

Dr. Sandy Enloe
Director of Special Education

Sevier County Schools

SPECIAL EDUCATION NEWS

January, 2008
Parent Edition

Editor:
Dr. Kaye Thomas

I hope all of you had a wonderful Christmas and have a safe and happy New Year. I'm sure you enjoyed having your children home with you during the holidays, yet they were eager to return to school and their friends. I'm so thankful that we have teachers in Sevier County that are not only qualified to teach children with disabilities, but who are also loving, caring individuals. Always feel free to call your child's teachers or the Special Education Office if you have questions or concerns.

Dr. Sandy Enloe

Topics of Discussion:

Changing of the name of this newsletter from "SpEd Newsletter" to ??????. I changed the name to "Special Education Newsletter" until we have suggestions for changes. Just let me know at kayethomas@sevier.org.

School Closings for Students:

January 15, 2008 – Administrative Day
January 21, 2008 – Vacation Day (MLK Day)
February 5, - Inservice Day
February 15 & 18 – Winter Break
March 21, - Half Day
March 24-28, - Spring Break

What do you think?

Some portion of our anatomy must be in contact with a chair at all times in order to learn.

(See back of page for the research on this statement)

Dates to Remember:

Completed portfolios are due to Jeff Romanczuk at the SpEd office by **February 6, 2008**. Watch for notes from your child's teacher concerning you signing the portfolio before it is turned into the state.

Parent surveys are due by **February 15, 2008**. If you have not returned one, please send it to your child's teacher. These are on the parent link of the website, or directly at <http://www.slc.sevier.org/parentsurvey0708.doc>.

Disability Days on the Hill - **March 12, 2008 for East Tennessee. Legislative Plaza, Nashville, TN.** It's time to get involved! Mark your calendar and start making your plans to go to Nashville today! Make appointments to meet with your senators and representatives on the day designated for your region of the state! Let them know what issues are important and how their decisions affect your life!

Response to the "QUESTION OF THE MONTH: *What are some tips to motivate the unmotivated student?*"

- Spend time one on one discussing non-school issues.
- Contract: expected behavior/rewards & consequences.
- Sit with your child to get him/her started working.
- Show an interest in your child's work – ask him/her "why."

If you have other tips, e-mail them to kayethomas@sevier.org.

Parent Link of the Special Education Website

<http://www.slc.sevier.org/parents.htm>

The parent link of the Special Education website has many useful links. The links are divided into Services, Special Education, and Parent Advocacy.

An important “service” link this time of year is #27 on the list, the **weather-related school closings listing from WBIR TV**.

The first of the advocacy sites is the **Tennessee Yellow Pages for Kids with Disabilities**, with an amazing amount of links to agencies offering support and advocacy.

Nth Degree is an edgy and funny site, supportive of special education in general and inclusive education in particular.

This one and the main Special Olympics site are the last two links, at the very bottom of the Parent page. If you have suggestions for other links, contact Jeff Romanczuk in the Special Education Department (865) 453-1036, or jeffromanczuk@sevier.org.

What do you think? (Answer to question posed on the front page.)

Actually, research shows that our ability to learn diminishes in direct proportion to the amount of time we spend sitting.

Educating Students On The Autism Spectrum

Autism Spectrum Disorders are puzzling developmental disorders that significantly affect a student’s ability to

communicate, interact with others, and learn in a conventional manner. Despite these difficulties, children with autism do grow and learn, albeit often at a different developmental rate than other children. Many educational approaches can significantly improve the quality of life of persons with autism and their families. While there is no known cure for autism, there are treatment and educational approaches that may reduce some of the challenges associated with the condition. Interventions will help to lessen disruptive behaviors, and education can teach self-help skills that allow for greater independence. But just as there is no one symptom or behavior that identifies individuals with autism, there is no single program that will be effective to meeting the needs of every student on the spectrum.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding Autism, please feel free to contact me at the Special Education office. Veronica Smelcer

Volunteer Surrogate Parents Needed

Do you know an adult who would like to make a difference in a child’s life? Sevier County Special Education needs caring and committed adults with time to share. Children who have disabilities are often in need of special education services. Some of these children are not residing with parents or have been taken into state custody and need a concerned volunteer who is willing to learn about their special needs. Employees of the school system are prohibited from being surrogate parents. Any others interested in representing a child’s need for services and developing plans with service providers to meet those needs should contact Dr. Jeff Romanczuk, Sevier County Department of Special Education (865) 453-1036, to get more information or to request training to become an educational surrogate parent. Dr. Jeff Romanczuk