

STEPPING Stones

NOVEMBER 2019

MARYLAND ASSOCIATION OF NONPUBLIC SPECIAL EDUCATION FACILITIES



2020 MANSEF CONFERENCE FRIDAY, MAY 1, 2020

New Psalmist Retreat and Conference Center

There is so much excitement swirling around MANSEF's May 1, 2020 Conference as our planning all comes to fruition, we wouldn't be surprised if you could actually sense it while reading this newsletter. We can't wait to welcome you to our new location, where all the plans that are currently being made will come to life and ensure the best experience possible.

The New Psalmist Retreat and Conference Center is a beautiful venue for the learning that will be taking place, not to mention the good bit of fun planned with our Food Truck Festival. There will be sessions to fit any need - encompassing many different areas of learning. Whether you are in search of current research, learning about accommodations, or new teaching strategies, you'll find a session just right for you. So join over 2,000 special education professionals for this very special day of discovering and networking.

Final Call for Presenters

We have a few slots open and we are looking for people willing to donate their time to present workshops related to topics that would be informative and applicable to our audience of special educators. Our theme is **MANSEF 2020 Bringing Wellness into Focus**. Deadline for proposals is December 6, 2019.

Check the MANSEF website at www.mansef.org for updates and more details.



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

In the forefront of Maryland's legislative focus in the upcoming months is the Kirwan Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education and the associated funding decisions. The member schools of the Maryland Association of Nonpublic Special Education Facilities (MANSEF) have been leaders in providing innovative schools and services to thousands of Maryland's neediest special education students over the past 44 years. In carrying out its mission, the MANSEF member schools make it possible for Maryland to meet its federal mandate through IDEA to "ensure that a continuum of alternative placements is available to meet the needs of children with disabilities for special education

continued inside

We serve as the collective voice and essential resource for the nonpublic special education community to champion the continuum of services for students with special needs. -MANSEF's mission

"To realize optimum growth for students with special needs and to advance support to their families by ensuring access to a full range of educational opportunities"

-MANSEF's vision

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Maryland **A**ssociation of **N**onpublic
Special **E**ducation **F**acilities

Phone: (410) 938-4413

Fax: (410) 938-5130

Email: mansef@aol.com

Website: www.mansef.org

Tania Dubeau - President

Susan McLendon - Vice President

Piper Phillips Caswell - Secretary

Julie Hickey - Treasurer

Dorie Flynn - Executive Director

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

continued from front

and related services." While the intent and goals of the Kirwan Commission are unmistakably valuable, it is the goal of MANSEF to be sure our role in Maryland's educational system and in the broad special education community is not forgotten. Currently, it is not evident that the recommendations are protecting or elevating the funding stream for nonpublic special education schools.

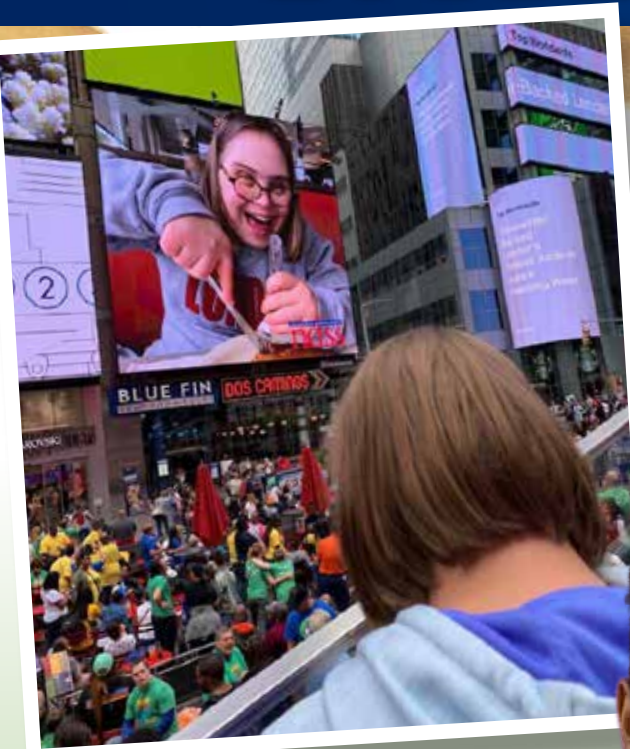
As we work on advancing the inclusion of MANSEF in the upcoming educational funding reform, we continue to focus on our established objectives including:

