



SPRING 2025

FREEDOM ACRES NEWS

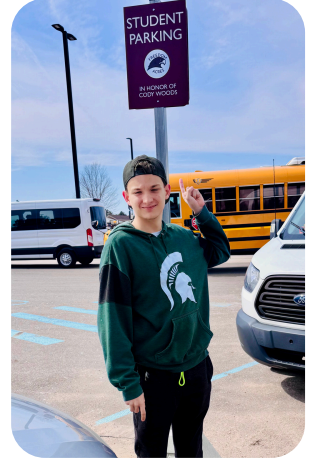
From the Desk of the Principal

WRITTEN BY ANGELA MILLER, PRINCIPAL

The 2024–25 school year was a journey filled with heartfelt moments—both joyful and reflective. We celebrated countless victories, learned through challenges, and were reminded often of the importance of valuing the time we share with others.



One of our proudest moments came as we watched a Freedom Acres Falcon, Cody Woods, soar to new heights. Cody earned his diploma from Belding Area Schools and proudly walked with the Class of 2025 in his home district. His radiant smile on graduation night was a testament to what it means to accomplish a goal through hard work and perseverance. We wish Cody the brightest future and celebrate his trailblazing legacy. Cody was also our first learner to gain approval from the superintendent to drive to Freedom Acres—a milestone now proudly displayed on a commemorative sign.



As the school year concludes, our SEI (Severely Emotionally Impaired) learners will wrap up on June 4th and return for an exciting new beginning on August 20th. Our SCI (Severely Cognitively Impaired) learners will break from June 5th to the 16th, then return to complete their 200 days of instruction through a modified summer schedule.

Throughout the year, we built lasting memories: Halloween fun, meaningful social-emotional learning lessons, March Madness PE challenges, Olympic-style games, a 5K, Field Day, and holiday celebrations. Reading Month, playground fun, shared conversations, and simple bike rides added to the richness of our time together. In every laugh, every hand held, and every moment shared, we grew as individuals and as a school family.

Some learners required hospital stays or homebound services. Our dedicated staff stepped in without hesitation, providing instruction and support to lift our learners' spirits no matter where they were. Our Freedom Acres community embodies resilience, compassion, and an unwavering commitment to going the extra mile.

You don't teach someone to swim while they're drowning. The same goes for *discipline during a meltdown—connection must come before correction.*





Shout-Outs and Gratitude

As the school year draws to a close, we want to extend our deepest thanks to the pillars of our community who continue to lift us higher:

Freedom Acres PTO

Your compassion, dedication, and heart make our school an incredible place for students to feel safe and thrive. Your thoughtful recognition on Principal's Day truly moved me, and that card remains displayed in my kitchen - a daily reminder of your kindness

VFW & Ladies Auxiliary

We are so grateful to Jackson Mutschler, David A. Huhn VFW Post 12082, and all local veterans for your education, support, and grilling skills at our events.

Richard A. Handlon Correctional Facility – MTU (MDOC)

Thank you for your generous donations of pumpkins, crocheted items, and no-sew blankets. Your efforts brought comfort and joy to our learners.

Our Parents, Students, and Staff

Your advocacy, belief in our mission, and collaboration fuel our vision of excellence and felt safety.

ISD Board Members

Thank you for standing beside us and supporting our work.

Together, we've faced challenges with tenacity and always kept our purpose at the center - service students with care, compassion, and commitment.

Principal's Personal Perspective

On a personal note, life has allowed me the honor to serve as a mother, wife, principal, community member, educational advocate, learner, grandparent, and more. Every day, I strive to become a better version of myself—growing through curiosity, reflection, and deep listening.

💡 I've learned that curiosity releases assumptions and that setting aside judgment can be the most powerful gift we give others. Felt safety, paired with listening, wins every time.

☀️ This spring, I welcomed my beautiful granddaughter, **Anya Joy Miller**, born on May 5th. My grandson, **Lukka**, is embarking on his second trip around the sun, charming hearts and growing into a remarkable little human. This fall, I look forward to welcoming a new daughter-in-law into our family. My youngest will begin his senior year—a bittersweet milestone. And my husband remains my greatest cheerleader and partner, sharing joy with me on 16-mile bike rides (mittens on!) in the Petoskey area and music-filled evenings.

🎵 Music and concerts have been my tools for personal care and self-regulation. I've met some amazing dreamers and

believers through this passion. I am a BELIEVER—and if you have a dream, chase it fiercely! Becoming an educator, wife, and mother has been the most rewarding journey I could have imagined.

