

A Publication of Potential Development – School for Students with Autism

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

In February, the Board of Directors held their Annual Meeting. Some of the highlights include:

Several new directors were added including Sue Filipovich, Burgan Real Estate; Angel Pixley, Thrive Counseling Warren; Meribeth Pantall-Noble, Compco Industries and Jomont Ware, YSU. With regrets, the Board accepted the resignation of Rick Fryda, Compco Industries. Rick joined the Board in 2008 and was an instrumental part of the growth of our schools. Also, during the first regular meeting of the Board for 2024, with regrets, the Board accepted the resignation of member David Padgett. We would like to thank David for his generous support of Potential Development.

Maria Stevens, Stevens Consulting, is assisting the Board with developing a new strategic plan. Details will follow soon.

The current slate of officers is: Chairman, Ken Goldsboro, Premier Bank; President, Bob Gearhart Jr., DCW Group; Vice President, Deloran Thompson, ivory and birch; Treasurer, Jim Houck, Houck Agency; Secretary, Linda Mansfield, Youngstown Community School.

In other news, I would like to once again thank Hubbard junior, Isabella Williams for all of her hard work in putting together the Shoot for a Change event. It was a tremendous day and we were thrilled to have the chance to recognize our Senior athletes and Pep Club members with letterman jackets.

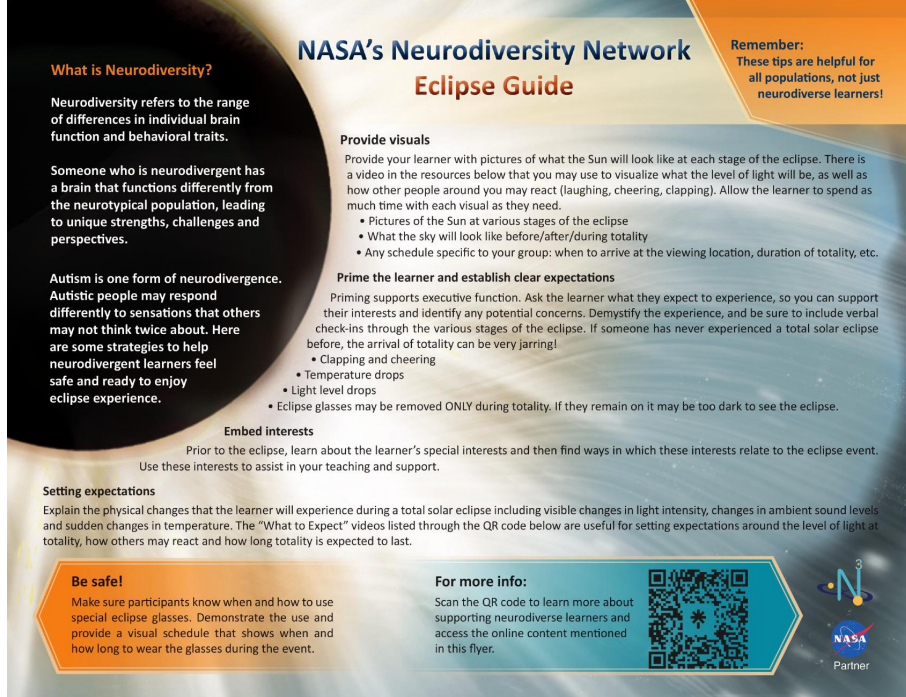
Looking forward, please mark your calendars for March 9, when our Alumni-Varsity Basketball game will be held at Valley Christian School. It promises to be an exciting event with a special presentation from our Pep Club!!

Paul



PD Off for the Solar Eclipse on April 8

Mark your calendars now! Spring Break has been extended one more day to include Monday, April 8 so students and families can safely view the solar eclipse. Here are some great tips:



What is Neurodiversity?
 Neurodiversity refers to the range of differences in individual brain function and behavioral traits.

Someone who is neurodivergent has a brain that functions differently from the neurotypical population, leading to unique strengths, challenges and perspectives.

Autism is one form of neurodivergence. Autistic people may respond differently to sensations that others may not think twice about. Here are some strategies to help neurodivergent learners feel safe and ready to enjoy eclipse experience.

Embed interests
 Prior to the eclipse, learn about the learner's special interests and then find ways in which these interests relate to the eclipse event. Use these interests to assist in your teaching and support.

Setting expectations
 Explain the physical changes that the learner will experience during a total solar eclipse including visible changes in light intensity, changes in ambient sound levels and sudden changes in temperature. The "What to Expect" videos listed through the QR code below are useful for setting expectations around the level of light at totality, how others may react and how long totality is expected to last.

Be safe!
 Make sure participants know when and how to use special eclipse glasses. Demonstrate the use and provide a visual schedule that shows when and how long to wear the glasses during the event.

For more info:
 Scan the QR code to learn more about supporting neurodiverse learners and access the online content mentioned in this flyer.

Remember:
 These tips are helpful for all populations, not just neurodiverse learners!

NASA's Neurodiversity Network Eclipse Guide

Provide visuals
 Provide your learner with pictures of what the Sun will look like at each stage of the eclipse. There is a video in the resources below that you may use to visualize what the level of light will be, as well as how other people around you may react (laughing, cheering, clapping). Allow the learner to spend as much time with each visual as they need.

- Pictures of the Sun at various stages of the eclipse
- What the sky will look like before/after/during totality
- Any schedule specific to your group: when to arrive at the viewing location, duration of totality, etc.

Prime the learner and establish clear expectations
 Priming supports executive function. Ask the learner what they expect to experience, so you can support their interests and identify any potential concerns. Demystify the experience, and be sure to include verbal check-ins through the various stages of the eclipse. If someone has never experienced a total solar eclipse before, the arrival of totality can be very jarring!

- Clapping and cheering
- Temperature drops
- Light level drops
- Eclipse glasses may be removed ONLY during totality. If they remain on it may be too dark to see the eclipse.

Shoot For a Change Is Another Success

Shoot for a Change version 2024 was everything we thought it would be, and then some! What a tremendous effort by our students, coaches, families, staff and everyone who supported this fabulous event. We have a special place in our hearts for Isabella Williams, who created this extraordinary event which raised funds for PD!



At the Heart of it All

Our students had a great time during their Valentine's Day parties!



Upcoming Important Dates



Saturday, March 9

Alumni-Varsity basketball game, noon at Valley Christian School

Sunday, March 10

Daylight Saving Time begins

Wednesday, March 13

Parent Meeting

Friday, March 15

No School | Professional Day for Staff

Sunday, March 17

St. Patrick's Day

Wednesday, March 27

PTO Meeting

Friday, March 29

Spring Break begins

We love our Pizza Cook-Off Sponsors!

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Senior Night Made Memories

Our senior athletes and Pep Club members proudly celebrated with their loved ones during "Senior Night" held at halftime of the *Shoot for a Change* basketball event. Flowers were given to parents, they walked through a balloon arch and each senior received a letterman jacket. What a great night!



Miss Becky celebrates 30 Years at PD

Miss Becky celebrated her 30th work anniversary with Potential Development last month. Mr. Paul presented her with a gift from PD that included this puzzle piece plaque. We salute you Becky, and know that your impact shines within so many former and current students!



Three Cheers for Miss Denise

We saluted our School Counselor, Miss Denise, during School Counselors Week! She is kind, helpful and informative to our students and families, and is the very definition of a Superhero! We are lucky to include her as a valued member of our PD family.