

John Eva (L) and Dr. Peter Martin (R) of Invensys flank League School Executive Director, Dr. Frank Gagliardi.

## International Corporation Executives Visit League School

Late in February, executives from Invensys paid a visit to League School to become more familiar with the school as it begins its 25,000 square foot enhancement program.

Invensys executives who advised League School included John Eva, senior vice president of Invensys Operations Management of Foxboro, MA and the United Kingdom, and Dr. Peter Martin, vice president, of Invensys Operations Management. Dr. Martin holds multiple patents for dynamic performance measures, real-time activity-based costing, closed-loop business control and asset resource modeling. They toured the school with executive director, Dr. Frank Gagliardi, learning about our current programs and future plans while meeting with some staff members. Thanks to the company for its support and interest.

## We Are Working Closely With MAAPS (Massachusetts Association of Chapter 766 Approved Private Schools)

The MAAPS 2012-13 Strategic Plan describes the association’s current mission, vision and future direction. According to the plan, it enables all member schools (including the League School of Greater Boston) to join together in a common direction to serve the needs of our member schools and students. League School staff member, Paul Oricchio, serves on the organization’s Public Relations committee whose goal is to promote the development and dissemination of factual information for parents about the options available for special education to protect the rights of students with special needs.

The group meets monthly at Doctor Franklin Perkins School in Lancaster. Another important goal of the committee is to provide a variety of tools to assist member schools in building awareness of their services and promoting their schools and programs. Other ongoing initiatives include:

- Evaluating and updating the MAAPS website as necessary
- Organizing one positive image
- Coordinating media appearances to include MAAPS members when possible
- Assisting member schools in building awareness of their services and promoting their schools and programs (for example, providing expert testimony at state house on related issues, capitalizing on possible photo opportunities)
- Ensuring that MAAPS events and significant newsworthy events are released to regional publications and media outlets in an effort to gain awareness of MAAPS initiatives
- Maximizing the use of social networking tools to assist member schools in building online awareness of their services and promoting their schools and programs
- Identifying stakeholders and/or school officials to serve as authors as well as utilizing MAAPS leaders as authors with the goal of disseminating updated and factual information to parents as well as the legislature and other stakeholders on SPED (Special Education) issues

“This is an opportunity for those of us who serve on the MAAPS Public Relations Committee to get together and share ideas and implement very important goals,” commented Paul Oricchio, who works in the League School’s development and public relations office.



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## Elaine Hall Captivates With Her Inspiring Story

Thanks to the generous sponsorship efforts of the Dedham Institution for Savings and the Middlesex Savings Bank, on Wednesday afternoon, February 13th, Elaine Hall, founder of The Miracle Project, addressed more than 100 attendees (League School staff members and parents) in two presentations. The story she told was both mesmerizing and informative.

She began by providing her backstory, developing The Miracle Project because she wanted to provide an opportunity for her autistic son, Neil, to develop, and simply stated, where she was located in Southern California offered no educational programs like the one provided by League School.

The Miracle Project is a creative socialization program that supports, nurtures and inspires children and teens with autism and other special needs through movement, music and theater. She detailed how she used creative expression and theater to achieve socialization goals for the children with whom she interacted. And she proudly noted how much their self-esteem increased as they became more invested in the program.

She demonstrated some of the techniques she uses with audience members happily participating in the engaging exercises. She also presented her “7 Keys to Being Miracle-Minded and Unlocking Autism.” They included:

1. Set an intention – “how we show up” – different from a goal
2. Love and accept
3. Experience the senses – understand individual differences
4. Follow the child’s lead (and need)
5. Inclusion – start with reverse inclusion – have volunteers mimic behavior to ease inclusion (hide under a chair with them, run around with them)
6. Rehearse for life (Practice makes progress)
7. Celebrate abilities

Elaine was also highly complimentary of the League School’s program offerings and expressed her appreciation for and admiration of the SCERTS approach to teaching.

She concluded by reminding everyone that creative arts is a great way to interact with students – allowing them each to have their own voice. These performances also provide parents with an opportunity to appreciate their child – to see what’s right and terrific about their kids – sometimes it’s the first time that parents hear something positive about their child. It helps parents to learn to value their kids.