- Advancing the mission of the association;
- Educating the community about the distinction between nonpublic special education schools and public schools;
- Advocating to legislatures during MANSEF's upcoming Advocacy Day on February 4, 2020 and through other extensive lobbying efforts;
- Sharing resources with families and advocates for students with special needs by responding to specific inquiries and distributing the MANSEF Membership Directory;
- Serving as a liaison to the Maryland State Department of Education and Local School Systems regarding program approval, COMAR compliance, teacher certification requirements, budget setting, curriculum standards, graduation requirements, state assessments and other issues affecting MANSEF schools and students;
- Advocating for and improving the crisis management and emergency preparedness of MANSEF schools with resources through the Safe Schools Fund Grant;
- Enhancing the MANSEF Conference scheduled for May 1, 2020 and other professional development opportunities;
- Facilitating opportunities for MANSEF schools to access funds for the first time through MSDE's Aid to Nonpublic Schools Textbook and Nonpublic Aging School Programs;
- Providing networking, technical assistance, and mentoring opportunities to member schools in order to strengthen their ability to serve students;
- Coordinating the consortium to provide specialized services for special education students attending private and public schools;
- Highlighting the successes of MANSEF schools, community partners, and students through social media, the website, and Stepping Stones;
- Awarding Michael Cardin Scholarships to deserving MANSEF students seeking to pursue educational, recreational and vocational experiences;
- Enhancing the role parents play in educating the community and advocating for students through the Friends of MANSEF;
- Representing MANSEF's goals, needs and interests at the local, state and national level by attending conferences and sharing resources; and
- Serving as a centralized source of valuable support and information about the continuum of educational options available for Maryland's special education students

These are just some of the ways in which MANSEF is continuing to shape and strengthen Maryland's special education community. MANSEF encourages you to become an integral part of advancing our mission and making positive changes for Maryland's students.

Tania DuBeau
President

MANSEF CELEBRATES STUDENT SUCCESS



Alex Saul sees herself on the Jumbotron in NYC

The Harbour Schools

Not everyone can be on the Jumbotron in Times Square in New York. But Harbour student, Alex Saul, made the grade. Alex's parents entered Alex's picture in a contest run by the National Down Syndrome Society. Thousands were entered and 500 were chosen. They went to NYC for the weekend with many of the families from the Chesapeake Down Syndrome Parent Group. Alex and her parents wanted to see it live and they did. Carol Saul, Alex's mom, is a teacher at The Harbour School.

Gerald Wilson-Branch is proud of his accomplishments



High Road Schools

Artist at Work

Eric Nelson is a 9th grader at High Road Academy, Laurel. Eric started painting when he was one year old and sketching cartoons by the age of 5. Eric was given the task to draw the school's Homecoming 2019 theme, Sleepy Hollow. He willingly accepted the

challenge. His artwork is now on display at school.

Academically, Eric has worked hard since coming to our school in the summer of 2017. He has improved his decoding skills, strengthened his word attack and raised his phonological awareness. We admire and appreciate Eric's artistic talent and contributions.



Eric Nelson and his Sleepy Hollow painting

Gerald Wilson-Branch is a 4th grade student at the High Road Lower School. Gerald has displayed exemplary behavior, completed all of his class work on time and helps around the school whenever he is asked. Gerald has a vibrant personality, loves to tell jokes and really enjoys the perks of being on Blue level. Gerald's favorite part of being on level is doing his school jobs and going on field trips. Gerald is currently working towards achieving Silver level and we are all ecstatic to see the amazing progress he has made!