🌻 To our parents, students, and staff—thank you for allowing me the opportunity to serve. It is the greatest honor.

Stay Connected

Visit our website, and stay in touch throughout the summer. We can't wait to welcome you back for another incredible year at Freedom Acres!

Wishing you a joyful, safe, and relaxing summer,

Educationally yours,

Angela Miller



HOW TO

EMPOWER CHILDREN

WHEN THEY STRUGGLE

Big Life Journal

1 LISTEN AND EMPATHIZE

Practice listening when your child vents to you about a problem.

- Provide **choices**
- **Validate** your child's feelings
- Ask your child **open-ended questions**
- **Prompting** with questions like,
- You can also **ask**, "What do you need from me?"

"What do you think would happen if you tried ____?"

2 MODEL THE ATTITUDE YOU WANT TO SEE

Practice listening when your child vents to you about a problem.

- Use **phrases** like, "This is hard. I need a break," or, "This is hard. I'm going to keep trying."
- **Ask** your child to help you brainstorm solutions.
- **Avoid** expressing negative opinions of yourself or making comments like, "I can't do this."
- Focus on the **positive**. Was a lesson learned? Did you improve? Did you overcome the struggle--and how great did it feel?

3 BUILD UP CONFIDENCE WITH AGE-APPROPRIATE TASKS

Boost your child's feelings of confidence and capability by allowing him to do age-appropriate tasks on his own.

GETTING DRESSED

MAKING THE BED

PICKING UP TOYS

PREPARING FOODS LIKE CEREAL OR TOAST



4 REMIND THEM OF PAST STRUGGLES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Remind your child of tasks that were once difficult and became easier with time.

WHAT ARE YOUR CHILD'S STRENGTHS?

HOW DID HE GROW THESE STRENGTHS?



5 TEACH PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS

Teach a simple process like the following:

- **Step 1:** What am I **feeling**?
- **Step 2:** What's the **problem**?
- **Step 3:** What are the **solutions**?
- **Step 4:** What would **happen if...**?
- **Step 5:** What will I **try**?

6 KNOW WHEN TO LEND A HAND

Step in when:

- There is a **safety concern**.
- When a task that is **not developmentally appropriate**.
- A **skill(s) needs to be learned** before your child can succeed.
- Your child has tried multiple strategies and persevered, but is **still struggling**. In this case, offer guidance and help. Then, discuss what your child learned and praise the effort/progress.

SUBSTITUTE EMPLOYMENT

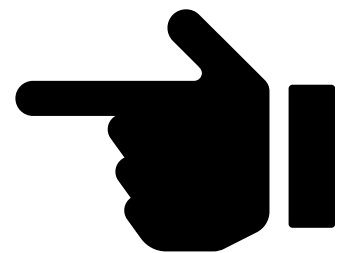
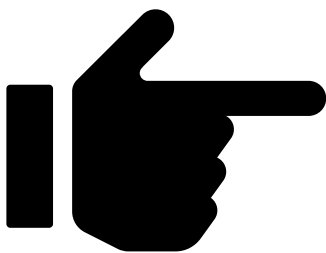
To apply to work as a substitute Para–educator or Teacher

Looking for full-time, permanent employment through the
ISD? Most employees who are hired as a Health Care Aide or
Teacher are found via the ESS/Willsub substitute system.

Apply at www.willsub.com



*Submitting a completed application does not guarantee or
ensure any offer of employment with ESS/Willsub or any of its
client districts or affiliates.*



Fingerprinting Information

If you have already applied to work as a Substitute through
ESS/Willsub, please do the following:

- Call the Ionia County ISD (616-527-4900) for instructions, or
stop by the ISD's office (8 am - 2 pm) to receive the
appropriate paperwork to enable you to be fingerprinted.
- If you have had your fingerprints taken through another
school district, contact Theresa Wiles (616-527-4900) to
obtain a Criminal History Release form.

