



BEAR TRACKS



A NEWSLETTER OF THE SCRANTON SCHOOL FOR DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING CHILDREN



Dr. Seuss Celebration

Our school celebrated Dr. Seuss Day on Friday, March 1. Students enjoyed seeing "The Cat in the Hat" come to life and sign the book "I Can Read With My Eyes Shut."

Elementary students enjoyed literature and STEAM activities run by our Middle School students. Students especially enjoyed the Seuss Activity Cube and Cup Stacking Cat Hat. When the activities were finished we all enjoyed a "Seussical" lunch. This tradition is one that students have come to enjoy and will look forward to for many years to come. ■



SuperVisions -

A Note from CEO, Steven E. Farmer

As I write this, Spring has sprung! Flowers are blooming, leaves are growing on trees, and grass is becoming greener.

It is amazing to see how over the past few months our staff and students continue to grow and bloom into better educators and learners. As you pore through this issue, you will see how we are continuously growing through education in and out of the classroom!

Not only are our faculty, staff, and students growing, our enrollment is growing! Through our "Choices for Children" (birth - 3 years old program) and our four "programmatic sites" in Pittsburgh, Edinboro, Scranton, and Hershey, we are serving close to 400 children!

During the 2018-2019 academic year, we saw many exciting accomplishments. Most notable was being fully accredited by the Conference of Educational Administrators of Schools and Programs for the Deaf (CEASD) and being recommended for full accreditation with Middle States Association. The members of our faculty, staff, administration, families, alumni, board, and students could not have achieved this feat without a lot of hard work! Thank you to all of you who participated in this process.

Another exciting accomplishment was the completion of our 10,000 square foot Children's Center Expansion project. We will have a ribbon-cutting and Open House on the first day of school of the upcoming school year.

The Scranton School for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children celebrated its 10th anniversary this year and had an incredible celebration Gala on May 3rd. Everybody was mega-impressed with the event!



As we look toward the future, WPSD will celebrate its 150th anniversary over the upcoming school year. We have many activities planned. The biggest event of the year will be the 150th anniversary Gala on October 26th. You can purchase your tickets online via our website (wpsd.org).

Last but not least, we are working on the final elements of our Strategic Plan and Campus Master Plan. These projects were huge undertakings, and we are excited about the final products.

All in all, this was a successful year of growth, thanks to our Trustees, Faculty, Staff, Administrators, Students, Parents, Community Partners/Donors, Legislative Partners, and Alumni! We have an amazing team!

Happy reading!

Sincerely,

Steven E. Farmer, Ed.D.
Chief Executive Officer



Bear Tracks

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Hershey Orchard



Our Vision

It is the vision of our school to be a **Total Learning Environment**

for our students.

The Scranton School for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children is a special place where...

- Our students achieve at the same levels as other children in our society.
- Our students reach their highest potential in academics and citizenship.
- Our students achieve independence, high personal aspirations, and pride.

The Scranton School for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children

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Halloween Spooktacular

The halls of SSDHHC were filled with mini witches, goblins and more as we celebrated another fun Halloween. Students enjoyed a parade through the halls while receiving treats from the staff and families. The gym was transformed into a Halloween fun fest with pumpkin bowling, ghost match games and a witch ring toss. Upstairs, on the second floor, students walked through a spooky and magical maze where a surprise was waiting around each corner along with more treats for their goody bags. ■





Community Thanksgiving

Have you ever stopped to think about what life in your town might be like without the "unsung heroes" in your community? The folks who pick up the trash, plow the streets, patrol the neighborhood, and manage all the details of community life are often unnoticed until we have a problem. At The Scranton School, we set aside a day during each Thanksgiving season to express our gratitude to these civil servants for their tireless efforts on behalf of our community. Students and staff deliver a delicious Thanksgiving Turkey dinner with all the trimmings to the South Abington Township building and to the Clarks Summit Borough building. As we deliver the meals, we have the opportunity to meet, talk with, and say thank you to the men and women who serve our community. We are very thankful that our school is located in such a fantastic and supportive community filled with so many wonderful civil servants! ■



