

**DECEMBER:***1 - PA DAY**22 - LAST DAY BEFORE  
WINTER BREAK***JANUARY:***26 - PA DAY***THE  
GAZETTE**

## PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Sometimes we do things backwards and sometimes it is actually a good thing. Preparing our December Newsletter is case in point. Each month, the Newsletter has a theme. This theme provides the direction of the classroom/program blurbs. With the holidays before us, **CELEBRATIONS** is our December theme. Teachers and staff have the option of sending in little stories and updates on the exciting learnings that are happening with their students. As I read these stories of celebration from the classes, I cannot help but smile. It is amazing to see and hear about all the daily learning and consistent gains our students are making in the areas of **COMMUNICATION, LIFESKILLS, TRANSITIONS** and **INDEPENDENCE**. The gains our students are making are not just 'nice' steps, but rather targeted learning goals, that have been set in their **Individual Education Plans**. And as I reflect on those gains, I realize that many people within our Board, in the community and at home have worked diligently to this end. So as I read about the exciting learning happening, my personal **CELEBRATION** is acknowledging our **amazing Glenwood Staff!**

Both our teachers and EAs are working hard to provide the best learning experiences for your child. As I move about the school, I am so impressed with the way in which our staff have taken the individual strengths of our students and designed relevant programming to address their learning goals. People often say, you cannot understand Glenwood without experiencing it. The uniqueness of the alternative programming takes teaching **COMMUNICATION, LIFESKILLS, TRANSITIONS** and **INDEPENDENCE** to a very different level. Through strong skill sets, professional knowledge, collaboration and commitment, our staff are

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supporting your child for learning today and for their next steps into adulthood. I regularly learn of teachers and EAs who are taking additional courses in special education to improve their practice. Over the summer and fall, many staff have taken courses on Structured TEACCH and professional development in such areas as Prompt Fading, ABA Strategies, use of assistive technology and signing to name a few. It is so exciting to have our staff go out from the school to model best practices to other educators or have other educators observe within our classes or present on profession development days.

We are also so fortunate to have Sue, the only Board Kinesiologist, and Lucia, Communication Disorders Assistant, on site to support physical and communication goals of our students. Another important part of our staff are Ed and Ivo, our custodians who keep our school safe and clean and interact wonderfully with our students. And the first voice you hear or the person who greets you at the door, Leigh, our Office Administrator, who brings both a strong professional and compassionate piece to our school, it's daily functioning and our student lives.

So, as I read with you our **CELEBRATIONS** of our students and their learning, I want to **CELEBRATE** the **AMAZING STAFF** here at Glenwood and acknowledge all the wonderful things they do.

As always, please enjoy reading our December Newsletter and all the learning that occurs in our students' lives as Glenwood continues to be '**a special place to learn and celebrate!**'

*Happy Holidays*

*Todd Graves,  
Vice Principal,  
Glenwood Special Day School*





There are many things to celebrate at Glenwood and here is just a small sample of the amazing things happening.

## **B***uilding our Classroom Community in Room 1*

The amazing students in our room continue to build positive bonds with each other and the various faces around the school over the last few weeks. The students have come a long way in regards to their positive social skills, including Shifa and Cameron's budding bus-buddy friendship and Tyler's willingness to share with the other students in the class and school. Kasey always helps other students to feel comfortable by not being afraid to show her dance moves during music time, while Hamza and Susma enthusiastically move along to the beat to make the class laugh. We are also lucky to have had Taylor, a Mohawk Student completing her placement, with us every day. She has been a friendly face to have around and she will be greatly missed when she leaves us in December! We have a lot to **CELEBRATE** in Room 1!