*ESS/Willsub will not start your second phase of paperwork until
the fingerprint results are received by the Ionia County ISD.*

SUMMER HEALTH TIPS

SUN SAFETY

SUMMER SKIN PROTECTION



WEAR
BROAD HAT



USE SUNGLASSES



WEAR PROTECTIVE
CLOTHING



AVOID DIRECT
SUNLIGHT



AVOID SUN BETWEEN
11 AM AND 3 PM



USE SUNSCREEN



DRINK MORE
WATER



REFLECTION
CAUTION



SEEK SHADE

Health News from Nurse Becky

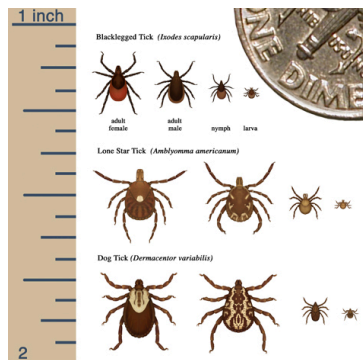
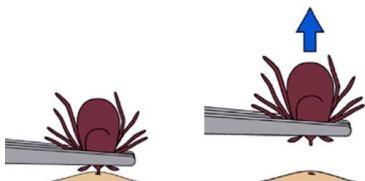
Spring in Michigan

As we welcome spring in Michigan, we also welcome ticks and mosquitos. Ticks are prevalent in Ionia County and have been known to carry Lyme disease. It is important to prevent disease, and remove ticks as soon as possible.



Ways to Prevent Tick Bites

- P Avoiding areas with lots of ticks such as grassy, brushy, or wooded areas
- P Checking skin regularly when outdoors
- P Checking clothing regularly when outdoors
- P Checking pets regularly
- P Use of repellents



How to Remove a Tick

1. Use clean, fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin's surface as possible.
2. Pull upward with steady, even pressure. Don't twist or jerk the tick; this can cause the mouth-parts to break off and remain in the skin. If this happens, remove the mouth-parts with tweezers. If you cannot remove the mouth easily with tweezers, leave it alone and let the skin heal.
3. After removing the tick, thoroughly clean the bite area and your hands with rubbing alcohol or soap and water.
4. Never crush a tick with your fingers. Dispose of a live tick by
 - Putting it in alcohol,
 - Placing it in a sealed bag/container,
 - Wrapping it tightly in tape, or
 - Flushing it down the toilet.

For more information about ticks and tick borne disease, go to www.cdc.gov/ticks

Please remember to call Freedom Acres
616-527-2921 to report your child's absence.

Elementary SEI with Ms. April Cavanaugh

...and just like that, it's over!

WRITTEN BY APRIL, KATHY AND ASHLEY

It is hard to believe another school year has come to an end. Our students have enjoyed the spring weather and all the outdoor activities. We finished M-Step and celebrated with ice cream treats. We have enjoyed the school year and watching all the growth socially, emotionally, and academically.

The students always looked forward to our TRAILS social-emotional group on Monday and the interactive lessons Ms. Elizabeth planned. We are so proud of our students and all their accomplishments and improvements we have seen throughout the school year. We hope summer brings lots of fun, smiles, and maybe a bit of reading. Happy Summer to All!



Middle SEI with Ms. Abby Bailey

Bunnies, Baking, and Big Smiles

WRITTEN BY ABBY, KACI AND CASSIDY

We are winding down the school year and the students are eager for their summer break to begin! What a fun and exciting past few months we have had. The students enjoyed going on their CBI trips to bowling and helping at IMKids 3rd Meal. Cassidy has done a spectacular job with her Home Ec sessions with the students, keeping them engaged, teaching them the basics of cooking/baking and kitchen safety and proper hygiene. Our class enjoyed the Valentines day dance again this year, and took advantage of the photo shoot.

Ms. Abby enjoyed bringing in her baby bunnies for the students to love on and show around the school, they are trying really hard to convince her to make one a classroom pet. We shall see... Easter brought a scavenger hunt for the students that took them throughout the school and playground. We are all loving the nicer weather that May has brought, so the students and staff are going for walks at school and on the trails in town. As the school year is coming to a close, the students are working diligently to get their classes completed and credits earned!

As always, there was never a dull moment in our classroom. We hope everyone has a wonderful, ice-cream filled summer, and we look forward to seeing you at the beginning of the 2025-2026 school year!



High School SEI with Mrs. Lisa English

Legendary Year, Lovable Crew

WRITTEN BY LISA, GINA AND MEGAN H



Happy Spring! This year has gone by so quickly and we are all trying to slow down time so we don't have to focus on how much we will miss your children over the summer! We have accomplished a lot in the short time we have been given. A new team in the SEI High School classroom brought it together for your learners, whom I've dubbed Lisa's Lovable Legends. We have celebrated many successes, including a High School Graduate - Congratulations Cody Woods!! Although we did not get out into the community as much the second half of the year, we sure have had many positive adventures at school. Thanks to Ms. Emily for weekly events in Adapted Physical Education and to Ms. Elizabeth for weekly TRAILS! We couldn't do it without everyone! A heartfelt thanks to all those who persevered with us to help close out another successful year! We can't wait to see what 2025-26 has in store for us all! Have a wonderful summer!