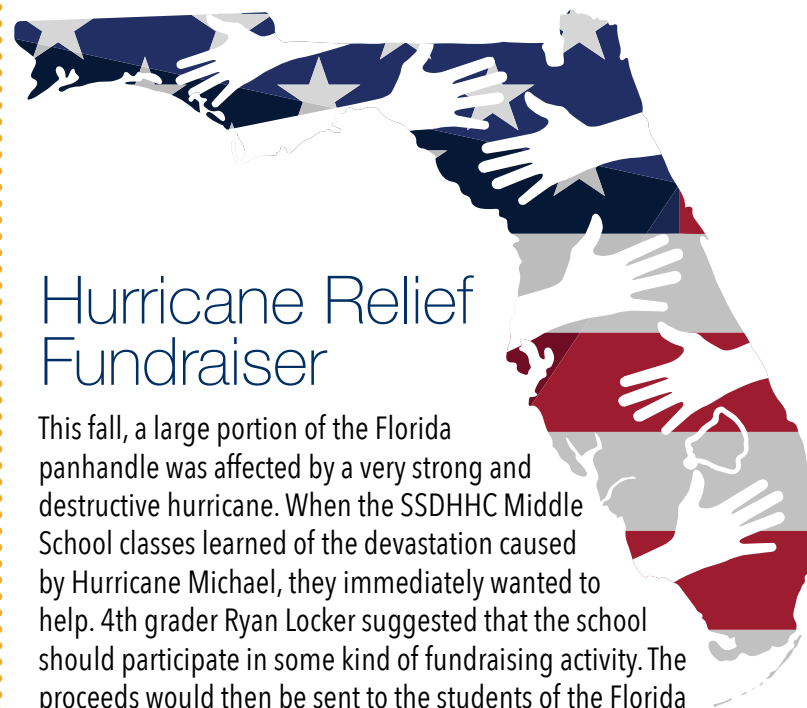


2018 Angel Tree Project

Once again our SSDHHC community has demonstrated the true meaning of Christmas! Our Angel Tree project was a huge success thanks to the overwhelming generosity of everyone involved. This year, we were able to help make several of our students' Christmas wishes come true. The excitement shown by many staff members in finding just the right gift for a particular child proves that it really is more fun to give than receive. We are very fortunate to be a part of such an amazing group of people. May everyone have a happy and healthy 2019! ■

Hurricane Relief Fundraiser

This fall, a large portion of the Florida panhandle was affected by a very strong and destructive hurricane. When the SSDHHC Middle School classes learned of the devastation caused by Hurricane Michael, they immediately wanted to help. 4th grader Ryan Locker suggested that the school should participate in some kind of fundraising activity. The proceeds would then be sent to the students of the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind (FSDB) to help them recoup some of their lost or damaged school materials. The staff and students participated in a "dress down" day to raise money. The school raised a little over \$115 to send to Florida. The Middle School students wrote a personalized note to accompany the funds to FSDB. ■



2018 Annual Holiday Show



Breakfast with Santa



Hershey Christmas





Festival of Lights

The Parent Staff Organization of The Scranton School kicked off the holiday season with a family get-together on December 13th.

Families were invited to see the Festival of Lights display at Stone Hedge Golf Course near Tunkhannock. Prior to the visit, six families and the school's dorm students and staff gathered at the school for a pizza party. The food and drinks were offered at a minimal cost thanks to the generosity of Weis Markets and Wegmans, which donated gift cards for the purchase of pizzas and beverages. After the meal, families formed a caravan and visited the display where they traveled through brightly colored tunnels of light, and saw illuminated sea creatures, colorful snowflakes and musical instruments.

At the end of the display, families posed for photos in front of scenic displays and enjoyed making s'mores together. The PSO would like to thank The Scranton School for the use of the cafeteria and hopes to have more family get-togethers in the future. ■

Ski Club

Balance, strength, agility, stamina, focus, determination and confidence - all of these words describe the physical and mental skills being developed each week of the ski season as the members of our Polar Bears Ski Club spend their Thursday afternoons and evenings at the Montage Mountain Ski Resort. After the short van ride to the resort, skiers and boarders complete their homework as soon as they arrive at the lodge. Then it's time to pick up our gear and head to the lift for some free-ski time! Our skiers also receive two hours of weekly expert training from the awesome instructors at the Montage Mountain Ski School - and the training pays off. Many of our students advance from beginners to expert skiers over the course of the season, eventually tackling some of the most challenging terrain in the entire Northeastern United States! The goal of this club is to have a fantastic time in the fresh air while developing personal confidence through a unique recreational skill that brings lifelong enjoyment. Family members and friends of students and staff at The Scranton School are all welcome to join the fun! Please contact Mr. Boersma at dboersma@thescrantonschool.org for pricing and schedule information! ■





ASL

The Scranton School is offering American Sign Language classes to the local community with the goal of continuing to provide resources to the area. We are very excited to be starting a partnership with the Carbondale Area Library. This additional site means we will be hosting ASL classes in three towns across two counties and have more members of the community taking our classes than ever before.

In addition to this expansion, we have also begun to provide private ASL classes to agencies and organizations that work with the Deaf community. This has been met with great excitement as people taking the class have learned how to communicate with their clients more effectively. It is our hope that this program will continue to expand so that more people will be equipped to communicate and meet the needs of the Deaf community.