Her last statement effectively summarized what The Miracle Project is all about – “Kids will show us their passion and their greatest interest – we just have to look for it, follow it and nurture it.” To learn more about Elaine’s fine work, check out [www.themiracleproject.org](http://www.themiracleproject.org).



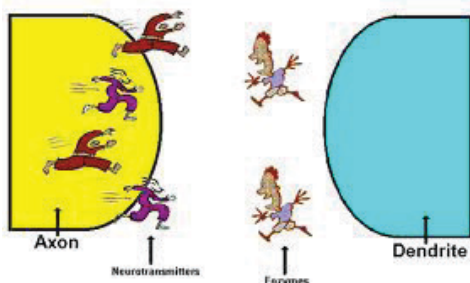
### Upcoming Events at League School:

- Thursday, March 28th - 6:30 P.M. -  
Talk by Sally Fogel, M.Ed., Certified Sexual Educator

Please check the school calendar on the school website, [leagueschool.com](http://leagueschool.com), for the latest announcements about upcoming events at the school.

### Did You Know...

Massachusetts Association of Chapter 766 Approved Private Schools’ (MAAPS) mission is to “represent private special education schools in the goal of providing the highest quality education to students with special needs. To fulfill this mission, MAAPS advocates to improve the environment in which Chapter 766 approved private schools work and helps them manage more effectively by offering information, training and consulting.” According to the official website of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Chapter 766 is a Massachusetts law which guarantees the rights of all young people with special needs (age 3-22) to an educational program best suited to their needs.



The Team from Room 221 (L-R): Meemee Reynolds, Krista Swaider, Betsy Kerrigan and Meg Robertson

## Tag - You've Been Reabsorbed.

Last month at League School, the students in Room 221 enjoyed an innovative integration of gym and science – the result – an engaging and educational game of “Synaptic Tag.” The lesson plan came from a Neuroscience Newsletter for kids produced by a professor from the University of Washington, Eric Chudler. (And in a remarkable “It’s a Small World” coincidence, it turns out that Meemee Reynolds, one of the teachers in 221, and the professor graduated just two years apart from the same High School in California.)

Students were coached through a fun review of their Science neuron lessons by participating in the game. In the game of “synaptic tag,” you are part of the synapse. The object of the game is to get as many neurotransmitters across the synapse to the dendrite without being caught (deactivated) by the enzyme. It is like a game of tag. Draw or find a space for the axon and a dendrite (see the picture below). Some players are neurotransmitters and they wait in the axon; other players are enzymes, they wait in the gap between the axon and the dendrite. It is best to have more neurotransmitters than enzymes. The enzymes are “it.”

When someone says “go,” the neurotransmitters run across the synapse as fast as possible without being touched by an enzyme. If a neurotransmitter is touched by an enzyme, it must go back (be reabsorbed) into the axon and wait until the next turn. If a player makes it to the dendrite, the player is safe.

Students who participated were given the chance to be both a neurotransmitter and an enzyme with a large NT on their pennies identifying the roles they were playing. The students had a great time, expending energy while reinforcing the lesson that had been learned.

So, thank you Meemee Reynolds, Meg Robertson, Krista Swaider and Betsy Kerrigan, our 221 teachers and adaptive PE teacher, for a great lesson and learning experience.

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## Meet Our League School Employees of the Month: February - Meghan Robertson

Meghan Robertson was chosen as the League School’s employee of the month for February. At a recent awards ceremony held in the school’s auditorium, Principal Jean Leahy praised both Meghan’s dedication and approach to teaching.

“Meghan is very cooperative and has a wonderful relationship with the students with whom she interacts. She has worked closely with the students and staff on a number of projects - she has been instrumental in the development of the student council and helped coordinate a recent food drive at the school. She promotes school spirit and has a way of making each day a little brighter for our students,” added Ms. Leahy. She continually sets a wonderful example for us all. Congratulations Meghan.



## March - Marilyn Diamond

This past week, Marilyn Diamond was chosen as the League School’s employee of the month for March.