Behavior Coach Ms. Elizabeth Dreja

Fostering Growth and Well-being: A Look at Our Behavior Coach Program

WRITTEN BY ELIZABETH

As the Behavior Coach at Freedom Acres School, I have the privilege of working closely with our learners, particularly those in the Severely Emotionally Impaired (SEI) program, to help them navigate the complexities of their emotions and develop essential life skills. My role is centered around fostering a supportive environment where every learner can thrive socially and emotionally.

A significant part of my work involves leading Social Emotional Learning (SEL) groups. In these sessions, we explore a range of topics crucial for healthy development, including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. Through engaging activities, discussions, and collaborative exercises, learners build their emotional vocabulary, learn to identify their feelings, and understand how their emotions impact their actions and interactions with others.

In addition to group sessions, I hold regular one-on-one meetings with learners. These individualized sessions provide a safe and confidential space for them to discuss their challenges, celebrate their successes, and work through specific behavioral patterns. During these meetings, we collaboratively identify target behaviors – specific actions or reactions that, when addressed, can significantly improve a learner's ability to manage their emotions and navigate social situations more effectively.

It is incredibly rewarding to witness the growth and progress our learners make as they gain confidence in managing their emotions and developing stronger interpersonal skills. By investing in their social and emotional well-being, we are not only helping them succeed academically, but also empowering them to lead more fulfilling and productive lives.



Adapted PE with Mrs. Emily Stall

Inclusive and Engaging

WRITTEN BY EMILY



Where has this year gone?!? We have been working so much this year in Adapted Physical Education. Our students have been engaging in a variety of activities and events.

I missed our return to the new year as I enjoyed the arrival of my daughter. She is growing so fast! While I was out, I rested and enjoyed all of the newborn snuggles I could get. She is a great baby and growing happy and healthy.



The highlight is a toss-up for me. I missed our yearly Olympics as I was away on maternity leave. I was able to enjoy our Valentine's Day dance on my first day back! We had a blast with pop culture events, including March Madness and The Masters. Students were able to connect with real-world events inclusively and engagingly. I am looking forward to ending the year with a school talent show, along with the Field Day. Such a great time to be a Falcon!

PreK/Elementary SCI with Mrs. Stephanie Brown

Spring into Fun: Sunshine, Snacks, & Smiles

WRITTEN BY STEPHANIE B, HALI, STACIE, AND TYLER

The sunshine has arrived and has lifted our spirits!!! We take every opportunity to get out and enjoy the warmer weather. The trail is great for walking, riding bikes, or going for a ride in a wheelchair. The playground has been such a blessing, allowing all of the FA students to play together.

This spring has been full of lots of fun! We have had all kinds of exciting activities in APE (Adapted Physical Education) with Mrs. Emily. Basketball, mini golf, kickball, baseball and more! Mrs. Emily, Mrs. Brenda, and Ms. Kacey have helped us to get fitted for the appropriate bikes and we have taken a few rides out on the trail. It is great to get out and get our bodies moving!

We continue to work on skills that help our students to become more independent in their daily lives. Having fun while learning is our motto and we do a pretty good job at sticking to it. Thursdays are an especially fun time, when we have OT/Speech/PT group. A fun story and craft/activity are always provided by Mrs. Sue, Mr. Jacob, and Mrs. Kara.



Our class has been cooking/baking on Fridays. Our most recent treats were Marshmallow Puffs, Garlic

Toast Pizza, Haystacks, and Brownies! Each student has a job when we create our tasty masterpieces. This can range from dumping in an ingredient, stirring, or pressing a switch that activates the mixer. The students take turns shopping for the needed ingredients with staff at the store. It has been a great experience having the kids out in the community and working on appropriate social behavior.

Elementary/ Middle School SCI with Mr. Ben Croel

Nourishment Fuels Our Strength

WRITTEN BY BEN, GYWEN, KIM K, AND HEATHER

The 2024-2025 school year is coming to a close and it has been another great year! It is an absolute honor each day to be entrusted with your child and to have the opportunity to work with them and be a part of their lives. I appreciate the effort that you make to ensure that they are here each day and ready to learn. We had a lot of fun this year with the different activities that we did in the class and out.

