



# A few Words from the Superintendent

# RISING STARS ACADEMY

*As we approach this solstice time of the year, I find myself focusing on one word that is seldom used during the hustle and bustle of this glorious season: grace. **Grace** is an interesting word. It is a beautiful name. It is also a term used to describe a blessing before a meal. Grace is also something that is very important in social emotional health. It makes us inherently human – the better self that shines a light for others. There are five graces that are invaluable that encompass a life of Grace: Gratitude, Resilience, Aspiration, Courage and Empathy.*

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Welcome winter and what should be the most joyous season of the year! While the festivities are merry, they are sometimes more overwhelming than joyous. Anxieties increase in the hustle and bustle of things that need to be done and long lists needing to be checked. Many find themselves overextended in a variety of ways, and joy diminishes quickly. I hope you take time to slow down and find **gratitude** to elevate your heart and spirits.

December brings the end of the year. It can create mixed emotions about goals that may have not been met, or anticipation of the new year, thinking of goals that need to be set for 2023. We find ourselves living more of each day in the past, thinking of things we didn't do or in the future, thinking of things to come. I hope you find time to be present, marvel in your **resilience**, and **aspire** knowing that you can make tomorrow different than today.

Our young adults sometimes have difficulties over the holidays, causing emotion and anxiety. I hope that you find **empathy** in meeting them where they are to understand that the change of routines and loss of time spent with friends can be difficult for them. When they are in our classrooms at school, we use an approach of teaching them **courage** in knowing these fears and how they can move beyond them.

I hope you and your family find time to enjoy the season. Less is more, and peace is the best gift that we can give each other. More importantly, give yourself the gift of peace, letting things go, knowing you are enough. Grace during these times is balance when emotions are high. Have a blessed and graceful holiday.

Deb

"We are approaching the threshold of winter.

Life is being drawn into the earth, painlessly descending down into the very heart of herself.

And we as natural human animals are being called to do the same, the pull to descend into our bodies, into sleep, darkness and the depths of our own inner caves continually tugging at our marrow.

But many find the descent into their own body a scary thing indeed, fearing the unmet emotions and past events that they have stored in the dark caves inside themselves, not wanting to face what they have so carefully and unkindly avoided.

This winter solstice time is no longer celebrated as it once was, with the understanding that this period of descent into our own darkness was so necessary in order to find our light. That true freedom comes from accepting with forgiveness and love what we have been through and vanquishing the hold it has on us, bringing the golden treasure back from the cave of our darker depths.

This is a time of rest and deep reflection, a time to wipe the slate clean as it were and clear out the old so you can walk into spring feeling ready to grow and skip without a dusty mountain on your back & chains around your ankles tied to the caves in your soul.

A time for the medicine of story, of fire, of nourishment and love.

A period of reconnecting, relearning & reclaiming of what this time means brings winter back to a time of kindness, love, rebirth, peace and unburdening instead of a time of dread, fear, depression and avoidance.

This modern culture teaches avoidance at a max at this time; alcohol, lights, shopping, overworking, over spending, bad food and consumerism.

And yet the natural tug to go inwards as nearly all creatures are doing is strong and people are left feeling as if there is something wrong with them, that winter is cruel and leaves them feeling abandoned and afraid.

