7:00. Please come to help celebrate even if you haven't RSVPed! Contact Bonnie for more information.

Special Deliveries

We are looking for volunteers to help deliver presents and holiday meals for our 19 families in need. We had fewer volunteers than we expected for the Thanksgiving delivery, so we are hoping that many of you will step up. The gifts will arrive on Monday, December 17th and will be available for distribution after school any time that week. I know that I really enjoyed sharing this experience with our families and I hope you will, too.

Family Giving

At this time of year, many people give generously to families who are in need. If you would like to contribute to this fund, make your checks payable to MV Sunshine Fund and forward it to Phaedra.McLaughlin@d303.org. These funds will be used by the social workers throughout the year to support our students and their families during times of need. Last year, we collected over \$600 to support our families.

Educator of the Year Nominees

In addition to Melissa Jackson nominated in the administrator category, the SAIL team would also like to nominate Linda Hensel for the paraprofessional category. Linda has over 20 years of experience working with students with disabilities. We wish them both good luck!

Parent Forum

The most recent parent forum featured an individual who is attempting to provide getaway weekends for our families of children with disabilities. It is an exciting prospect. If you would like more information, please contact Carla. The next parent forum will be January 31st.

Board Book

For many months, we have used a service called Board Book. It is a way to publish the minutes and all the related documents for every monthly Board meeting. You can access it on our website (mvse.org) and click on Board Book.

Think Summer!

We can't believe it, but we are planning for ESY already! The dates are **July 8 to August 1, excluding July 4. The sessions will be held on M-Th, from 8:00-12:00.** One location will be MJC and we're still working on the second location. Information about summer employment will be announced and posted on our website in March. These dates/times are firm, so you can begin to inform your parents, if you wish. The official brochure will probably be ready in February.

Students attending ESY must all meet the criteria for eligibility. These forms and procedures are on the Netchemia document library (MVSEC) and on the mvse.org website.

Policy Revisions

The policy committee (Tim, Mike, Steve) is back at work again, reviewing revisions to our policies. When finished, these same policies will be sent to all staff for any comment before presenting them to the Board at the January 7 meeting.

Move Requests

With this short month, our next move date will be Thursday, December 20. So, that means you should turn in any move requests to **Bonnie Carlson** by **Monday, December 17** so we can organize the work requests. If you have large furniture, equipment or large boxes to move, please fill out the form and clearly label the items to be moved. The forms are on the web-site.

New Staff in December

Vicki Gaddis began as a temporary OT in the middle of November. Welcome!

IMPORTANT Deadlines

Several important deadlines are fast approaching. If any of the following apply to you, please notify Sue IN WRITING in the Human Resources Department, by the appropriate deadline.

- Feb. 1: Employees on leave of absence must inform MVSEC of their intention to return to work (MVSEA & TASC)
- Feb. 1: Certified staff members seeking a leave of absence must inform MVSEC of their intention for the upcoming school year (MVSEA)
- Feb. 1: Full-time, tenured staff members may request a reduction to a part-time position (MVSEA)
- Feb. 1: Part-time staff members intending to continue part-time must provide written notice (MVSEA)
- Feb. 1: Individuals who wish to job share must jointly apply (MVSEA)
- Feb. 1: Employees may notify their desire for a change in their caseload assignment for the upcoming school year (TASC)
- Feb. 1: Employees may request a change in FTE status for the upcoming school year (TASC)
- Mar. 1: Educators must notify MVSEC of interest in receiving payment in full the balance of their salary (no summer pay) (MVSEA)
- Mar. 1: Any certified employee who is interested in a transfer for the upcoming school year should notify MVSEC of their intent (MVSEA)
- Mar. 1: Employees must file an irrevocable notice of retirement (MVSEA & TASC)

Reminder: Two Business Rules

Mileage should be completed to the last day of the month and then submitted. Your reimbursement will probably be about 6 weeks later. All other reimbursements should be submitted by the 26th of each month. Remember that you will only be reimbursed for pre-approved items.

Therapeutic Horseback Riding Fundraiser

Many of our students use HorsePower Therapeutic Riding, in Maple Park, IL. HorsePower is on a mission to offer horseback riding lessons to all children and adults with special needs regardless of their ability to pay. Scholarships are offered on a sliding scale based upon both therapeutic and economic needs. In order to offer scholarships and cover necessary expenses of the program, HorsePower actively fund-raises throughout the year.