If you would like more information about our ASL classes, please contact Hannah Hart at hhart@thescrantonschool.org or call 570.585.1000. ■



KIDS CAMP

Student Ages 7-12

Fun Activity programs

HEY YOU!
Don't miss out!

Details coming soon!

Make New Friends



Adventure Awaits!
June 24-27, 2019!

Our Library

There is so much more to our library than meets the eye. Our library is a great place for students to borrow books, sit comfortably and lose themselves in stories. Our library is also a place where students are able to experience and learn about STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math). Our students have access to computers and iPads for research and learning. Students are challenged to think like a computer programmer and code using "Little Bits" electronics building blocks and programs such as Scratch. Students are also challenged to think scientifically. They are given problems such as building a water tight shelter with very limited resources. These kinds of challenges develop creativity and alternative thinking in our students. These skills help them grow into creative adults who can take on the challenges of the world. ■





Spirit Week

Spirit Week was a week full of activities, craziness, and most importantly, fun! Spirit Week was an excellent way to show that we are proud of our school and excited about what is happening here. Throughout the week, students and staff participated in activities during lunch and at the end of each day. Points were awarded for dressing up according to the daily themes as well as success during the various activities. Both Kevin and Dr. Farmer had a chance to duke it out on the twister mat. Let's just say that it's a good thing their jobs don't depend on their flexibility! Students loved testing out their hand speed while playing the pie in the face competition as well. We're looking forward to next year to see what craziness the Spirit Week Committee can stir up! ■





PBIS Blowout

Recently, representatives from PaTAN and a local Intermediate Unit visited SSDHHC to evaluate our progress in becoming an official PBIS (Positive Behaviors, Interventions, and Supports) program. We are happy to announce that we passed the School-wide Evaluation Tool (SET) assessment and are now considered official in PBIS.

Our students practice and demonstrate how to be Ready, Responsible, Respectful and Safe. Students can earn the opportunity to attend monthly PBIS celebrations. ■



ALL IN
ADVENTURES

Middle School Social Club

The Middle School Social Club has been a busy, fun, and productive after school activity so far this year. Students have learned valuable lessons in money management, communication, and social independence. The most recent trip involved holiday shopping for family members. The students went to Hobby Lobby and Five Below to purchase gifts for a specific set of people. They learned how to budget both time and money. The students then returned to the dorm and enjoyed pizza and were able to socialize with one another. All in all, it was a great experience for everyone. ■



100th Day of School Fun



Science Fair

Our middle school students kicked off the school year in science by reviewing the scientific method in preparation for their science fair projects that would be presented at the science fair held at WPSD. Students researched topics ranging from a color symphony using milk and food coloring to building LED dance gloves and using them to understand ASL in the dark.

Honorable Mention awards went to two of our 6th grade students, Carlene Miller and Aidan Morton Capozza. They researched and presented on "What Makes Ice Melt Faster?" and how to best make "Eggshell Geode Crystals". Congratulations to both of them! ■





Spotlight on SAS

Accessing the Community

Once a month our Secondary Applied Studies (SAS) class takes a trip into the community to practice skills learned in our Career Exploration Center, or CEC for short. Our trips often consist of shopping at a retail store, ordering food from a restaurant and participating in a leisure activity. We use graphic organizers for both settings to help our kids independently make purchases. Our Community-Based Instruction (CBI) trips are focused on the development, practice and application of vocabulary in real life situations.

We also travel to our local YMCA once a month. Our Physical Therapist and Occupational Therapist accompany the class on the trips to promote and facilitate fitness in a safe environment. We assemble and prepare a healthy lunch the day before. The first half of our day at the YMCA is spent using the exercise equipment. The kids track their total time spent on the machines and monitor their heart rate. The second half of our day is spent swimming in the pool.



Work Skills Training and Fundraising

Our monthly soup sales and seasonal fundraisers provide funding for the trips as well as work-training activities. The class practices functional math and reading skills to record the soup orders, count the money and distribute the soup. In the winter we make ornaments to sell at our winter holiday show. This past year we assembled and decorated clothespins to look like snowflakes. We are currently getting ready for our spring plant sale. The plants will come in woven newspaper pods handmade by our class. The pods do not contain glue, tape or staples and should be placed directly into a container or ground. ■





Pre-School Story Time at Scranton Library

The Scranton School has found a new way to partner with the Abington Community Library that is loads of fun for our youngest students. The two organizations have had a long collaboration with the Signing Santa event during the holidays. We recently launched a Signed Storytime on Wednesday mornings at the library. Children from our Choices for Children and Preschool classes join children from the community to enjoy stories, music and crafts. From the smiles on their faces, it's safe to say everyone enjoys learning together! ■