More!

STUDENT SUCCESS



Logan eyes the Boston Marathon

St. Elizabeth School

SES Student Logan Thomas discovered his love of running a few years ago, and has continued to “wow” the community with his passion and skill. Logan joined the St. Elizabeth School Running Club at this year’s Richmond Marathon, and ended up finishing in an astonishing 2 hours and 55 minutes. He came in 93rd overall out of thousands of runners and 4th in his age category! Logan hopes to qualify for the 2021 Boston Marathon, where he would become the 2nd special needs male athlete to ever qualify in the Boston Marathon’s history.



Phillip loves to help others

Oakmont Upper School

Philip is in his senior year at the Forbush School at Oakmont Upper School and has proven to be great asset to his program. Since arriving, he has improved greatly with his communication skills as well as controlling his behaviors. When anyone needs help, he is always the first to jump at the opportunity to assist. Philip is always volunteering to help others throughout the day, whether it is cleaning, handing out papers, or doing other jobs within the community. Philip’s future goals are to transition into an adult work program after graduation.

Katherine Thomas School

The Katherine Thomas School (KTS) has a horsemanship club through a partnership with Great and Small Therapeutic Riding. Club members typically spend half the lesson riding and the other half participating in horsemanship activities to continue learning about horse care and behavior. The horsemanship portion is also an opportunity to emphasize responsibility and social skills. Rain or shine, hot or cold weather, our club members eagerly attend each week. One student who was initially terrified of his horse gained the confidence over several sessions to ride comfortably, and that sense of accomplishment has carried over into his classes. Another student, Katie, was chosen to demonstrate her riding skills at Great and Small’s Fall Fundraiser Event, Horses on Pointe!



The Pathway Schools

Students enrolled in any of the Pathways schools can continue to take advantage of many of the educational and extracurricular opportunities available through the public schools. The interests, talents, and goals vary for each student. Pathways is continuously partnering with the local school systems to identify ways in which students can engage in the public schools. Currently, the range of options supported through Pathways opens doors for students to train in career academies, take online high school courses, take classes in the mainstream setting, play sports at the junior varsity and varsity levels, and join in traditional high school social activities such as homecoming dances and proms.

The car shop is one of the career training opportunities



Howard is living his dream of playing football

for several years, first with the Boys and Girls Club, then on the Junior Varsity and now Varsity squad for his home school, Gwynn Park in Brandywine. The educational and therapeutic support received at Pathways enables students to succeed academically and bolster their abilities to be part of a team and play with confidence in a highly competitive arena.

Zala, a student in the Anne Arundel community based program, is taking an online course in Algebra II made available through her high school in Howard County. She has been learning in a public forum in other ways, as well. Last year she joined Toastmasters, the international organization that focuses on developing public speaking skills, where she gave speeches on some interesting topics, such as building igloos.

Two Pathways students are currently playing on Prince George's County Public School football teams. A junior in the Re-Entry at Duval program has enjoyed playing in every game this season as a part of the DuVal Junior Varsity football team. Howard, a senior in the Edgewood community-based program, is eager to graduate during this school year and is continuing to fulfill his dream of playing football. He has been playing football



