St. Elizabeth School students have been using video chats to learn at a distance over the past few months, but SES staff have also been working diligently to bring more than just instruction into students’ homes.

Our aim is to ensure that our students stay in contact with their classmates and still feel connected to the SES community. To accomplish this, staff have come up with innovative ways to keep our students engaged. For example, every week day, students can view the SES Morning Announcements on YouTube and every Wednesday, students can chat with staff and their fellow homeroom students during “Lunch Bunch” Google Meets sessions.

To encourage good behavior and the five tenets of the PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports) program at SES, Eagle High Five winners are announced weekly by SES Behavior Specialist Ms. Olivia Baker on the SES YouTube channel.

SES Student Becky Tannenholz illustrates the five values of the Eagle High Five: Respect, Responsibility, Rethink, Achievement, and Encouragement.

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A MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

Dear SES Families,

I hope this newsletter finds you well. As the 2019-2020 school year draws to a close, I can’t help but think that it would be quite an understatement to say that this was a school year that we will never forget! Just before winter break, I mailed a holiday letter to all SES families in which I mentioned the importance of finding a reason for gratitude in every experience, even those that might not immediately seem to be good ones.

When we closed the school building in response to the COVID-19 pandemic back in March, I was initially having trouble finding a reason to be grateful. Since that time, I have watched our students and staff rise to the occasion. They learned whole new teaching and related services methodologies, and never once did they allow the physical distance between us become an obstacle to the deep and personal relationships they have formed. Our SES students, their families, and our staff have inspired me more than you know, and I could not be any prouder of everyone for finding creative ways to learn with one another and to care for one another during such an unprecedented time in all of our lives.

Please know that we miss being in the same space with our students and that we are hoping as much as you are that we can begin our safe transition back to the school building soon.

In the meantime, please enjoy the pages of this issue of Milestones. It is filled with photos, accomplishments, and the creativity of our amazing students and staff. I believe the smiles of our students will warm your heart, just as they do mine.

Sincerely,

Michael Thorne
Executive Director

PPE Equipment Needed

As we gear up to welcome students back to St. Elizabeth School in a new fashion, we are readying our building and procedures to ensure the safety of our students and staff.

To help transition staff and students back safely, SES is in need of unused PPE equipment such as masks, gowns, and gloves. If you are able to donate PPE items or contribute to our PPE fund, please contact the SES Development office at development@stelizabeth-school.org or donate to the PPE Fund online at www.stelizabeth-school.org/donate-now.

ST. ELIZABETH SCHOOL is extremely grateful to the following organizations that have recently awarded grants and donations to the school.

EVEN DURING A TIME OF FINANCIAL UNCERTAINTY, THESE ORGANIZATIONS STEPPED UP AND HELPED FUND SOME OF OUR IMMEDIATE NEEDS.

Please join us in recognizing their support. It is the generosity of these organizations and all of our donors who allow SES to carry out our mission of helping students with special needs go the distance.

THE MARION I. AND HENRY J. KNOTT FOUNDATION
Accessible Restroom Project (Phase 3)

NORTHROP GRUMMAN ECHO
Google Chrome devices and computers

THE THOMAS W. BRADLEY FOUNDATION
Google Chrome devices and computers

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS/HOLY TRINITY
COUNCIL 3413 and FATHER O’NEILL COUNCIL 4011
General fund

A useful social story that we previously shared to explain the importance of wearing a mask.

THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS DONORS
SES GRADUATING CLASS OF 2020

St. Elizabeth School would like to honor our graduating class of 2020. Because SES recognizes the importance of this milestone in the lives of the students and their families, an in-person commencement ceremony will be planned at St. Elizabeth School after students are allowed to return to the brick and mortar school building.