~ Hannah Young, Room 1

## **C***elebrate good times....*

While the things we celebrate in our classroom may seem small to others on the outside looking in, they are big accomplishments to many of our students and special for us as a staff to witness. On any given day, you may find us patting our students on the back or saying "great job" or "good work" not only for independence or perfection in tasks, but also for efforts and attempts. In recent days, for example, we celebrated with one of our students who is blind for a positive transition in the hall walking with his cane...for another student we celebrated her great job using the talker to greet others with "hello" in the hall... and for another student we congratulated him for fantastic work engaging with the new Tar Heel program on the MyGaze technology we have been experimenting with in our class. We always have so much to celebrate in Room 2, including the fact that we have the honour and privilege of working with your children every day!

~ Angela Saccomano, Room 2

## **C**an I Have Some More?? - Building Help Seeking Skills in Room 3

Many of us don't like asking for help as it can be seen as a weakness and not a strength, when it really is not! For our students, building help-seeking skills allows them to **communicate** their needs and wants with others! Room 3 is using these skills regularly during snack and lunch, or are working on developing prerequisite skills needed to ask for help in socially acceptable ways. Some of our students are able to eye gaze at their choices on an e-tran board (ie drink or eat), use a Big Mac button to ask for assistance (ie opening wrappers, help scooping food onto a spoon) or signing for more food when they are ready to eat more of their snack. This allows us to effectively support our students and makes for an enjoyable dining experience!

~ Ivan Quach, Room 3

## **N**ew Country, New School, BIG Progress

Room 4 would like to celebrate CuiLiu! She is a new resident of Canada since January 2017. She has slowly increased her time spent at Glenwood since May 2017 and is now attending full days here with us! Her bright and contagious smile helps make Room 4 a happier place to be. We are so proud of your progress CuiLiu!

~ Sherri Beckerson, Room 4



## **A** New Glenwood Superstar in Room 6

A little over a year ago, Abdu arrived in Canada from Eritrea. In the three months since starting at Glenwood, he has learned over 20 signs which he uses every day to **express himself** to staff and other students, and shows an amazing amount of **independence**. One of the most valuable signs he has learned is "help", and he uses the sign appropriately to ask for help whenever he is struggling with a learning task or life skill. He has quickly learned the basics of Structured TEACCH and visual schedules, and often surprises staff with things he has learned by watching others. Abdu has one of the biggest smiles in the whole school, he loves to dance, and he is known by everyone. Abdu has had an amazing start to his school career, and is a true Glenwood Superstar!

~ Ken Cameron, Room 6

## ***I*t's Your Turn in Room 10**

We are very excited to have the Structured TEACCH table up and running, teaching the students new skills to add to their **independent** workstations. We would also like to celebrate the introduction of a group table with the focus of **communication** - social skills specifically in regards to "*it's your turn*" during group table activities. The group table has brought a sense of community to our room as we are starting to witness more and more social interactions between our students which is awesome to see. Moving forward we plan to utilize the group table more and more as we are excited to see the future gains. We are so excited to see all the positive gains that have occurred in such a short period of time!

~ Devin Cowan, Room 10

## ***S*martboard Celebrations**

Room 11 is celebrating the great learning that is going on during Calendar Time. After each turn, the students tell a peer "It's your turn (name)" either verbally or with their ipad "talker". The calendar activities allow for interaction with peers and staff. Lucia (our CDA) has been involved during our calendar time and has shared great ideas for how to promote even more **communication** with our students. This time has evolved into a very rich learning time that we all enjoy.

~ Karen Schmidt, Room 11

## ***B*rrrr It's Getting Cold Outside!**

During TEACCH time the students have been working on their **Self Help Skills** in preparation for the cold weather, MA can put on his own hat and coat. He is learning how to do up his coat buttons and put on his gloves. NL can put on his own hat and is learning how to put on his own coat and mittens. NF can put on his own hat, sort different coloured/patterned hats and mittens, and is learning how to put on his own coat and mittens. SA is learning how to dress for her second winter in her new country. She is pedalling her tricycle around the school halls faster than last month. It's fantastic to see so many accomplishments from our students.