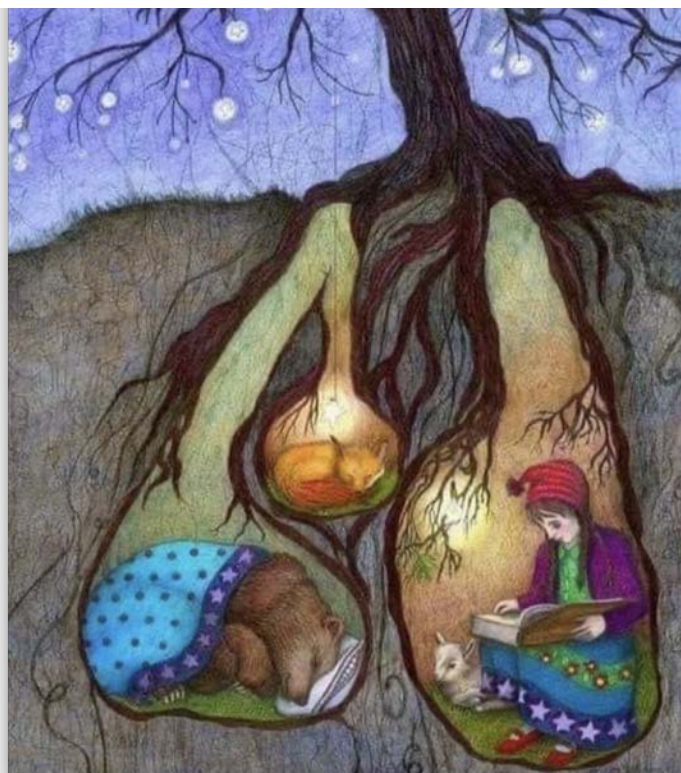
Whereas in actual fact winter is so kind, yes she points us in her quiet soft way towards our inner self, towards the darkness and potential death of what we were, but this journey if held with care is essential.

She is like a strong teacher that asks you to awaken your inner loving elder or therapist, holding yourself with awareness of forgiveness and allowing yourself to grieve, to cry, rage, laugh, & face what we need to face in order to be freed from the jagged bonds we wrapped around our hearts, in order to reach a place of healing & light without going into overwhelm.

Winter takes away the distractions, the noise and presents us with the perfect time to rest and withdraw into a womb like love, bringing fire & light to our hearth."