“Marilyn is efficient, has a vast knowledge of clinical services and is steadfast in her advocacy for families and students,” praised Donna Griffin, coordinator of clinical and family services. “She does a great job identifying students’ needs and working collaboratively with parents,” Pat Connolly, coordinator of admissions. Way to Go, Marilyn.

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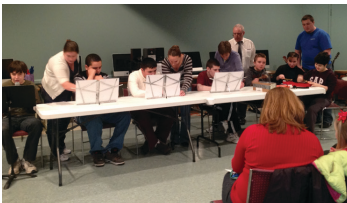
## What do you want for your child with autism?



How about the chance to be on the Student Council and help organize school events.



Or the chance to prepare, serve and enjoy a Thanksgiving feast for students and staff.



Or the chance to perform in a Winter Music Concert in front of family and friends.

Since 1966, we've been providing students aged 3 to 22 diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder and Asperger's Syndrome with a nurturing environment that allows them to discover their capabilities and meet the challenges of life.

To learn more about our SCERTS-based approach and the exceptional results it produces, call us at 508-850-3900, ext. 514.



[leagueschool.com](http://leagueschool.com)

Look for this League School ad in this month's edition of *The Boston Parent's Paper*. To access the publication online, go to: [bostonparentspaper.digitalparenthood.com](http://bostonparentspaper.digitalparenthood.com).

ANYONE WISHING TO MAKE A DONATION TO OUR SCHOOL MAY DO SO BY ACCESSING OUR WEBSITE AT [LEAGUESCHOOL.COM](http://LEAGUESCHOOL.COM) OR BY MAILING IT IN TO:  
League School of Greater Boston,  
300 Boston Providence Turnpike, Walpole, MA 02032.

Thanks in advance for your support.

## League School Will Be Sponsoring a Presentation by Sally Fogel, M.Ed. This Month

Sally Fogel M.Ed, has been a certified sexuality educator since 1984. She has a private practice and teaches sexuality and social skills in public and private schools throughout New England. Sally has also taught courses on human sexuality at Wheelock College, Boston University School of Social Work, and Boston College.

Sally has offered presentations in the area on providing appropriate human growth and development education to youngsters with special needs.

Some of the topics Ms. Fogel will discuss include:

- Rules in society (including "hidden rules") regarding sexuality and how to teach your teens/young adults these
- How to use social stories in the home environment to teach kids about puberty.
- Hygiene and puberty
- How to help your son/daughter (and help parents) accept a disabled person's sexuality and what to expect as your child gets older.
- Teaching teens about relationships: both friendships and dating

Ms. Fogel will be speaking on Thursday night, March 28th at 6:30 p.m. in the school's auditorium. The event is free of charge and open to the public. If you would like to attend this speaking engagement, kindly RSVP to Patrick Fuller at [pfuller@leagueschool.com](mailto:pfuller@leagueschool.com) or 508-850-3900 ext. 514.

We hope you can join us for what we believe will be an engaging and enlightening talk.

## What Can We Do For You?

One of our main objectives in creating this newsletter was to enhance communications between school staff members (teachers and administrators) and people interested in what we were accomplishing here (parents of current students, parents of League School graduates, potential donors, local businesses). We want the former to share some of their rewarding experiences and innovative lesson plans to enable the latter to better understand the kind of exceptional education offered here at League School.

In reviewing the early issues of this publication, we realized that we really haven't yet created an effective forum through which parents can get answers to specific questions they might have. To that end, we would like to encourage you to e-mail us with any and all questions you might have about our programs, our staff, our facilities - about anything having to do with League School.

In future issues, we will select a submission that we believe impacts the most people and respond to it. One month might focus on the development process for IEPs, another on the criteria for classroom placement, while a third might answer how a student gets elected to the Student Council. Simply stated, if you want to know about it, we will be glad to share our thoughts and insights with you.

To submit your question/query, please e-mail Patrick Fuller at [pfuller@leagueschool.com](mailto:pfuller@leagueschool.com). And don't be shy - we are looking forward to hearing from you.