Cooking was a fun addition to the classroom this year. We made things like cookies, pizzas, cakes, etc. all while keeping food allergies and sensitivities in mind. We have been able to ride bikes, swing and play on the playground as it warms up. We have a lot of exciting activities planned for the Summer programming here at Freedom Acres. I look forward to the students coming back and having a great Summer with us here after some time off to rest and enjoy with family.

I hope you have a great Summer! I look forward to talking with you soon!



Middle School SCI with Ms. Lindsay Seal

Spring Fun and Learning in Our Middle School SCI Classroom

WRITTEN BY LINDSAY, KIRSTEN, AND JACKIE

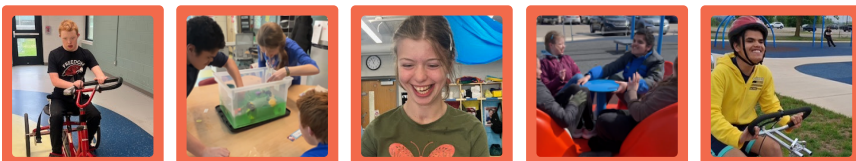
Spring has sprung in our Middle School SCI Skills-Based Classroom, and we've been busy learning, growing, and making great memories!

One of the highlights of our spring has been our weekly Community-Based Instruction (CBI) trips to the Ionia Bowling Alley with our friends in the MoCI program. These outings are a wonderful way for our students to practice real-world skills while having fun and building friendships.

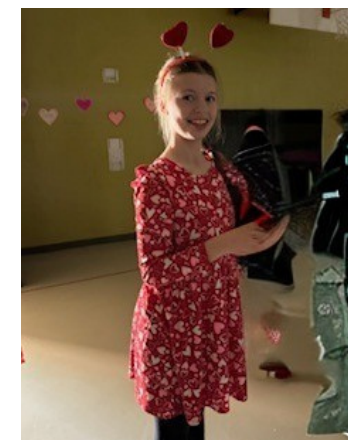
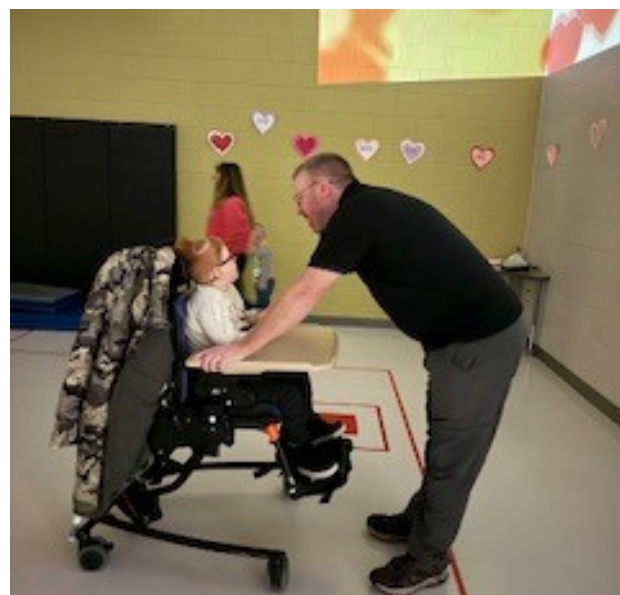
Back at school, we've been taking full advantage of the warmer weather! Our students love riding bikes, going on nature walks, and spending time on our amazing playground. Outdoor time has been a favorite for everyone, offering both fun and physical activity.

In the classroom, we've been working hard on our daily routines and life skills, building independence and confidence each day. We've also explored a variety of sensory activities that help our students regulate and engage with their learning in creative ways. We've had the joy of joining up with Ms. Kate's class to host our awesome friends from Ms. April and Ms. Abby's class in the SEI program, who come down and read to us. These reading buddy visits are a special part of our week, and our students truly cherish the time spent with their peers. We're so grateful for the kindness and connection we share with these wonderful classrooms!

It's been a season full of smiles, learning, and friendship. We're proud of everything our students have accomplished and excited to carry this positive energy into the rest of the school year!



SWEETHEART DANCE





FIELD DAY



New Experiences with Ms. Kate Alcook & Mrs. Lynne Geiger-Wester

Exploring Together: A Year of Learning and Friendship

WRITTEN BY KATE, LYNNE, JESSICA, KIM, TONY, TRINA, WARREN, AND ZOEY

This year has been an exciting year of investigation, exploration, and growth. Both students and staff have enjoyed our team approach to learning and look forward to our next gathering.

