



Panther Press

A weekly publication of the Georgia Academy for the Blind

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This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

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Georgia
Academy
for the
Blind - GAB



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Mission Statement: The Georgia Academy for the Blind provides 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.



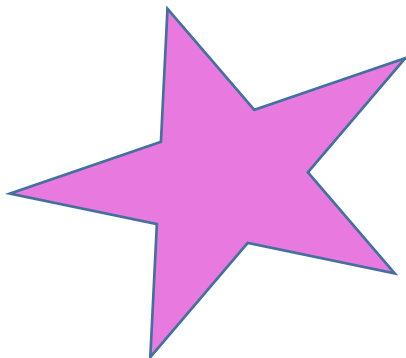
MARK YOUR CALENDARS * just added

February 19: Presidents' Day Holiday
February 28: Braille Challenge - - Programs for parents/guardians are planned!
March 23: Spring Program
March 26-30: Spring Break
April 2: Easter Holiday
April 5: Prom
*April 9-20 Elementary and Middle Milestones
April 19-22 SCASB
April 26-29: Senior Trip
*April 30-May 11 High school End of Course Milestones
May 1: Help a Child Smile Mobile Dental Clinic
*May 14-18: Milestones' Retests for grades 3, 5 and 8
May 25: Graduation

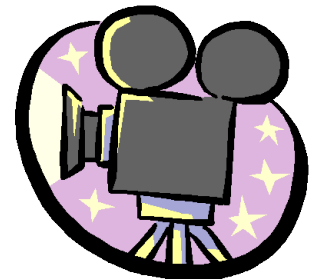
Remaining February Birthdays:



~18th Ambria
~22nd Roni
~24th Kayla and Dorrian
~26th TJ



Be sure to check out the Georgia Department of Education's "Discover State Schools" video that features GAB. It can be found from their website here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=or_S-tspwU&feature=youtu.be



Character Education

Empathy part 4

Check out our "Ripples of Kindness" activity we did this week during ECC! <https://ideas.classdojo.com/i/ripples-of-kindness> We learned how small acts of kindness can make a BIG impact! Ask your child about it this weekend!

Learn more about our Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program by visiting:

<http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Special-Education-Services/Pages/Positive-Behavioral-Interventions-and-Support.aspx>

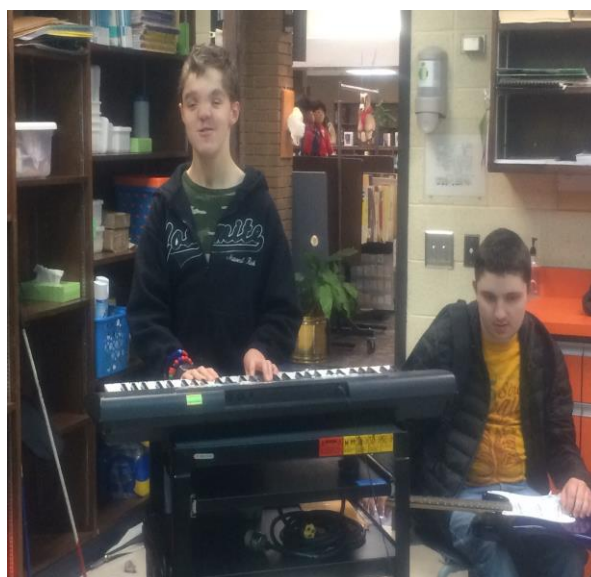
This week in pictures...



(Right and left) Mrs. Rushing's class enjoying the classic, "Charlotte's Web" during their read aloud time.



(Left) Rainy days and Mondays NEVER get us down! In fact, it is a perfect time for O&M instruction!



Above: Mrs. Thompson's Music Appreciation class, "The Rebel Rousers" Serenaded the hallways and classrooms on Tuesday! Below: Ms. Layson's class enjoying the tunes before class.

Right: The race is on for our next 1,000 General Mills Box Tops to help with field trips!



EECC's Valentines Dance!