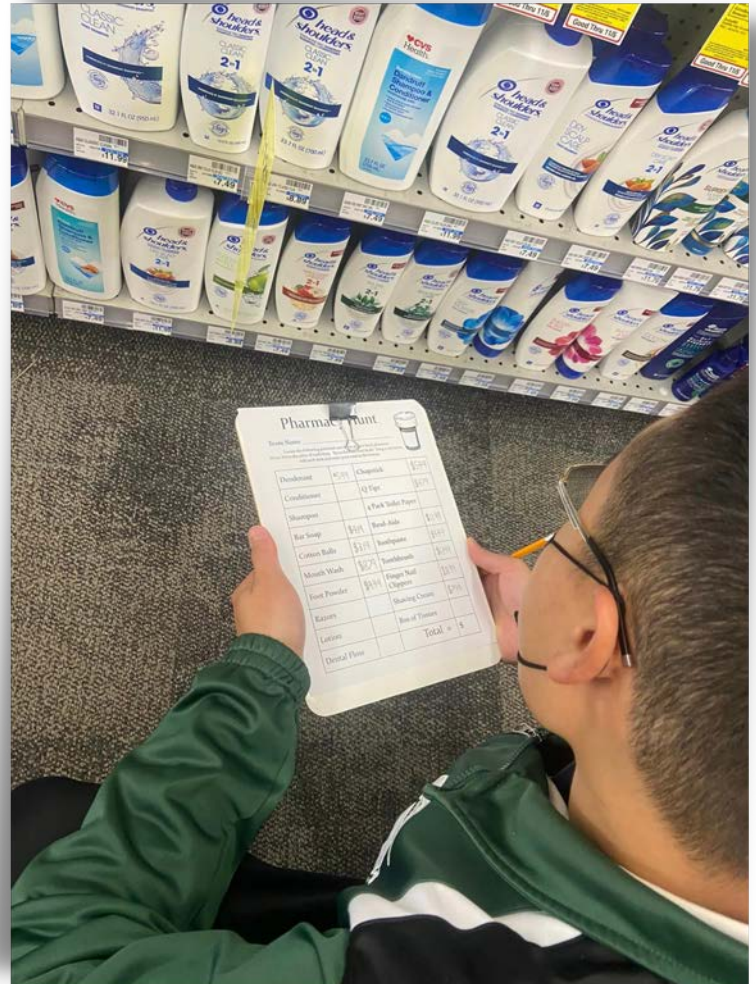
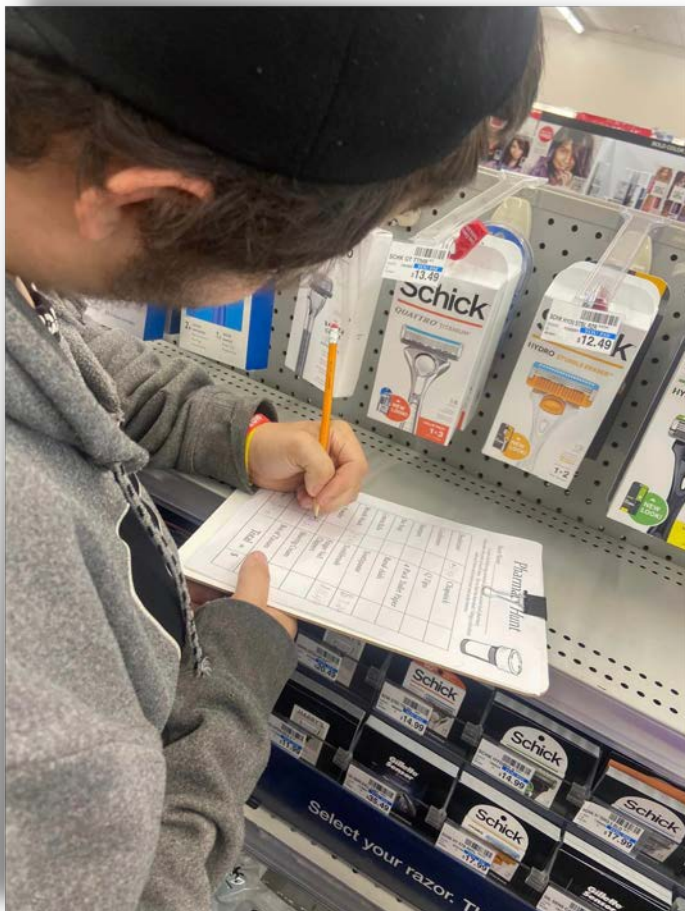
•illustration by Jessica Boehman•

•words Brigit Anna McNeill•"



# Ms. Emily's Classroom

As part of our self care unit, students are learning how to properly use hygiene products as well as how to budget for them.



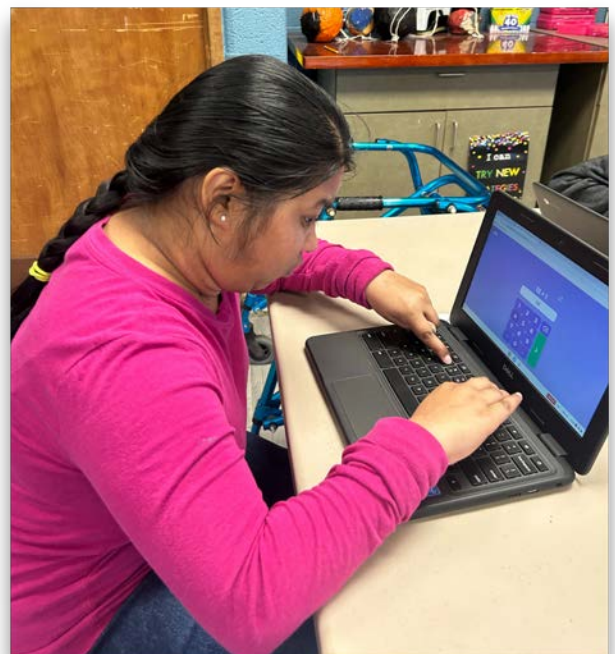
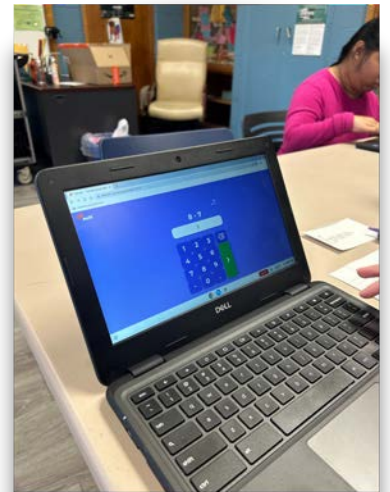
# Ms. Jenni's Classroom