Zala enjoys being a member of Toastmasters

Ivymount

Ivymount Student's Sports Dream Comes True

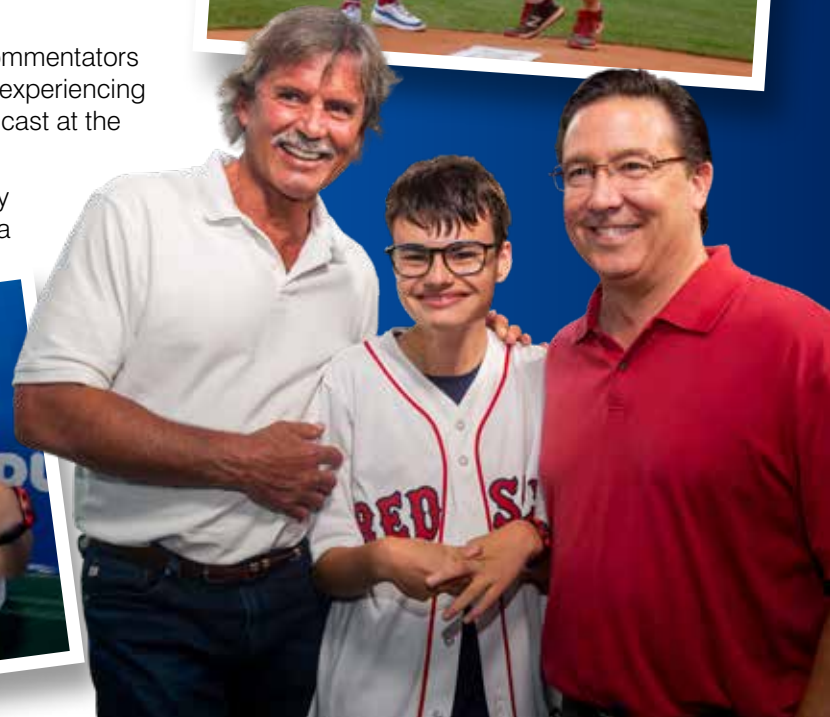
To the cheers of Ivymount students and staff, high school student Noah Coon received unbelievable news - that he would immediately fly to Boston to see his favorite team, the Boston Red Sox.

The trip was organized by Dream On 3 (DO3), a nonprofit organization that creates dream sports experiences for children and young adults living with life-altering conditions. DO3 worked with Ivymount to stage the surprise for Noah.

Noah fulfilled three dreams - visiting Fenway Park, meeting commentators Dennis Eckersley, Dave O'Brien, and Jeremy Remy, and then experiencing his other passion, meteorology, by delivering a weather broadcast at the Boston CBS station.

Recently elected student government association president by his fellow students, Noah reported that the trip was a once in a lifetime experience. He says that he hopes to go to college, would like to live in Boston, and one day be a sports announcer.

Noah Coon fulfilling his dreams in Boston. Photos courtesy of Dream On 3



SCHOOL News

Forbush School at Glyndon

Forbush School at Glyndon and Hannah More Center

November is a big month at the Glyndon campus! A new playground was added to our scenic location.

The new playground is “awesome,” said one student, and another said that it is “bigger and better than the one in my neighborhood,” one student even exclaimed that

it was a “Christmas present for everybody!” In addition to the playground, we’re having a campus-wide party to celebrate the ten-year anniversary of our move to our beautiful campus. This move was Sheppard Pratt Health System’s first educational program to venture out from the original system’s main campus in Towson.

The Chelsea school group at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial

The Chelsea School

Chelsea School Visits the Vietnam Veterans Memorial

On Friday, October 25th, all students in grades 5-12 from Chelsea School visited the Vietnam Veteran’s Memorial in Washington, DC. In recent years, the school has planned an all-school field trip on the last day of the marking period to allow IEP-content teachers time to complete their quarterly reporting. Students were taken on a guided tour and participated in a scavenger hunt where they had to find the names of nine veterans from Hyattsville, Maryland – Chelsea’s home town. For one of Chelsea’s fifth graders, the experience hit close to home, as he searched for the name of his great uncle, who was killed in action during the Vietnam conflict.

The new playground at Forbush School in Glyndon



October rocks with Rocktoberfest! The Hannah More campus of the Forbush School at Glyndon and Hannah More Center came together on October 26 to strengthen the school community in a fun atmosphere. Over 100 staff, students and families were treated to Mission BBQ while listening to a performance by a local band. There was also a children’s area with crafts, face painting and a friendly chili cook-off among the staff for school-wide bragging rights!