We started the year completing science experiments. We have since expanded our peer-to-peer experiences to include cooking and baking activities, time spent on the playground, as well as arts and crafts. Everyone has seemed to appreciate their time together, as evidenced by their smiles, giggles, words expressed, and participation. Here are some pictures that highlight our AMAZING team in action!



Early Childhood SE with Mrs. Khloe Harris

Springtime Growth in Our Classroom

WRITTEN BY RYLEIGH, ERICA, JILLANNA,
KENDRA, TAYLOR

This spring has truly been a season of blooming for our ASD preschoolers! Whether indoors or outdoors, we've been on the move—exploring, creating, and learning together. The children have taken part in a variety of engaging art projects, from crafting colorful paper glasses to decorating their own wind chimes, each activity showcasing their personal creativity and growing fine motor skills. A special highlight of every week has been Reading Buddies on Tuesdays, where older students join us for one-on-one story time—an experience that our kids have honed their attention in for. We've also seen a boost in confidence as many of our students grow more comfortable using their AAC devices to express themselves at all moments. Most notably, independence has bloomed in so many ways throughout the classroom, and we couldn't be prouder of their progress. What a joyful and vibrant season it's been!



Speech Therapy with Mrs. Sue Wizorek

Building Language

WRITTEN BY SUE

As most of you know, a lot of our students rely on alternative ways of communicating. We have a variety of speech generating devices, switches, PECS, and even looking at icons or items to let people know what they are thinking! We are always creating and looking for opportunities

Here are some ideas for building language at home:

Model, Model, Model

Use simple language, gestures, and visuals (pictures, objects) frequently throughout the day. Show them how to communicate.

Create Communication Opportunities

Set up situations where your learner needs to communicate to get what they want or need. Pause and wait expectantly for a response.

Respond to All Attempts

Acknowledge any attempt to communicate, whether it's a sound, gesture, pointing, or using a device. Show them their message was received.

Keep it Fun and Playful

Communication should be enjoyable! Incorporate it into games, songs, and daily routines in a relaxed way.

Use Visual Supports

Pictures, schedules, and choice boards can help your child understand and express themselves.

Give Choices

Offer simple choices (e.g., "Do you want juice or water?") to encourage verbalization or pointing.

Talk About What You're Doing

Narrate your actions and what you see around you using simple language.

Be Patient and Wait

Allow your child extra time to process information and formulate a response. Avoid rushing them.

If your child has a speech generating device – Keep it Charged and Functional

Regularly check the battery and ensure the device is working correctly so it's always ready.

The key is to make communication a natural and enjoyable part of your child's daily life!

I continue to provide support to teachers and families in helping our learners find a voice -- any way to communicate! If you have any questions, or would like to talk with me about your learner's communication needs, you are always welcome to contact me at (616) 489-2064.

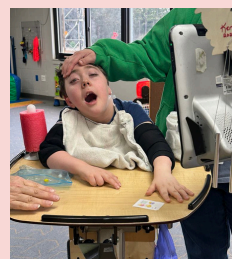
Occupational Therapy with Jacob Heppe

Creative Fun: Boost Your Fine Motor Skills

WRITTEN BY JACOB, OTR/L AND KARA, COTA

These winter months sure have flown by. The OT department continues to have a blast, week in and week out, working with all of our wonderful students and staff here at Freedom Acres. If you come on any given Thursday, you will typically see our group sessions making the rounds in the different classrooms with OT/SLP/PT's in attendance. When you visit our school, you may even see some type of craft displayed in the hallways or classrooms that our students have worked on either independently or with the help of adult support.

One common thing that almost all of our learners love is music! From songs like *Down on Grandpa's Farm*, to shaking a maraca, to activating a switch playing *Wheels on the Bus* all our learners enjoy some time of auditory input. That's why at Freedom Acres we love to incorporate music and dance into our sessions on Thursday's consistently. Glad to see everyone at Field Day this year!



Physical Therapy with Brenda Brown

Spring & Summer PT Update

WRITTEN BY BRENDA PT AND KACEY PTA

Looks like winter is finally going to leave us. With the sunshine of spring and summer, the PT team is helping students move, explore, and grow through safe, fun, and meaningful activities.

Adaptive Biking

Students are riding adaptive tricycles and hand cycles with supportive seating and helmets. Biking builds strength, endurance, posture, and confidence - with full staff support.

Outdoor Activities

PT sessions include walking with mobility devices, seated or standing tossing games, and coordinating with staff in facilitating movement activities. Fresh air boosts regulation, engagement, and movement skills.