Ms. Jenni's class has been learning about self care. Self care is taking care of our whole body and mind. Taking care of our mental health is important so we came up with many things to do to promote our mental health. Visiting local parks and spending time in nature was very high on our list. We researched parks in the area and found bird feeding at Kensington Metropark. The students researched how to do this and learned that in Fall and Winter, the birds of Kensington enjoy eating black oil sunflower seeds. They even landed on our hands for these tasty treats. We walked the trails and had a wonderful time feeding the birds!



# Ms. Sarah's Classroom

The students have been working on their math skills by playing 99 math. This week the students worked on addition, subtraction, and adding up coins!



## Ms. Maria's Classroom

Ms. Maria's class has been working on creating and producing the RSA News. Students research the stories and come up with the topics they would like to discuss. They then write the stories and decide who should present each story. Filming and editing is also done by the students. You can watch their first video on the Rising Stars Academy Facebook page.



# DETROIT · ATHLETIC · CLUB

This year students have been given a tremendous opportunity to work in the kitchens of the prestigious Detroit Athletic Club. They have prepped vegetables, meat, and seafood for many functions at the club, including preparing lobsters and spices in the club's signature 70 plus year old Lobster Bisque. The students have been involved in the plating line which puts food on the plate just before it is served. We are grateful to the staff at the Detroit Athletic Club for allowing our students this fantastic work experience.



# HENRY FORD HEALTH

Students work in the kitchens and cafe' at Henry Ford Hospital Detroit. They prepare rolls, food, and desserts to be served in the cafe' such as pumpkin pies for Thanksgiving. Students follow hospital Covid protocol to keep food safe.





# TACOM

Students work hard in the kitchen and help at the counter while at TACOM. They assemble sandwich wraps, salads, soup, and hot beverages for TACOM's very own Starbucks. They also restock items in the kitchen as well as clean and prep for the next day.



# DETROIT FOUNDATION HOTEL

Our students are having a fantastic work experience in the kitchens of the Foundation Hotel in Detroit. The hotel is located in the old Detroit Fire House on Larned Street across from Huntington Place (Cobo Hall). Students work on a variety of tasks including filling orders on the lunch line, prepping food, using the fryers, and helping in their bakery. Students have also made hot lunches for the hotel staff from prep through plating. Thank you to the Foundation Hotel for their support and guidance of our students.





## **FOUR CIRCLES STORE & CAFE**

**PHONE: 586-806-6455  
X133 (CAFE)  
STORE HOURS  
TUESDAY-THURSDAY  
9 A.M. - 1 P.M.**

**CASH, CREDIT, AND  
CHECKS ACCEPTED**

**BREAD CAN BE  
PURCHASED IN THE  
STORE. CARRY OUTS FOR  
LUNCH ARE ALSO  
AVAILABLE.**



# Community Based Instruction

Students went to Maybelle Burnette Library on Van Dyke in Warren to check out all the amenities they have to offer! This library opened in January of 2020 and has a diverse collection of books, magazines, and videos as well as educational games students can play on the library's computers and iPads. We are lucky to have such a great library within walking distance from Rising Stars Academy.



