

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE STUDENTS, STAFF, PARENTS AND SUPPORTERS OF LEAGUE SCHOOL

Welcome to the League School of Greater Boston's Newsletter - UPDATE.

Any comments or suggestions are welcome. Please send them to Paul Oricchio in our development office at poricchio@leagueschool.com or call him at 508-850-3900, extension 535.

Please bear with us as this is our first attempt to engage with our many audiences in this format in awhile.

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League School Building Update

We are hoping to begin building our 20,000-square foot addition to our existing main structure in 2013. It will house classroom and office space. The school will also enhance our current on-campus residential increasing space by 4,500 square feet, consolidating all of its living/learning center activities in one location. This program will enable us to improve offerings to students and to enhance programs.

“Our building project will enable us to make capital improvements to our facilities that will measurably improve our ability to educate our students,” said The League School’s Executive Director, Frank Gagliardi. “These new classrooms, tutorial rooms, a computer center, a library, a vocational center, an independent living center, larger music and art classrooms, and individual offices for staff and administrators as well as individual independent living areas for every student in our residences –the positive impact on their learning (and their lives) will be significant.”

As most of you know, we have decided to pursue a plan for a minimum \$10 million enhancement program to our school. Our goal is to raise a substantial portion of the cost of these enhancements through a major development fund campaign, which will greatly assist us in reducing the cost of long-term and short-term financing. Mass Development has issued a tax-exempt bond on behalf of the League School. Proceeds will also refinance previous debt, which had financed construction of the current 35,000 square foot building. Middlesex Savings Bank purchased the bond.

Look for more information about this project and the part you will be able to play in it in future editions of our newsletter and on our website.

League School’s Student Council Has a Lot on Its Plate

Reenergized in March of this year by the leadership of Meg Robertson, League School’s Student Council meets every other Wednesday to plan a variety of special programs and events for their fellow classmates. The Council recently spearheaded a Thanksgiving Food Drive at the school, collecting boxes of canned goods and donating them to the Walpole Food Pantry.

The Council has organized a number of engaging events this fall that have entertained students – these have included:

- Crazy Hat Day
- Favorite Sports Team day
- Pajama Day
- A Halloween Dance

In the weeks ahead, the Council will be coordinating a toy drive with collected gifts being donated to Toys for Tots. Combining Meg’s leadership with its members enthusiasm, the Student Council continues to enliven student life at the League School.



League School Student Council Members (L-R): M. Toole, J. Hipsman, D. Norman, S. McDonough, A. Lowe, S. Burke

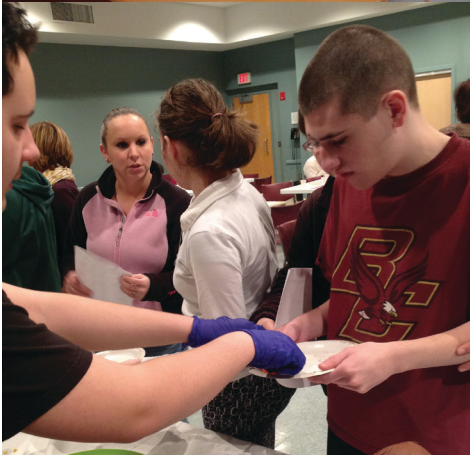
Room 217 Leads League School's Thanksgiving Celebration

There were a number of seasonal activities celebrated in classroom 217 at the League School as the students prepared for the upcoming holiday season.

The theme for them was the *5 Senses of Thanksgiving*. Students had been "Looking and Touching" all of the changes that fall brings to the environment, "Listening" to stories about tradition and history, and finally, were "Tasting and Smelling" all the foods that families traditionally share at Thanksgiving Dinner. It was an all-encompassing program that encouraged student participation while enhancing their sensory development.

The students also worked on seasonal crafts like a Give Thanks Candy Jar, a textured Cornucopia, and even created their own paper plate pilgrims. Among the cooking activities they enjoyed were making Thanksgiving trail mix as well as a harvest loaf. They also did food tasting every Friday in advance of their preparation of a Thanksgiving Feast that the entire school was invited to attend on Tuesday, November 20th at 11:00 in the school auditorium.

It was a feast fit for a king - and students, faculty and staff appreciated the culinary, serving and cleanup efforts of everyone involved. Here are a few photos that reflect the preparation, cooperation, and participation involved in that wonderful event.



PAC

League School's
Parent Advisory Council

League School Hosts Informative PAC Workshop

On November 29, 2012, the League School of Greater Boston's Parent Advisory Council hosted "The Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC): An Introduction to MRC and an Overview of Post-22 Programs and Services" with Guest Speakers: Adam Garber, M.Ed. MRC is a state agency funded through federal dollars as indicated in the 1973 Federal Rehabilitation Act, said Mr. Garber, who works in the Vocational Rehab division of MRC. Vocational Rehabilitation Division is one of four areas that the MRC is responsible for. The other divisions are Community Services, eligibility determination for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), and the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) federal benefits program. MRC promote equality, empowerment and independence of individuals with disabilities, according to their website.

"We are outcome-oriented," said Mr. Garber. "Our clients need to go through an application process to qualify for our assistance .We encourage clients to participate in our program at least two years before they graduate from high school so that we can become familiar with them and they can become acclimated to what is out there for them," added Mr. Garber. "Only certain employable candidates will qualify," said Mr. Garber.

