



Panther Press

A weekly publication of the Georgia Academy for the Blind

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January 4, 2017 Welcome Back Edition



Georgia Academy
for the Blind - GAB

Mission Statement: The Georgia Academy for the Blind will provide quality education services to Georgia's students with visual impairments and/or visual impairments in conjunction with other disabilities to prepare them to achieve their highest level of independence in transition to college and career readiness

Success! Nothing Less!

We hope each of our students and their families had a wonderful, safe, and restful holiday season. Just as quickly as Christmas, then New Year's came and went, so are the final days of our Winter Holidays! Our staff is back on campus preparing for our students' return. We have put together a list of things that we hope will make the transition from holidays to school a bit easier for all. **Now is the time to:**

- ❖ Begin getting back on school day sleep schedule. We all enjoyed later bed times and later waking times. Getting back on a sleep schedule now will help assure that our students are getting the amount of sleep required to begin each morning ready to learn.
- ❖ Begin getting back on a school day eating schedule. We all enjoyed the holiday treats and day long snacking. Getting back on a routine of healthy eating and particular meal and snack schedules will help them ease into our cafeteria and our recess snack schedule necessary for being ready to learn.
- ❖ Reflect with your child the good times your family experienced over the holidays, but also remember to engage them in what they have to look forward to in returning to school. Ask what they are looking forward to the most, who they are most eager to see again, etc. This is a good time to remind them of their IEP goals and for the older students, their transition goals. If you remain enthusiastic about their education, they will likely be more enthusiastic.
- ❖ Dress ready for outdoor fun and learning! Our Orientation and Mobility Specialists, Robin Cruise and Greg Hudgins want to remind O&M students to be prepared for cold weather. Hats, scarfs, gloves, socks, and winter coats will be necessary. So far our winter weather has been mild, but each day here in Georgia can possibly bring us a significant drop in temperature. Students need to be sure to be prepared for cold weather.
- ❖ Mark your calendars*! We have a few calendars left! If you will let Sonya Milam know, she will send you one! These dates are below. Make sure your family calendar has your student's **IEP date** and a date to see your **ophthalmologist** and send us the **eye report**.
- ❖ Remember that **Georgia Parent Survey is still underway and we need YOUR help!** The data will be used as part of the calculation of the **School Climate Star Rating**. Survey responses are anonymous and will be submitted directly to the Georgia Department of Education for analysis. *Simply copy the link below into your browser of your computer or SmartPhone to take the survey. Our school district is STATE SCHOOLS, then you will be prompted to select Georgia Academy for the Blind.*
<http://apps.gadoe.org/schoolclimate/parents.nsf/Survey.xsp> After you complete the survey, please send a note with your child or email Sonya Milam at smilam@doe.k12.ga.us and he/she will receive a voucher for a **FREE WENDY'S FROSTY! OFFER EXPIRES January 21**
- ❖ Remember that if you have had your IEP this year and have not yet completed the survey, you can do so here: <http://tinyurl.com/ASpparent16-17> Under district, you will be taken directly to Georgia Academy for the Blind. When it asks about ASPIRE activities at home, it is referring to any time you discuss school and their goals beyond school, have your child make choices, and/or have your child speak for him/herself. Let Sonya Milam know if you need any assistance with either of these surveys.
- ❖ Remember, if you attended one of the classes for parents/guardians on the day of the Winter Concert and Art Show, we need you to return the survey that was distributed on that day. Contact Sonya Milam if you need one sent to you. These surveys are important as we continue to make relevant family engagement opportunities in the future.

*Mark Your Calendars

January 8: Residential Students return!

January 9: School starts back!

January 16: Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday

January 19-23: SCASB in Mississippi (Wrestling, Cheering and Fine Arts)

January 16: Application Deadline (attached) for Short Course Weekend due (ages 12-21)

January 31: "Drop in RPM" West Gwinnett County

February 7: "Drop in RPM" *Chatham County (location change from Dougherty)

2 February 16: Braille Challenge (*Program for parent/guardians is being planned*).

0 February 17-19: *Short Course Weekend **Grooving and Moving**. (*Application linked below*).

1 February 20: Presidents' Day Holiday

7 February 28: "Drop in RPM" East Gwinnett County

March 14: "Drop in RPM" Bibb County

March 27-31: Spring Break

March 28: "Drop in RPM" West Cobb County

April 6: High School Prom

April 27-30: Senior Trip

April 17: Easter Holiday

May 15: Mother's Day Holiday

May 26: Last day of school and Graduation



We are saddened by the death of a 2016 GAB graduate, Caitlyn Bibb.

Caitlyn passed away peacefully on December 29 in her home in Warner Robins.

Our thoughts and prayers remain with her parents, Charlie and Connie and her entire family.

Many GAB staff, students and parents were able to attend the services on January 1st and 2nd.



Character Education

Word of the quarter: **RESILIENCE** The capacity to successfully manage high levels of change.

Word of the week: **SELF CONFIDENCE** Positive attitude about, and trust in one's self; sense of security and self-assurance.

Confidence comes naturally with success, but success comes only to those who are confident.



happy
birthday

Devoneta ~ 5th

Shakira ~ 10th

John ~ 14th

Johnny ~ 15th

Morgan ~ 23rd

Dante ~ 24th

Destiny G ~ 24th

Destiny I ~ 25th

Devon ~ 25th

Georgia Academy for the Blind



Grooving and Moving

Short Course Weekend February 17-19, 2017

GAB Student Application go to:

http://www.gabmacon.org/files/YELPE_b23167c01b1a653b3745a49013852ec4/ShortCourseApplication2017GABStudents.pdf

Application Deadline: January 16, 2016

(All applications subject to approval)

- **ALL INFO MUST BE FULLY COMPLETED AND LEGIBLE OR APPLICATION WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED FOR ACCEPTANCE.**
- Students must have a documented vision loss that impacts their learning.
- Students must be Georgia residents and enrolled in school.
- Students must display independent living skills appropriate to their age.
- Students must have the physical, mental, and behavioral capabilities to benefit from the programs offered.
- Students ages 12-21 may attend.

For questions or more information, contact **Dawn Day** (478) 751-6083 x 1114 mday@doe.k12.ga.us

This newsletter is produced by Sonya Milam, Parent Mentor. Please give her your feedback and any news items by contacting her at 478-262-3303, or email smilam@doe.k12.ga.us.

Student Editor is Caleb Burdette.