

Exceptional News

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Wayne County Special Education Department Parent Mentor Partnership—April Lee

Special points of interest:

- Being Successful because of Self-Determination
- Parent Meeting Sept 28th
- Buddy Ball Soccer starting soon
- Back to school challenges
- Benefits of being involved



Self-Determined to Succeed

Why is self-determination so important for students with disabilities? Self-determination is important for all people; especially students with disabilities. The skills included in self-determination; such as goal-setting, problem-solving, and decision-making, enable students to assume responsibility for the choices they make for their life. People with disabilities have emphasized that having more control

over their lives, instead of having someone else make the decisions for and about them, increases their self-



esteem and self-worth (Ward, 1996). Research shows that students with disabilities who leave school with enhanced self-determination skills are at least twice as likely as their peers who have not learned to be

self-determined to be employed one year after graduation. Three years after graduation, they are more likely to have obtained jobs with benefits and are more likely to be living somewhere other than the family home (Wehmeyer and Palmer, 2003).

To read more about Self-determination ask your child's teacher or the Parent Mentor for a copy of the Transition Manual or look for it online at www.doe.k12.ga.us.

Lunch and Learn set for September 28th

I will be hosting a **Lunch and Learn September 28th** for parent's of students who are being served by the Special Education Department. This will be a great time to learn some practical and easy ways to help your child

succeed in school as well as in the community. There will be activities that you can take home and use with your child.

Meeting will be at the Tech Center, next to JEB Elementary and Enrollment Center, from

11:30am-12:30pm. I will have a few lunch items available or feel free to bring a lunch with you.

I look forward to meeting you and sharing this time with you! RSVP at 427-1000 ext 48.



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www.parentmentors.org

www.p2pga.org

Exceptional Sports/Buddy Ball Soccer

We will begin our **Buddy Ball Soccer** (FREE sports activity for students with any disability—where all students can play!) season on **October 23rd**. We have other Exceptional Sports Activities scheduled during October for the entire family. But to get more information on these activities you must have your child registered for Soccer no later than **September 30th**. Register at the **Wayne County Recreation Dept. on Walnut Street. 427-5915**.



Helping challenged kids during back-to-school time

Find entire article at www.pbs.org Submitted by Mary Geier

Every child faces challenges when heading back to school. But back-to-school time can be exceptionally difficult for the 20 percent of children who suffer from a psychiatric or learning disorder. The school environment can feel toxic to these children, for it demands so many things that summer activities don't — the ability to sit still, get organized, stay on task, and adapt to a new, highly structured daily schedule. School also requires kids

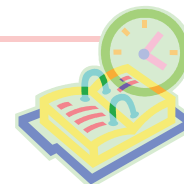
to separate from their parents and interact with peers — enormously challenging tasks for any child with anxiety. As a parent you can help:

- Ease anxiety by modeling confidence and calm behavior, and by imposing structure in family life (mealtime, homework and bedtime routines).
- Set aside time to talk to your child about challenges they face
- Create a routine to help with homework (Create space on a desk to work; clean out the child's backpack; review the day's assignments)
- Communicate effectively with your child's teacher(s) about concerns and accomplishments



Benefits to Family Engagement in Education

National Parent Teacher Association (PTA)



- When parents are involved, students achieve more, regardless of socioeconomic status, ethnic/racial background, or the parents' education level;



- More extensive the parent involvement, the higher the student achievement;
- Higher grades and test scores,

better attendance, and complete homework assignments can be expected;

- Students have higher graduation rates and greater enrollment rates in postsecondary education;
- Educators hold higher expectations of students whose parent collaborate with teachers;
- Student behaviors such as alcohol use, violence, and antisocial behavior decrease as parent involvement increases;
- The most accurate predictor of a student's achievement is not income or social status, but the ex-

tent to which that student's family is able to a) create an encouraging learning environment at home; b) communicate high, yet reasonable, expectations for their children's achievement and future careers; and c) become involved in their children's education at school and in the community (Schargel and Smink, 2001, pg 52-54)

