

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

NAVIGATING TOGETHER

Supporting Parents. Empowering Students. Together.



This Month's Spotlight: Changing Seasons, Growing Skills

As autumn arrives with cooler air and changing colors, we're reminded that every season brings new growth opportunities.

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month - an annual recognition of the positive impact of people with disabilities in the American workforce.

What a perfect time to promote kindness, inclusion, and celebrate all of our unique abilities.

Halloween Reminder

Every child is different! Check in throughout the evening to make sure your child is still enjoying their time celebrating.

You can always make your own Halloween fun at home with a treat scavenger hunt or spooky movie night.

Tips & Tools for Home: Helpful Halloween Ideas

To make Halloween enjoyable for our special education families, prioritize preparation and adaptation.

Preparation and Planning: familiarize everyone with traditions by reading books about Halloween. Practice trick-or-treating to build comfort. Manage sensory needs by avoiding loud noises, strobe lights, and fog machines.

Costume Choices: Select soft, tag-free costumes that aren't itchy. Ensure that costumes allow for comfortable movement, sitting, and bending. Consider themed t-shirts, pajamas, or other comfortable clothing if a full costume is too challenging.

During the Celebration: Don't force involvement, and be prepared for them to feel overwhelmed. For non-verbal trick-or-treaters, bring a sign to hold. Look for teal pumpkins, a sign that the home is autism-friendly.

Education Corner

Education Laws, IEP Tips, School District Information, and Advocacy

Answering Your Frequently Asked Questions

As parents, we have many questions when our children are navigating the special education process. Below are the answers to your most common questions.

What is the difference between IEP and 504?

An IEP provides specialized services for children who qualify under one of the 13 disability categories in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

A 504 plan is for students who have a disability that limits one or more major life activities (such as walking, learning, or concentrating) but do not require specialized services.

What is the difference between accommodations and modifications?

An accommodation changes how a student learns the material (extended time, preferential seating, breaks, etc) but not what they are expected to learn.

A modification changes what a student is expected to learn/demonstrate (reduce the number of questions, simplified reading materials, etc.).

What can I do at home to support IEP goals?

Keep the lines of communication open with the school, and ask for any resources they have that could help. Familiarize yourself with your child's goal and try to incorporate those into daily life.

Keep in mind, if you have questions and are unsure of who to ask, the Parent Resource Center Liaison

Parent Resource Center Contact:

Melinda Reed - Special Education Parent Resource Center Liaison - melindareed@spsk12.net

If you are not signed up to receive our monthly newsletter but would like to be, [click here](#).

Community Connections

Local Events and Workshops

October Community Events for Families

Roller Skating in Downtown Suffolk - October 1st through the 30th at Festival Park.

47th Annual Suffolk Peanut Festival - October 9th through the 12th at the Suffolk Executive Airport.

Suffolk Out of the Darkness Walk - Bennett's Creek Park - October 25th at 10:00 am.

For more information and events in Suffolk, [click here](#) for official website of Suffolk, Va.



Resource Roundup

Featured guides, books, websites, and more.

Support for Parents from Across the Web

As parents, we often forget that we too need support at times. Here are a few resources across the web that can support parents during the school year.

Parents Helping Parents - (www.php.com) a variety of fantastic resources for parents and caretakers.

The Arc of Virginia - (www.thearcofva.org) provides advocacy, information, and family support through every stage of life.

Reach Out

If you're feeling overwhelmed or unsure where to start, don't hesitate to reach out. We are here to listen, support, and guide. Let's make this school year a positive and empowering one for every student and family!

Hours

Monday & Tuesday: 10:30 to 4:00
Wednesday: 10:00 to 5:00
Thursday & Friday: 8:30 to 1:30