Ten parents attended the event held at the League School Board Room. One of best questions one of the parents asked was "Why should an employer hire people with a disability over one who doesn't? Mr. Garber said disabled employees stay longer in the jobs, employers receive some tax advantages, and MRC does provide job coaching for clients early in their job assignments that can save employers the cost of training. "Our clients are equally productive and we will pay partial salaries for the first six weeks," added Mr. Garber, who has worked for MRC for over 17 years. When an employee stays longer in a position, the employer saves on fixed cost of training new employees.

MRC will provides some job placements, assist with resume preparation, interviewing skills, develop job leads, advocate for the employee/client and actually help match people in the right position based on the talents they possess, according to Mr. Garber. "We will follow our clients for 90 days after they are hired as well." MRC will partner with other agencies in a collaborative fashion to assist people who are post 22 in age or even ones who seek positions before that cutoff.

Potential employees/clients can receive training at any state community college or state university to prepare for a career and the state will pick up the tuition cost, added Mr. Garber. This workshop was part of a series of workshops the school and parent advisory council offers on a monthly basis, according to Patrick Fuller, vice principal of the League School.



League School Receives \$30,000 in Gifts for iPads

The League School of Greater Boston has recently received four gifts in cash and pledges totaling over \$30,000 for IPADS for students, according to the school's Executive Director, Frank Gagliardi, Ed.D. "We are very pleased to accept these gifts from the Christopher Catanese Foundation (\$15,000); Dedham Institution For Savings (\$5,000); Rodman Ride For Kids (\$5,000) and Central Motors of Norwood (\$5,000). The generosity of these organizations will enable our students to have the most-up-to-date technology possible to assist in learning and interacting with our teachers, parents and other students."

"We are grateful for these gifts and look forward to leveraging this technology to enhance the learning environment here at the school."



Meet the Staff at League School - Paul Oricchio

Paul Oricchio, a seasoned development and public relations executive, has joined the League School's development office. He will be involved with marketing, development and public relations for our non-profit organization.

One of his first tasks will be to conduct a pre-campaign analysis. He will interview internal and external leaders in our community in an attempt to gauge the level of support for an upcoming major development fund campaign the school will undertake in an effort to assist in the short and long-term financing of an estimated minimum \$10 million enhancement program the school has begun. He has served non-profit organizations for over thirty years in the Greater Boston area.

If you know of anyone who would like to help Paul in his efforts, please contact our development office. Please feel free to consider us in your estate planning as well.



League School's Teacher of the Month - Judith Smith

At a recent all school staff meeting, League School Principal Jean Leahy was happy to announce that Judy Smith, League School's art teacher, had been named Employee of the Month. "Judy has encouraged our students to increase their self-esteem and generally make them feel good about themselves," praised Ms. Leahy. "She is an outstanding teacher for students."

A League School Parent Shares Some Kind Words of Praise

Hello All - I'm sure that I've shared the fact with most of you that my son absolutely loves the League School. He was at the point where he couldn't wait to be done with high school and we were feeling the stress right along with him. He did not like any of his placements at all, bolted from school continuously and tried various ways to get put out of school so that he would not have to attend. After three therapeutic schools, we have finally found the perfect match for him.

Over the few months that he has been at your school, he has blossomed. He speaks of his disability openly and the challenges that it poses and his desire to overcome the challenges that he is able to overcome and his desire to try and compensate for the ones that are very difficult. He shares his thoughts and feelings on so many topics and is so clear and articulate in his presentation.

He is so excited about future career opportunities, thanks to the class that he takes at your school. It has exposed him to new possibilities. He recently spoke of being an aide in a classroom with small children who are struggling because he loves children and he wants to help people who struggle.

He has spoken with admiration about many of you, Kara, his art teacher. . . but two days ago I was overwhelmed with thanks when he said that there is a teacher who helps him who I believe is named Marianne . . . she is the second teacher in Kara's classroom. He described her as smart, helpful and non-judgmental . . . he said "she is very good at her job." It was so clear how much he liked her and how much she helps him. Perhaps he got his idea about being an aide by watching her. I told him that he should write those sentiments down and share them with her, but I'm not sure he has done that so I wanted to make sure that I thanked your staff for him. Happy Holidays!

IMPORTANT NOTE: ANYONE WISHING TO MAKE AN END OF THE YEAR DONATION TO OUR SCHOOL MAY DO SO BY ACCESSING OUR WEBSITE AT LEAGUESCHOOL.COM OR BY MAILING IT IN TO: League School of Greater Boston, 300 Boston Providence Turnpike, Walpole, MA 02032.

December's Schedule of Events at League School:

- Thursday, December 6th - 11:00 - 1:00
PAC Appreciation Luncheon
- Friday, December 7th - 1:00 PM
League School Open House
- Tuesday, December 11th, 12:30
League School Winter Concert
- Thursday, December 13th, 12:30
Chorus/Rock ST Band Concert
- Friday, December 21st
Winter Break begins at end of school day
- Wednesday, January 2nd - School resumes

Please check the school calendar on the school website, leagueschool.com, for the latest announcements about upcoming school events.