Field Day

Thanks to our AWESOME Adaptive PE Teacher, Emily, Field Day featured adaptive biking, inclusive games, and full staff support - everyone participated and was celebrated!

Summer Programming

We'll continue PT during summer programming with equipment use, biking, movement plans, and weekly support. Let us know if your child needs an updated helmet or home activity ideas.



Thanks for partnering with us - here's to continued progress this summer!

Visual Therapy with Margaret Besson

Adding Textures

WRITTEN BY MARGARET

I have had a wonderful time getting to know the staff, students, and parents at Freedom Acres this year.

In the past few months we have continued working on light tracking, activating switches, and most recently we are adding in some textured materials. Adding textured materials can enhance student engagement. Think of the touch and feel books we loved when we were kids. This concept doesn't just apply to young students.

Thank you for all the help and support this year you provided me with this year. I look forward to working with all of you in the future. Together we can all make a difference. I hope you enjoy your summer!



CELEBRATING OUR INCREDIBLE PTO

FREEDOM ACRES PTO

Join us for more info on Facebook at

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/301521012754939>



PTO Appreciation

Our Freedom Acres PTO has been a steadfast and compassionate force this year. They have:

- Comforted and supported families and staff during the loss of three learners in under 12 months.
- Played an integral role in every building-wide event.
- Celebrated and honored staff on:
 - Principal's Day
 - Nurse's Day
 - Teacher Appreciation Week

We are grateful for their generosity, kindness, and unwavering support.

2025 – 2026 PTO Board

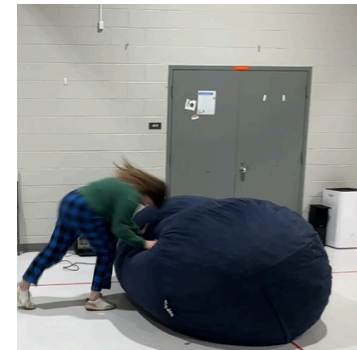
We are excited to announce the incoming PTO leadership team:

- **President:** Mollie Zanella
- **Vice President:** Hali Eveleth
- **Secretary:** Brandy Durrant
- **Treasurer:** Cory Blain
- **Member:** April Kreiner

Thank you for your continued service and dedication to our school community.



TALENT SHOW



WOAH!



2025 MOCK SUPERLATIVES

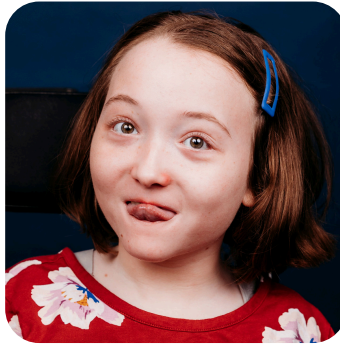


To sprinkle some extra pizzazz on year's end, we handed out special awards to our students! Teachers and staff conjured up quirky categories, perfect for capturing the unique flair of our amazing students!