The Forbush School Prince George's County

Awesome Games Field Day at Forbush at Prince George's County

This year we partnered with the American Heart Association and became participants in the Kids Heart Challenge, which focuses on total wellness of children while raising funds to help others. This challenge also gives us the opportunity to earn money for our physical education program. Our kick-off event was the Awesome Games Field Day, on Friday, October 25. Students practiced field day events for nearly a month and then competed against their peers. Each classroom decorated its own field-day shirts after they selected team names, which were the Red Dragons, Ninja Warriors, and E-lime-nators, to name a few. School and team spirit soared on this day, which included face painting, good sportsmanship, music, and fun! Teams competed in a freeze dance competition, jump rope, hurdles, baton relay, crab walking and balloon popping. A variety of adaptations allowed students to participate in the competition in which students received ribbons, medals, and MVP awards. Adding to the atmosphere were the staff, who enjoyed this event as much as the students!

Forbush School at Anne Arundel County

Our stars shine brightly at The Forbush School at Anne Arundel! Even though our upper school students have been earning and learning about the solar system in November, and their government and scientific inquiry thematic units, we always find a bit of time to celebrate!

Take a peak while we share a couple of our favorite shots:



A great time was had by all at the Forbush School Prince George's County's Awesome Games Field Day



Anthony gets all the right answers again!

Miss Brittany and Aiden on community-based instruction at Ledo's Pizza



Upper class heading off to The Character Parade with our friends at the Ruth Eason Special School



More!

The Harbour School's
Gentlemen's Club

SCHOOL News



The Harbor Schools

The Harbour School at Baltimore has a Gentlemen's Club. The boys meet monthly and discuss issues with becoming gentlemen, from how to treat a girl to how to tie a tie. The boys also work on appropriate table manners and how to handle and manage sexual experiences. This fall, high school seniors from the Gilman School

of Maryland visited with The Harbour School Gentlemen's club. The young Gilman men took questions from Harbour students and explained and expanded on the responsibility of good character. Both groups of students learned from the experience.

The Harbour School prides itself on the tenure of its staff. This fall, Wendy Johnson celebrated her 25th year at Harbour. She received a gold necklace drop as a thank you for investing her career at Harbour. Wendy currently serves as a media assistant at the Annapolis campus.

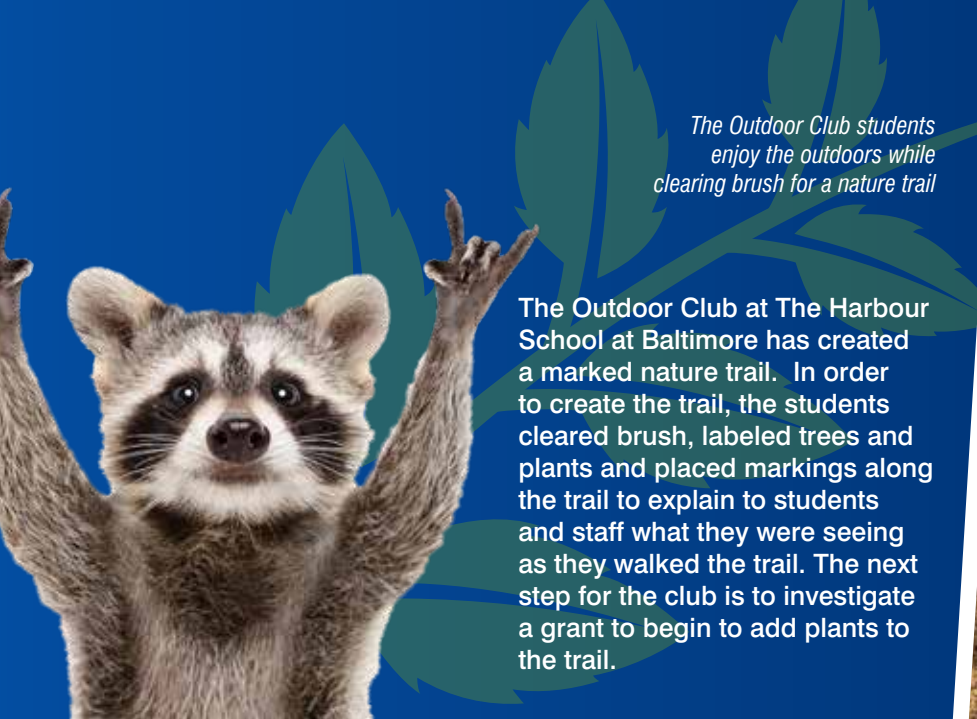
For the second year in a row The Harbour School at Baltimore hosted a Be Safe program sponsored by Pathfinders for Autism which has a grant to work with local law enforcement. Students participating in the program learn behaviors that will keep them safe in the community including proper responses to law enforcement.