SECOND NOTICE! We have received reports that instances of flu-like symptoms in Georgia has almost tripled. Officials say that holiday travel, along with bad weather and the severe strain of flu that is circulating at this time is causing a high number of hospitalizations in Georgia and nationwide. The symptoms of body aches and fatigue and respiratory distress have been especially severe, causing more to be hospitalized. The CDC still recommends flu shots to be the best protection from the virus, while it should be done earlier in the season, it is not too late to obtain one. It can take up to two weeks to be effective.

At home, please follow these important steps for protecting yourself and your family from the flu:

- Avoiding people who are sick as much as possible.
- Covering your cough with the inside of your elbow.
- Wearing a mask if you are sick.
- Staying home until your fever subsides for at least 24 hours and symptoms are relieved. This will prevent other students from possibly being exposed to harmful germs unnecessarily.
- Avoiding carbohydrates and sugar, which lower the strength of your immune system.
- Cleaning frequently touched surfaces like doorknobs and counter surfaces.
- If you are feeling sick, see a doctor as soon as possible, there are antiviral medications that may be able to shorten the durations of illness.
- Washing your hands often/ hand sanitizer may be used if soap and water is not available.

At school, we are:

- Diligently cleaning and using Z7 and Zep 30 (disinfectants) on surfaces like doorknobs, water fountains, and side rails.
- Providing each classroom and dorms with Purell dispensers, Clorox wipes and Zepdynamic disinfectant sprays.
- Sending staff and students home who present with flu symptoms.
- Reminding our students to cover their mouths if they cough.
- Reminding our students to wash their hands, to eat healthy foods, and drink plenty of water.



Parent/Guardians, I want you to know that we had an incidence of bed bugs in Cottage 5 this week, and we have used the protocols advised with discarding supplies and equipment that attract bed bugs and professionally cleaning/treating the entire area. We have had no further evidence of pests or students with bites. Please be aware and vigilant of your own children's items and notify the school of any concerns. We include information below for your knowledge. We apologize for this inconvenience and assure you that all precautions are taken at GAB.

How did I get bed bugs? Bed bugs are experts at hiding. Their slim flat bodies allow them to fit into the smallest of spaces and stay there for long periods of time, even without a blood meal. Bed bugs are usually transported from place to place as people travel. The bed bugs travel in the seams and folds of luggage, overnight bags, folded clothes, bedding, furniture, and anywhere else where they can hide. Most people do not realize they are transporting stow-away bed bugs as they travel from location to location, infecting areas as they travel.

How are bed bugs treated and prevented? Bed bug bites usually do not pose a serious medical threat. The best way to treat a bite is to avoid scratching the area and apply antiseptic creams or lotions and take an antihistamine. Bed bug infestations are commonly treated by insecticide spraying. If you suspect that you have an infestation, contact your landlord or professional pest control company that is experienced with treating bed bugs. The best way to prevent bed bugs is regular inspection for the signs of an infestation.



Helping your child with school concepts at home! Check out this great article from our friends at Paths to Literacy about **Recognizing and Building Abstract Thinking in the Child with Visual Impairment**. It includes some great tips activities you can do at home that will help develop these skills

http://www.pathstoliteracy.org/blog/recognizing-and-building-abstract-thinking-child-visual-impairment?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Paths%20to%20Literacy%20Newsletter%20Feb%2013%202018&utm_content=Paths%20to%20Literacy%20Newsletter%20Feb%2013%202018+CID_503e7853ec73ffc60fbce72c0ae513fd&utm_source=Paths%20to%20Literacy%20newsletter&utm_term=Recognizing%20and%20Building%20Abstract%20Thinking%20in%20the%20Child%20with%20Visual%20Impairment

Parent/guardian surveys continue



Your voice matters and we want to hear from YOU! Please take a few minutes and complete these three quick surveys from the Georgia Department of Education. Sonya Milam stands ready to assist you!