SES SPIRIT WEEK

SES students and staff participated in Spirit Week via Facebook and gladly shared photos. Spirit days included (from top left, going clockwise) PJs ALL DAY as displayed by Josh Cignatta, FURRY FRIENDS with Addie Stroup and Ms. Stacie Brownrigg, showing us their friends; FAVORITE HOBBIES with Ryan Mills demonstrating his biking; and FAVORITE THINGS with Colin McCabe sharing his love of camping and Sarah Prowell showing us her cuddly creature.

www.stelizabeth-school.org
While Terrence Ridley (pictured above) has been busy attending classes at St. Elizabeth School through the distance learning program, he also raised funds for the Athletes Serving Athletes (ASA) organization through their virtual RunFest. This event helps fund the program’s WingMan Program, which trains athletes with limited to no mobility to participate in mainstream running events. Terrence and his mom created a donation page online and quickly doubled their initial fundraising goal. Thank you Terrence for making a difference in our community!

SES Students Angel Crowder and Diego Krueger are the proud recipients of the 2020 Cardin Scholarship Award! The scholarship fund was established in memory of Michael Cardin, son of U.S. Senator Ben Cardin of Maryland and his wife Myrna, a former MANSEF (Maryland Association of Nonpublic Special Education Facilities) executive director. Award recipients were “selected for exemplifying perseverance in the face of adversity and embodying the spirit that everyone can succeed with hard work and support.”

Angel plans to use her scholarship funds to attend Easterseals – Independence Camp, while Diego plans to attend Easterseals Camp Fairlee. Congratulations to both Angel and Diego on this remarkable achievement.

SES Principal Ms. Erin Upton was recently appointed to the MANSEF board of directors. Her tireless work with MANSEF including a leading role on its school emergency safety task force makes Ms. Upton a deserving candidate.

During a difficult transition, SES students worked together to give to others in need. As part of a Jeopardy game in Ms. Tamarra Davis’s class, students were able to secure $800, which equates to 80 Eagle bucks. The money raised will be donated equally to Restaurants Strong and No Child Hungry.

Participating students included John Weekly, Natalie Halpin, Casey Vincent, Avery Roth, Haydn Bergener, Logan Thomas, Kaitlyn Valentine, Carina Ciccanti, Abigail Robelle, and Sutton Clark. Thank you, all, for carrying out the SES Franciscan values.
SES FASHION SHOW AND PROM GO VIRTUAL

On May 15, St. Elizabeth School broadcast its first live virtual Fashion Show! In April students were asked to submit a short clip or photos of themselves in their best “Renaissance” themed attire. After all the clips had been collected into one video, Fashion Show hosts Ms. Bernetta Baker and Mr. Andy Felicitas gave a live commentary on Google Meet for students, staff, and parents. We loved seeing everyone’s stunning outfits and runway walks! To see a recording of the event, visit https://youtu.be/XblNUV5l2ac.

The following evening, on Saturday May 16, SES invited students to dress up and attend the first Virtual Prom! With talented DJs Mr. Steve Backmon and Mr. Felicitas dropping the beats, SES students enjoyed a fun night “out” with each other. Students weren’t the only prom attendees though - lots of staff members dropped in to join the fun as well!

SES Kitchen Manager Bobby Mahoney and his son Jude (photo below) broadcast “Baking with Bobby and Jude” each week from their home.

“I absolutely love doing these videos for my SES family. As well as giving me a set time to share something I love doing with Jude (my son),” says Chef Bobby. Jude chimes in, “Chef Bobby and Assistant Jude are the best!”

“Dinners with Donna” is set to start broadcasting this month as well, with some fun new recipes from SES Cook Donna Smith.

These are just a few of the multitude of interactive broadcasts, video chats, and activities SES staff have offered so that students can feel a bit more “at school” at home!

STAFF GET CREATIVE WITH VIDEOS

SES staff used their ingenuity to create instructional, but amusing videos to engage our students. Videos spanned the subjects of yoga, how to make a positivity board or your own sensory kit. Fun story time videos were shared by staff, such as Ms. Lauren Opinion, SLP, who read “Pete the Cat and the Pizza Part” or Chip Riegel Morgan (photo above), who read “The Little Tiny Rooster” after first introducing us to his own hen.
UPCOMING EVENTS
As of now, SES is planning to hold its fundraising events as scheduled below. We will notify you of any changes.

SES Bull Roast
September 26, 2020
7 - 11 p.m.
Martin's East

SES Golf
October 14, 2020
9 a.m./8 a.m. registration
The Woodlands