Congratulations Wendy
Johnson on 25 years with
The Harbour School!



Students participate in the Be Safe Program





*The Outdoor Club students
enjoy the outdoors while
clearing brush for a nature trail*

The Outdoor Club at The Harbour School at Baltimore has created a marked nature trail. In order to create the trail, the students cleared brush, labeled trees and plants and placed markings along the trail to explain to students and staff what they were seeing as they walked the trail. The next step for the club is to investigate a grant to begin to add plants to the trail.



The Mann Residential Treatment Center

The Mann School at Sheppard Pratt in Towson held our 2nd Annual Career Fair for our Middle and High School youth October 24, 2019.

The Fair allows our students the opportunity to explore post-secondary education opportunities and identify possible career paths. We have been lucky in our ability to recruit professionals, educational, vocational training and state support programs from across several counties to share information on their careers as well as their personal journeys. This year we had over 25 professionals in the areas of architecture, cosmetology, law enforcement, software engineering, education, nursing, auto mechanics, and real estate just to name a few.

There were representatives from The Division of Rehabilitative Services (DORS), Job Corps, and The Community College of Baltimore County. In addition, Sheppard Pratt Human Resources provided a workshop on resume writing and interview do's and don'ts. Each student received a worksheet to record information on required training/education, required skills and income for careers of interest.

The Mann School and RTC provide youth from across the state of Maryland with the opportunity to receive individualized mental health treatment and educational programming so they may master skills and continue with their education. As with most schools, one of our guiding principles is to create occasions for our students to visualize and explore their futures. Students came away from the fair inspired and empowered after speaking to professionals who were able to provide tangible steps on how to reach their career goals.

*Students discover career
opportunities at the Mann
School's 2nd Annual Career Fair*



More!