1 Annual Georgia School Climate Parent Survey. This online, anonymous survey only takes about 5 minutes to complete and is your opportunity to provide feedback to GAB and the Georgia Department of Education. Georgia Parent Survey is important because 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. Results from the Georgia Parent Survey will not be available to the public and will not be posted online. The Georgia Parent Survey link is posted below. The survey can be found at: <http://gshs.gadoe.org/parents> *The first line asks for School System. Here you scroll down to STATE SCHOOLS, not your county! You will then be prompted to choose Georgia Academy for the Blind.*

2 Annual Georgia Special Education Services Parent Survey. This online anonymous survey with 10 questions also takes only 5 minutes to complete. It is available to all Georgia's families who have a student with a disability. This survey helps the state determine parents' perception of the success of parent engagement between them and schools. Georgia is required to conduct a parent survey collection process to measure parent/family perceptions. The information is gathered as a component of the **State Performance Plan, Indicator 8: Percent of parents with a student receiving special education services who report that schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving results for children with disabilities**. The data collected is reported as a percentage of parental involvement in the **Annual Performance Report** for each district. This survey can be found here: <http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Special-Education-Services/Pages/Parent-Survey.aspx> *When prompted to select district, choose STATE SCHOOLS, not your county! You will then be prompted to choose Georgia Academy for the Blind.*

3 Annual ASPIRE Parent Survey. This survey is conducted each year to determine parents' satisfaction in and involvement with Georgia's student led IEP program. Whether you attended your child's IEP on campus or on the phone, if you didn't complete this survey afterwards, please take a few minutes to do so now! <https://goo.gl/oGU3oc>



Yes, it's only February! **No** it is not too early for summer camp registration to begin!

Scholarships and spaces are limited so act now!

Come to the Braille Challenge Parent/Guardian Program and/or our meeting after the Spring Program to meet with these folks and learn more!



Visit their website where you can watch a video and learn more:

<http://www.campdreamga.org/>

SECOND NOTICE! Camp Dreams 2018 Camper Session Dates

- July 15th – July 18th (Sun. - Wed.)
- July 19th – July 22nd (Thu. - Sun.)
- July 23rd – July 26th (Mon. - Thu.)
- July 27th – July 30th (Fri. - Mon.)

Contact Sonya Milam for more information including how to register and how to apply for a scholarship!



Contact Sonya Milam for more information including how to register and how to apply for a scholarship! Visit their website and watch a video here:

https://hpex.columbusstate.edu/camp_abilities/index.php

SECOND NOTICE! May 25 - 28, 2018

Camp Abilities Columbus GA at Columbus State University (CSU) is a non-profit (501c) organization for children that are blind or visually impaired. Camp Abilities Columbus, GA is a residential camp that will be open for a maximum of 16 campers, ages 9 to 18 years old who are blind or visually impaired. They will stay on Columbus State University's campus to engage in an array of sports and recreational activities in a safe and developmentally appropriate environment. Sports and recreational activities include: goalball, beep baseball, beep kickball, tandem biking, rock climbing, swimming, soccer, tennis and team building activities.

FOURTH NOTICE: Announcing the Georgia Lions Club Camp for the Blind's 2018 SUMMER SCHEDULE



Session 1	June 10-15	Family Camp (ages 5-9)
Session 2	June 17-22	Pre-teen (ages 6-12)
Session 3	June 24-29	Older Adults (ages 35-up)
Session 4	July 1-06	Young Adults (ages 18-34)
Session 5	July 8-15	Teenagers (ages 13-17)

Deadline line for completed applications is April 21! You may get a paper application or learn how to register and how to apply for a scholarship by contacting Sonya Milam, or go to <http://www.glcb.org/>

Attention Atlanta area families! An email went out about upcoming Transition Fairs. Check your mail boxes next week and listen out for a phone call from our Parent to Parent Transition Partner, Cindy Crawford!



Let us hear from you! This newsletter is published by Sonya Milam. If you have news, suggestions or resources to share, please contact her at 478-262-3303
smilam@doe.k12.ga.us