# IMPORTANT DATES

**DECEMBER 15 – RSA BOARD OF EDUCATION MTG 6:30 PM – CAFE'**  
**DECEMBER 22, 2022–JANUARY 2, 2023 – WINTER BREAK**

## 2023

**RETURN TO SCHOOL TUESDAY, JANUARY 3, 2023**

**JANUARY 16 – MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY – NO SCHOOL**

**JANUARY 19 – RSA BOARD OF EDUCATION MTG 6:30 PM – CAFE'**

**FEBRUARY 8 – SPRING COUNT DAY**

**FEBRUARY 14 – NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS/STAFF REPORTS**

**FEBRUARY 16 – BOARD OF EDUCATION MTG 6:30 PM – CAFE'**

**FEBRUARY 20–22 – NO SCHOOL/WINTER BREAK**

**FEBRUARY 23 – RETURN TO SCHOOL**

## **RISING STARS ACADEMY WISH LIST:**

Rising Stars Academy now has a wish list for supplies! The list can be found on Amazon.com. To access, please visit the following link:  
[https://smile.amazon.com/hz/charitylist/lc/3Q8I48FVSLSW/ref=smi\\_ext\\_lnk\\_lcl\\_cl](https://smile.amazon.com/hz/charitylist/lc/3Q8I48FVSLSW/ref=smi_ext_lnk_lcl_cl)

**Thank you to all who donate their time, supplies, and/or have contributed monetarily. All support is appreciated and vital to our students' success!**

*Thank you!*

## **AMAZONSMILE**

**RSA NOW PARTICIPATES WITH AMAZONSMILE. A PERCENTAGE OF YOUR PURCHASES WILL BE DONATED BACK TO RSA. PLEASE UTILIZE THIS LINK WHICH IS CONNECTED TO RSA: [HTTPS://SMILE.AMAZON.COM/CH/46-0834143](https://smile.amazon.com/ch/46-0834143) ONCE YOU ENTER THROUGH THE ABOVE LINK, YOU CONTINUE TO SHOP AND CHECKOUT AS YOU NORMALLY WOULD. YOUR SUPPORT IS APPRECIATED!**

# COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES

Stand Out! Adaptive Adult Organization invites you to:

## Craft Nights

at the Art Shack

October 20, 2022 7:30Pm-8:30Pm  
November 2, 2022 6:00Pm-7:00Pm  
November 17, 2022 7:30Pm-8:30Pm  
December 7, 2022 6:00Pm-7:00Pm

All registration and Payment will be through the Art Shack

Register Online:  Follow us on Facebook: 

## Stand Out!

**Stand Out! is an organization for adults with special needs. Opportunities are provided for socializing and community gathering.**

Stand Out! Adaptive Adult Organization invites you to:

## Social Nights

at EOS Café

October 13, 2022 6:00Pm-8:00Pm  
Fall Semester Kick Off  
October 25, 2022 6:00Pm-8:00Pm  
Halloween Party  
November 10, 2022 6:00Pm-8:00Pm  
BINGO/BANGO  
December 1, 2022 6:00Pm-8:00Pm  
Karaoke  
December 15, 2022 6:00Pm-8:00Pm  
Holiday Party

<https://parkregistration.scsmi.net/>

Register online:  Follow us on Facebook: 



# Resource Page

**The ARC** - <https://arcmi.org>

44050 Gratiot Avenue

Clinton Township MI 48036

586-469-1600

Advocate organization for those with developmental disabilities.



**Social Security Administration** - [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov)

Toll Free: 1-800-772-1314



**New Horizons Rehabilitation Services, Inc.** - [www.newhorizonsrehab.org](http://www.newhorizonsrehab.org)

Ms. Elizabeth Foradori

Social Security Specialist



**Macomb County Community Mental Health** - [www.mccmh.net](http://www.mccmh.net)

586-948-0222 Access Center

Offers a variety of supports and mental health services to meet the needs of those with developmental disabilities, coordinated by a therapist or case manager.



Think Big