Their Big Bowling Fundraiser is coming up on Saturday, January 19th, 2013 from 11:30am-3:00pm, at St. Charles Bowling Alley. Tickets are \$25 for adults and \$10 for kids ages 4-10, free for kids 3 and under. Each ticket holder will be able to bowl 3 games, and enjoy pizza and pop served at their lane. Cash bar will be available. Non-bowlers can attend for \$10. 50/50 raffle tickets will be sold for \$5 a piece or 5 for \$20. A silent auction will also be available with many valuable items to bid upon.

Birthdays!

Happy December birthday wishes to: Elizabeth Baldwin, Kelli Hogan, Mike Glabinski, Hope Moore, Sue Caddy, Myra Stinson, Maria Bettler, Kris Kein, Paulette Ollie, and Judy Donner. Happy Birthday!

Book Study Group



A Smile as Big as the Moon by Mike Kersjes

A second book study group has just been started for the Hearing Itinerant Teachers. They will be reading Building Skills for Success in the Fast-Paced Classroom: Optimizing Achievement for Students with Hearing Loss, by Karen L. Anderson and Kathleen A. Arnoldi. Great idea to work together as a team!

Thoughts and Prayers

Sandy Gearhart's dad has had recent surgery, but is doing well.

Jeanette Grondin's dad went into the hospital right after Thanksgiving. She has been spending much of my free time at the hospital. Thankfully he is doing better and is home now.

Lynn Chasse's brother is recovering from a heart attack over the Thanksgiving holidays.

MaryAnn Domaracki's step-dad is very ill.

Our Sympathies to...

Experiencing a loss at any time is not easy, but it seems especially hard during the holiday season. We extend our sincere sympathies to:

Betsy Blower whose mother-in-law passed away two weeks ago. Betsy is appreciative the thoughts and prayers of my co-workers.

Janet Tichy whose her father passed away over the Thanksgiving holiday.

Pat DelGuidice whose mother passed away on November 10.

Linda Koch whose father passed away the week before Thanksgiving.

Dade Fox whose father passed away last month.

People News

Paige's son, Lucas, ate pureed spaghetti for the first time ever!!! With pears and sweet potatoes!!

Phyllis Markovic is back after her long illness. Thanks to all the PTs who stepped up to help during this time of need.

MacKenzie Hack is engaged!

Susan Grygier and the baby are doing well.

Progress Monitoring Training

This Thursday should be our last progress monitoring training. We were so pleased with the enthusiasm and sharing that we found from each group. Our next step will be to use these methods to monitor your IEP goals and to decide how to progress monitor program goals and outcomes. I look forward to hearing about the discussions you will have in your department meetings for the next few months.

Professional Development Opportunities

The following are some professional development opportunities. Just let Carla know if you'd like more information.

Mid-Valley Sessions

December 10 iPad after school
 December 12 Progress Monitoring
 December 14 Psych/SW Network

January 13 and 14th Autism Touchback
 January 17 iPad Touchback

The following are some other professional development opportunities you may want to explore.

- An Integrated Model of Communication Instruction, Pati King-DeBaun, December 11, Harper College, Palatine
- Social Work and Psychologists Network (Mid-Valley and Member Districts). Could it be Executive Function Disorder? December 14, 8:00-10:00, MV Room 4.
- Illinois Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders Conference, February 1-2, Lisle
- How Does Your Engine Run? Introductory Alert Program, February 1, Eisenhower Cooperative, Crestwood
- Augmentative and Alternative Communication Case Study Discussion and Lab, Kathleen Post, February 11, Kishwaukee College, Malta
- Boys in Crisis, Rachel's Challenge, February 13, Eisenhower Cooperative, Crestwood

Final Thought

Action may not always bring happiness, but there is no happiness without action.
Benjamin Disraeli

So, the ongoing saga with the happiness project...I have found and sorted my mom's pictures. Over Thanksgiving, we had the opportunity to review them with her once again and hear her stories. It was just a great time and really pulled the family together. It is easy in this busy time to drift apart and become consumed with the tasks at hand. I am so happy that we all had that chance with my mom. ***I wish you all much happiness and a wonderful holiday season.***