Most Spirited Falcon



Sparkling Smile



Future Picasso



Most Contagious Laugh



Prettiest Peepers



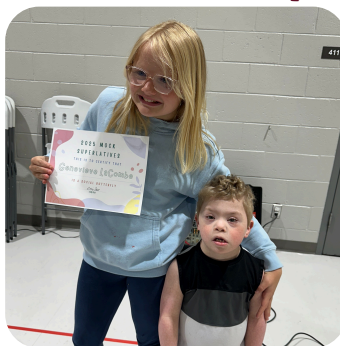
Future Beethoven



Most Athletic



Social Butterfly



Class Clown



Snazziest Dresser

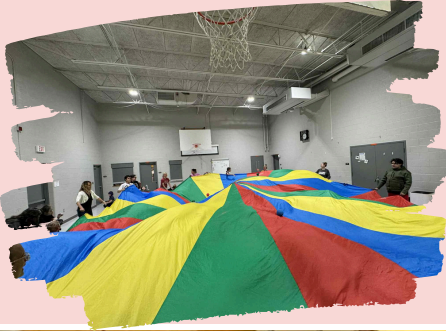


Loveliest Locks

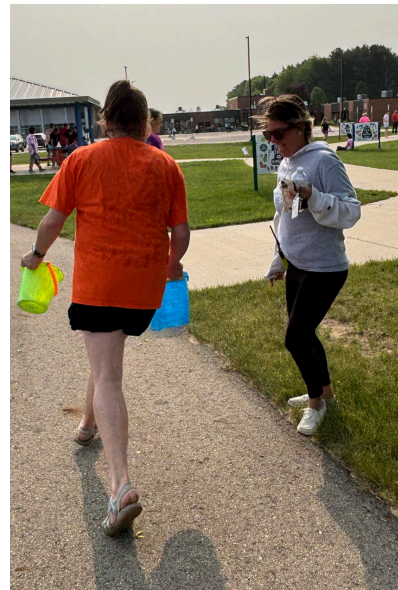
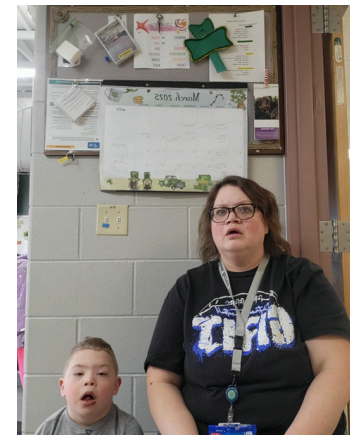


Awesome Aura





FREEDOM ACRES STAFF FUN



IN LOVING MEMORY

Kayleigh Shoen

December 21, 2005 - March 19, 2025



Kayleigh Louise Pearl Shoen, age 19, of Belding, passed away at home surrounded by her loving family on March 19, 2025. She was born in Grand Rapids, Michigan on December 21, 2005, daughter of Jessica L. Crandell and William M. Shoen. She attended

Freedom Acres School in Ionia where she was loved and nurtured by caring and talented teachers and staff. Kayleigh formed many friendships there and looked forward to school every day. While small in stature, Kayleigh had a commanding presence and could light up an entire room. She loved spending time with her family and friends. She loved being outside and going on adventures with family. She enjoyed being the "kitchen manager" at home. She was joyful even though she faced many medical challenges and surgeries throughout her lifetime. The doctors were frequently surprised by her strength, perseverance and ability to beat the odds. She will be forever loved and dearly missed by all that knew her, sass and all.

Kayleigh's life and light will be forever cherished by her mother, Jessica L. Crandell and step-father Jason Moshier; brothers Evan and Darren of Belding. She also leaves behind her father William M. and Sara Shoen; siblings Tucker and Indira of Belding; her maternal grandmother, Penny Porter and maternal great grandmother, Aletha Thornburg; several aunts and uncles; and many cousins and friends. She was preceded in death by her paternal grandparents, Steve and Mary Shoen and maternal great grandfathers Dale Sinclair and Harold Thornburg.



FREEDOM ACRES

SCI & SEI



2025
2026

AUG

- 18 NO SCHOOL
Staff DPPD #1
- 19 NO SCHOOL *EA Staff Work*
- 20 First Day of School
- 29 NO SCHOOL
Labor Day Weekend

SEP

- 01 NO SCHOOL
Labor Day Weekend

OCT

- 01 Picture Day *Count Day*
- 14 End of 1st Marking Period
SCI
- 15 NO SCHOOL *Staff DPPD #2*
- 24 End of 1st Marking Period
SEI
- 31 Half Day *Morning Only*
EA Staff work PM

NOV

- 14 NO SCHOOL
Staff DPPD #3
- 26 NO SCHOOL
Thanksgiving Break
Nov. 26-28

DEC

- 22 NO SCHOOL
Winter Break
Dec. 22 - Jan. 2

JAN

- 01 Winter Break Cont.
Dec. 22 - Jan. 2
- 08 End of 2nd Marking Period
SCI
- 09 End of 2nd Marking Period
SEI
- 19 NO SCHOOL *Staff DPPD #4*

FEB

- 13 NO SCHOOL
Mid-Winter Break
Feb. 13 - 16

MAR

- 13 NO SCHOOL *Staff DPPD #5*
- 20 End of 3rd Marking Period
SEI
- 23 End of 3rd Marking Period
SCI

APR

- 03 NO SCHOOL
Spring Break
Apr. 3 - 10
- 20 NO SCHOOL *Staff DPPD #6*

MAY

- 22 Half Day *Morning Only*
Staff and Students
- 25 NO SCHOOL
Memorial Day

JUN

- 02 Last Day of School
Half Day *Morning Only*
EA Staff work PM
- 02 End of 4th Marking
Period **SEI**
- 25 End of 4th Marking
Period **SCI**

OFFICE HOURS:

7:30 AM - 3:00 PM

STUDENT HOURS:

8:00 AM - 2:05 PM

TO REPORT ABSENCES:

(616) 527-2921

C A L E N D A R S U B J E C T T O C H A N G E