Aquarium

On Thursday, February 28th, our elementary classes visited the Electric City Aquarium and Reptile Den in Scranton. Students saw different kinds of reptiles and aquatic animals such as sharks, jellyfish, alligators, chameleons, and stingrays. They saw a variety of habitats and were able to touch stingrays and starfish in a Touch Tank. The students got to see the "Predators" show where they saw reptile predators and learned about how they hunted their prey. At the end everyone got to touch a real, live gila monster! The students and staff had a wonderful time. ■



Pep Rally

On November 29th, our students had the opportunity to attend a Pep Rally right here in our gymnasium. This community based event was organized by the Abington Heights marching band as a part of our PBIS program. The students enjoyed performances by the Abington Heights band, cheerleaders, and dance team. They also listened to a few motivational speeches by some of the high school students. The event allowed Abington Heights and SSDHHC students to interact with each other, and helped foster a relationship between the schools. ■



Outreach News: Central Pennsylvania

Hershey Preschool

Preschool has been expanding in many ways these last few months. Since December, we have increased our class by three students. They are each incredibly fun and bring their own sets of strengths and joys to our class. We also have added a speech therapist to our therapy team. We are blessed and thankful to have an amazing team of therapists that support us and our students each day.

We performed in our holiday program and sang a song created by Ms. Bridgette and Ms. Michelle called "baby sheep" to the tune of baby shark. It was a hit! We then celebrated the holidays with our inclusion friends and filled the gym with hands on sensory, snack, art, and collaborative activities.

In January, we studied winter and arctic animals. The students loved learning about animals and how they stayed warm with our blubber experiment. They also learned how to melt ice with salt water.

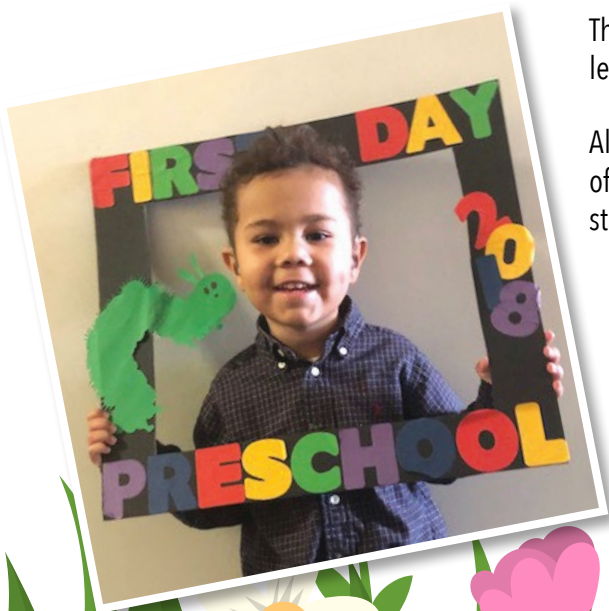
In February, we celebrated Valentine's Day and talked about being a nice friend and how to make others feel happy and loved. We had a week all about dental health and were happy to learn that many of the kiddos had already been to the dentist. We also studied dinosaurs. Digging into dinosaur eggs was a week-long process that ended with much excitement.

March began with Dr. Seuss. It was a silly week that featured Wacky Wednesday and nonsense words. We talked a lot about rhyming.

All of these themes have led to great discussion about what is real and what is pretend as well as the students learning many new vocabulary words and concepts.

This spring we are looking forward to getting more consistent outdoor time and learning about the land around us by studying gardens, spring, and growth.

Also, our classroom aide has been teaching an ASL 1 class in the evening for some of our parents and community members. We will be offering a new ASL 1 class starting in April. ■





Outreach News: Edinboro

In October, we participated in the Trail of Treats at the Millcreek Mall and our students were able to have a Halloween parade around Butterfield Hall with the School of Education.

The Director of the Planetarium at EUP and WPSD are collaborating and initiating a video project with WPSD high school students and ASL teachers. The goal is to make online NASA books accessible to the Deaf via ASL.

In November, WPSD provided hearing screenings to three daycares in the Erie area. We also attended the Erie County Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children's Activities Committee Thanksgiving Dinner with local deaf and hard of hearing students in Erie County schools.

In December, our Toddler Group was initiated at our Erie and Edinboro locations. Early Connections in Erie provided the Erie placement so that city families would have a convenient location to attend.

In February, the American Society for Deaf Children traveled to Edinboro to host their ASL weekend. This two-day intense training provided students with the basic sign language foundation and strategies to improve their skills. ■