~ Laura Bruch, Room 12

## Celebrating in Room 14

*“The more you CELEBRATE YOUR LIFE, the more there IS IN LIFE TO CELEBRATE!”*

*- Oprah Winfrey*

In Room 14 we believe that everyday is full of celebrations no matter how big or small. Daily celebrations occur all the time! Smiles on the bus as students arrive each day. Using words to ask for preferred items. Using check schedule cards to find out what is happening next. Sharing the swings at recess.



Laughing and giggling when interacting with staff. Learning new skills at TEACCH time. Increased **independence** in work and **life skills** tasks. Making positive choices and interacting with friends. Using iPad talkers to **communicate** ideas. Walking proud to class in the morning. Participating in whole school events.

~ Penny Parry, Room 14

## Glenwood in December

Glenwood in December brings many different things; Winter break, the Blizzard, dances, edible crafts and other festivities. For the CDA program however, it means the end of Term 1 and with it, so many moments to **CELEBRATE!** Students have been introduced to many different avenues of **communication** throughout this term and every single one of them has demonstrated progress. For this term it meant students learning a new sign, becoming better skilled at using their AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication) device (iPad, e-tran board or switch), using longer sentences, being newly successful on the MyGaze program and so on. Over the winter holidays remember to always have your child’s device available to them and to model, model, model! They’ll need to learn from the best (you)!



~ Lucia Crespo, Communication Disorders Assistant (CDA)

# Gross Motor Celebrations

*“Stop worrying about the potholes in the road and celebrate the journey”*

*- Barbara Hoffman*

Everyone has been working hard this fall in Gross Motor. We have new students, new standing frames and every day we celebrate all the little successes in our students’ individual programs. This could involve stretching by throwing and catching bean bags, reaching for a cause and effect toy, pushing the bike pedals a little more than usual, standing or sitting for a few seconds longer, or climbing the stairs with a bit less assistance just to name a few. We celebrate them all! It seems the more fun we have the more work we get done!

~ Sue MacMillan, Kinesiologist

# Celebrations in the Glenwood Apartment

The **Life Skills** program is celebrating success in the Glenwood Apartment. Many students are becoming more **independent transitioning** through their visual schedules to complete life skill tasks. The cooking program celebrated lots of great cooking this past fall with many delicious apple and pumpkin recipes. We will be adding to the celebrations by making freezer jam for the Blizzard Shopping Spree!

~ Katy Gurman and Elyse Pelletier, Prep Teachers

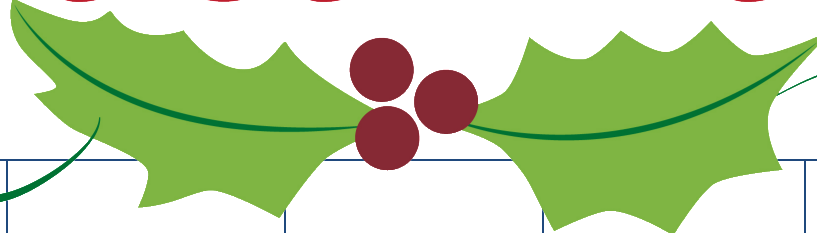


With the Winter months comes Cold Weather and Sickneses. This is a friendly reminder to please dress your child in layers. We do go outside whenever possible and want to ensure that our kids (and ourselves) are dressed for the weather.

With cold weather also comes coughs, sneezes, runny noses, etc. If your child is feeling under the weather and you are keeping them home please remember to call the office at 905-525-2140 and let us know. We worry about our students when they aren’t here.



# DECEMBER



				<b>1</b> PA DAY
<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> Day 4 - Santa's Workshop	<b>8</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> Day 4 - Holiday Dance	<b>15</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> Christmas Blizzard Fundraiser	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> Day 4 - Movie
<b>25</b> Winter Break	<b>26</b> Winter Break	<b>27</b> Winter Break	<b>28</b> Winter Break	<b>29</b> Winter Break



**Upcoming Important Dates:**

Back to School - January 8

PA Day - January 26