



QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Spring 2025

Principals Post

A Season of New Beginnings

Dear Students and Families,

As we enter the vibrant season of Spring, we wish you all a time of renewal and growth. It's a wonderful time to reflect on the hard work and progress made this school year, as well as to look ahead to exciting opportunities on the horizon.

Upcoming Events

This Spring is filled with meaningful milestones for many of our students. We're excited to attend any upcoming graduations and celebratory events for our students advancing to the next stages of their education.

Stay tuned for more details about these events, and be sure to mark your calendars for your student's specific ceremonies and celebrations.

Program Changes

As we look toward next year, there will be some changes in our programs. These adjustments are designed to better serve our students' needs and offer them more enriching and diverse educational experiences. If your student will be changing their Extended Transition location, their teacher will be contacting you.

Important Action for Parents: Contact Teachers about Next Year's Placements

As we begin to prepare for the next school year, it's important for parents to reach out to their child's teacher regarding placement decisions. If you have any preferences, concerns, or questions about your child's academic or social needs, now is the time to connect. Teachers will work with families to ensure that the best possible learning environment is provided.

Jacqueline Cassidy

Upcoming dates to remember:

SPRING BREAK
March 17 - 21, 2025

NO SCHOOL for students:
April 18, 2025
April 21, 2025

Contact information

Office: 727-549-6550
Principal: Jacqueline Cassidy ext. 2316
ESE Services Coach: Karen Cope ext. 2305
Social Worker: Bethany Sheehan ext. 2320
and
Psychologist: Barbara Shannon
(727) 588-5018 ext. 1087





It is time to **Spring** into action, and get a handle on stress!

In the midst of challenging times, finding effective ways to manage stress is crucial for maintaining our well-being. Fortunately, there are some simple adjustments we can make in our daily routines that can help cultivate a more balanced and serene lifestyle!

Reducing overall stress levels can be achieved by making a few intentional changes in several key areas of your life! Pick one area at a time to make changes. This will increase the likelihood of successful long term change!



SLEEP

Not getting enough sleep has been linked to weight gain, high blood pressure, reduced immunity, low energy, poor focus, and depression.

Adults generally need between 7-9 hours of sleep. Teenagers need between 8-10 hours of sleep! Here are some simple ways to help improve the quality and quantity of your sleep:

- *Go to bed and get up at the same time every day. *Create a calm, cool, and distraction free sleeping space.
- *Turn off electronics at least 30 minutes prior to bedtime and avoid caffeine and eating for at least 3 hours before bed.
- *Create a bedtime routine (i.e. read, meditate, listen to soothing music, etc). This triggers your body to get ready for sleep.



EXERCISE

Regular physical activity decreases stress hormones & increases the release of mood boosting hormones. This results in feeling less stress and anxiety, more energy, & increased overall well-being.

The CDC recommends 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity a week. That's only 21 minutes a day.

Fortunately, there are plenty of ways to add activity to your day even without "formal" exercise.

Formal exercise:

- *walk *run *bike *swim *dance *lift weights
- *workout at the gym *hiking *sit ups *jump rope

Passive exercise:

- *take the stairs *park further away than you usually would
- *Every 30min, get up and move for 3min *garden/yardwork



NUTRITION

This is not about losing weight. Nutrition and stress are interconnected. Eating a balanced and healthy diet not only improves your immunity and energy levels, it also changes how your body processes nutrients and calories. In fact, there are specific foods that can actually lower your cortisol level!

Foods that may reduce your cortisol level:

- *dark chocolate *green tea *yogurt *whole grains *beans *olive oil *avocadoes
- *vegetables (*red pepper, tomatoes, potatoes, broccoli, cauliflower, kale, spinach, leafy greens, corn*)
- *citrus fruits (*grapefruit, oranges, lemons, limes, kiwi, berries*) *seeds/nuts (*chia, flax, pumpkin, peanuts, walnuts*)
- *Lean protein (*chicken, turkey, eggs*) *fatty fish (*tuna, bass, cod, salmon, mackerel*)

FOODS TO AVOID: alcohol, caffeine, high sugar foods, and processed foods. A good rule of thumb is to shop the outside isles of the store (bakery, produce, dairy, meats) and avoid foods in boxes and bags.

Other areas that can help reduce stress:

Supportive Relationships

Keep in touch with friends and family for social and emotional support.

Mental Health

Limit exposure to news, media, or people that create stress.

Experience Nature

Feel the sun on your face, smell flowers, listen to the birds.

Mindfulness

Meditation, yoga, & prayer all help with self-regulation and lowering stress.



COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) www.RehabWorks.org serves as an employment resource for people with disabilities (727) 217-7930

<https://www.rehabworks.org/resources/docs/flyers/pre-employment-transition-services.pdf> provides information about VR services for students aged 14 through 21.

SPRING BREAK VR CAMPS - Some camps are in-person and some are online. Some camps also pay the student for attending! Click link below for a list of available Spring Break VR camps.

https://www.canva.com/design/DAGfwcEzRV8/K2-T-bbdI9i0xQKjSAFkSA/view?utm_content=DAGfwcEzRV8&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=unique_links&utm_id=hb090c82269

Post-Secondary Education

Florida's Center for Students with Unique Abilities (FCSUA) www.fcsua.org provides support to students, families and institutions of higher education so that students with intellectual disabilities have opportunities for on-campus college experiences that lead to employment opportunities.
(407) 823-5225

Florida Centers for Independent Living (FACIL)

<https://floridacils.org/about-facil> provides information and referrals, independent living skills training, peer mentoring, individual and systems advocacy and transition services. (850) 575-6004

Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) <https://apd.myflorida.com/>

supports individuals with developmental disabilities and their families in living, learning and working in their communities (239) 338-1372

Parents and students can apply for APD Services at <https://apd.myflorida.com/customers/application/>

APD also maintains a community resource directory as an informational tool to help individuals with disabilities learn about free and low-cost programs available in their respective areas.

<https://resourcedirectory.apd.myflorida.com/>



**Parents and students can obtain additional transition and post-secondary resources through:
Pinellas Interagency Networking Council for Students (PINCS) Resource Guide at:**

<https://www.pcsb.org/cms/lib/FL01903687/Centricity/Domain/169/Transition-Services-Guide.pdf>



Extended Transition students continue to bloom!

Team Russell at HERITAGE VILLAGE has been working hard to keep the grounds looking beautiful!



Congratulations

PTC-S

Anthony Diccio was "making it rain" in his plumbing class!

PTC-N

Brothers, Daniel and Louis Harkins, both earned their CompTIA, A+ Certification on their first attempt!



Richard L. Sanders

Whether it's working on sorting skills, creating bird seed ornaments, or learning about 3D printing, the students at SANDERS are getting it done!



In addition to sorting 20 pallets of community donations for the holiday season, students at DAYSTAR have also been working on their cooking skills!