SCHOOL News

*KTS lower school students
line up for their costume
parade on October 31*



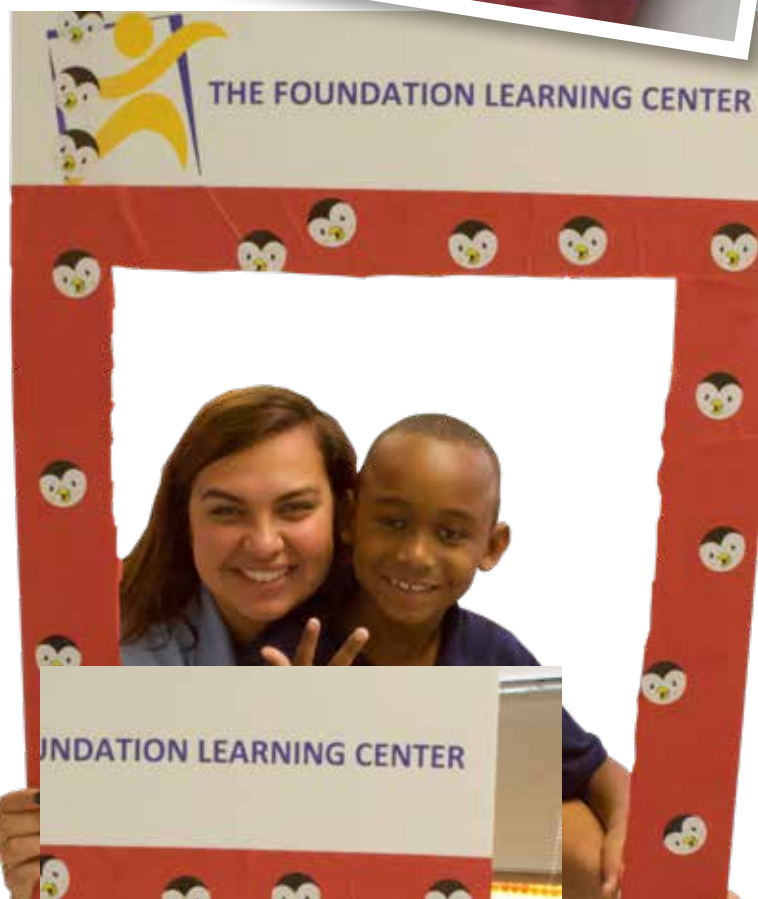
Katherine Thomas School

Students at KTS enjoyed fall celebrations on October 31st this year, including the lower school costume parade while parents and middle school students cheered them on. Lower school students practiced trick or treating, and the middle school students practiced thinking of others with quiet clapping and compliments. Lower school students had fall themed parties in their classrooms, while middle school students moved between a food room, music/dance room, quiet/art/cookie decorating room, and a movie room. The students enjoyed lots of good socializing and conversations at their parties, and the middle school students especially enjoyed their greater independence of moving between the party rooms.

Foundation Schools

We are very excited to introduce our new program for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder, The Foundation Learning Center! The Foundation Learning Center's mascot is the penguin. Penguins are special animals; no two are alike. At The Foundation Learning Center, we celebrate the uniqueness of each of our students. We believe that each student has their own gifts and abilities and we strive to provide an opportunity for our students to show their best selves and create the best quality of life - academically, social emotionally, and functionally - in school, in their families, and in the community. We have been making a difference for 45 years and look forward to expanding on our legacy for students with autism. We are so excited to partner with students, parents, and the community to care for this new population.

*Celebrating the new
Foundation Learning
Center, and its mascot,
the penguin*





Ivymount School

Ivymount Recognizes Support for Security Initiatives

Ivymount School and Programs held a breakfast reception on November 8 to thank the many people involved in helping to create a safe and secure environment for learning. High school students Michael and Noah presented MCPD Officer Mike Prather with a gift to thank him for his 18 years of working with Ivymount. Several parents, board members, and staff also joined the event to recognize more than a dozen state and local representatives for their support in securing funding for Ivymount's recent security upgrade initiative, which includes systems for access control, visitor management, training, and emergency communication. The morning celebrated the importance of Ivymount's strong partnerships with state and county representatives.

Maryland State Representatives

- Carol Beatty, Secretary, Department of Disabilities and member of School Safety Sub-Cabinet
- Sheila Philip, Section Chief, Nonpublic Special Education Maryland State Department of Education,

Montgomery County Representatives

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County Executive Marc Elrich • Council Vice President Sidney Katz • Senator Brian Feldman • Senator Jeff Waldstreicher • Senator Nancy King • Councilmember Gabe Albornoz • Councilmember Craig Rice • Matt Higgins, representing Councilmember Friedson | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delegate Alfred Carr • Delegate David Fraser-Hidalgo • Delegate Anne Kaiser • Delegate Kathleen Dumais • Delegate Lily Qi • MCPD Officer Mike Prather • MCPS Chief of Security Ed Clarke |
|---|--|





6501 North Charles Street
PO Box 6815
Baltimore, Maryland 21285-6815

MANSEF is committed to creating optimum educational opportunities in the least restrictive environment for all Maryland children with disabilities through: ADVOCACY, NETWORKING, COLLABORATION AND INFORMATION/RESOURCES.



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