

# St. Coletta Day School of Milwaukee

1740 North 55<sup>th</sup> Street, Milwaukee WI 53208 | (414) 453-1850

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Weekly Update      January 8, 2020

Important Dates:    Thursday, January 16      Urban Ecology Center  
                                 Monday, January 20      No School- Teacher In-service

We're going to try to use the 'Weekly Update' as a learning tool for everyone. We'll share some thoughts and ideas that you might find helpful. If you're already doing some of these things, great! If you're not doing these things, now is a good time to start. It's never too late!

## Attendance and Tardies

There has been an **improvement** in attendance and a **reduction** in the number of tardies that we have been experiencing. Keep up the good work in both these areas! And here is why it's important: One of the skills that we are teaching our students is the importance of punctuality. It is a vital part of our day. When teaching responsibility at school, we are also teaching responsibility in life. Being on time is a life-long skill especially when we look ahead to our students being independent individuals as adults.

## What's the Connection?

This idea of being 'punctual' is an essential skill that our students take with them throughout their lifetime. You all know that our Transition Program focuses on 'job experiences' around the St. Sebastian and St. Coletta campus. What you may not realize is that many of our students in Room 1 and Room 101 have important jobs around the campus as well. In fact, the way our school program is structured, **everything** that we help our students experience is working toward that end goal of eventual employment.

We know that our students learn in many different ways. Some learn best by reading about a task while others need to actually do the task to be successful. In both cases, the student takes on the responsibility of learning. Our school staff does an amazing job of helping our students to understand the importance of making that connection between punctuality and responsibility. Now, as a parent, you might think these concepts are a bit of a stretch for our students because they have special needs... Think again! Our students, your children, are very capable of doing great things. When the expectation is presented, the student has an opportunity to learn. Another way to look at it is this: If you never expect anything from the student, the opportunity to learn is missed.



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## How can YOU help?

Here are some examples of how you can help implement these skills at home with your child:

**Set expectations-** any child can put items away when they're finished with them. If you do it for them all the time, they are learning that it's not THEIR responsibility.

**Give them a task-** start out by keeping it simple and increase the level of difficulty as they meet success. When you're shopping for groceries, give them a cart and a list of items to find. Make it items that you buy for them anyway... list the item or use a picture. You're kidding yourself if you think your child doesn't know what the item is! Will it take you a bit longer to shop? Probably. Will your child be learning a skill? Absolutely!

**Keep them involved-** Let them help prep for meals. Think about how YOU learned to do the things you now do. Take nothing for granted. Everything needs to be learned somehow. Be patient. Again, if they've never done something before it's going to take time to learn.

Bottom line is this... at school, we don't teach anything in isolation. Everything has a purpose and you use those skills to build onto other skills. You can do the same thing at home. That's how learning works.

## Transition Program

Did you know that the students who participate in our Transition Program are involved in over three dozen jobs on a weekly basis? And, that includes some of the school students as well. Their 'Coffee Cart' business has been growing steadily since day one. Their customers include the teaching staff at both schools as well as office personnel. Oh, did I mention that the students operate the coffee business independently? That's right... the guidance and support is there if and when they need it. And that's if with a capital IF.

## Appointments

Please continue to call the office phone number (414-453-1850) to report any appointments for your child. We appreciate knowing about these appointments well in advance. **That's what works best.** Last minute notifications really don't work well. Prior advance notice gives the teachers a chance to have assignments ready ahead of time so that the student doesn't miss too much instruction time. Short notice is also a disadvantage if that student has a job on campus that would need a replacement.



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## Parent Meeting

Just a reminder that the Parent meeting that was originally scheduled for tonight is rescheduled for next Wednesday, January 15.

## Urban Ecology Center

Next week, Thursday, January 16 is our trip to the UEC. Dress warmly as the students will be outdoors for a time!

*Reflection: "It is good to have an end to journey toward; but it is the journey that matters, in the end."*

Ursula K. LeGuin

