

APRIL IS

AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH

A. Robert Gregory
Interim Superintendent

Autism affects thousands of families and hundreds of Newark Public Schools students every day. It is our collective goal and promise, as school administrators and concerned individuals to offer the best education, resources and environment for our young people to thrive and grow into adulthood. My introduction to autism came when I became the founding Principal at American History High School. With the help of others, we began the first Autism Program in a magnet school in Newark Public Schools. I am honored this month to expand our programs and partnerships to benefit those with autism.

Carolyn Granato
Assistant Superintendent, Special Education

Join us as we celebrate 2018 National Autism Awareness Month! National Autism Awareness Month represents an excellent opportunity to promote autism awareness and autism acceptance. It is the mission of NPS to ensure acceptance and inclusion in each of our schools resulting in a true appreciation of the unique aspects of all people. We welcome you to attend some of the many events planned during this incredible month and see firsthand the work being accomplished in our schools and community. Together, we can move one step closer to a society where those with ASDs are truly valued for their unique talents and gifts.

NOW OPEN

A. Robert Gregory, Interim Superintendent and Carolyn Granato, Assistant Superintendent, Special Education, recently joined Michele Aduato, ED, The North Ward Center, who officially opened the Center for Autism in Newark in April 2018.



AUTISM ACTIVIES AT NPS

For Autism Awareness Month, Newark Public Schools' Administrators, Teachers and Child Study Team members had an opportunity to listen to Linda Meyers, a national expert in autism. Their afternoon was filled with expertise, knowledge, and antidotes regarding the autism population and sheer admiration for our Newark Public Schools staff. Ms. Meyers emphasized to staff that an effective autism program must have a curriculum that addresses several components, including the "hidden curriculum". Our presenter was well-received and asked to return to discuss challenging behaviors for students with autism.

In support of Autism Awareness Month, various schools across the city will have musical performances, poetry, autism facts, poster contests, and luncheons. However, if you are unable to attend these activities, there are several ways to support Autism Awareness in your community. You can participate in a walk; there are several in the surrounding areas of Newark and East Orange. You can be an advocate for students by supporting inclusion of students with autism in the general education. You can work with your local SEPAC to support students with autism in the community. Every action to support or raise awareness around the difference of those on the spectrum is needed.

The Office of Special Education will have a variety of performances by our students with autism in the lower level at 765 Broad Street from 9:30 am-11:30 am to kick-off Autism Awareness Month,. Parents, community members, board members and dignitaries will share in our recognition of Autism Awareness Month. We ask Central Office staff to take some time to attend their performance and see our students capabilities. We know that your daily work tasks are instrumental in our students progress. Students, staff, families, and community members, **please wear BLUE on Wednesday, April 11 to promote Autism Awareness.**

LIGHT IT UP BLUE - Nearly a quarter century ago, the Autism Society launched a nationwide effort to promote autism awareness, inclusion and self-determination for all, and assure that each person with Autism Spectrum Disorder is provided the opportunity to achieve the highest possible quality of life. Newark Public School District wants to go beyond simply promoting autism awareness to encouraging the school community to become partners in movement toward acceptance and appreciation. Join us in celebration for 2018 of National Autism Awareness Month! National Autism Awareness Month represents an excellent opportunity to promote autism awareness, autism acceptance and to draw attention to the tens of thousands facing an autism diagnosis each year **Light It Up Blue**, annually observed on April 2, is dedicated to raising awareness of autism. Autism Speaks, an autism research and education organization, announced the launch of the inaugural Light It Up Blue campaign in 2010. This initiative is intended to raise international awareness of autism in support of both World Autism Awareness Day and Autism Awareness Month in the United States.

For more information about World Autism Awareness Day and the Light it Up Blue campaign visit: www.autismspeaks.org.

DID YOU KNOW

- Autism now affects 1 in 68 children, and 1 in 42 boys
- Autism prevalence figures are growing
- Autism is one of the fastest-growing developmental disorders in the U.S.
- Autism costs a family \$60,000 a year on average
- Boys are nearly five times more likely than girls to have autism
- There is no medical detection or cure for autism

IMPORTANT DATES

4/6	Autism Administrator Meeting	Harold Wilson
4/11	Autism Kick-off Event	Central Office, 765 Broad Street
4/20	Autism Movie Night	Camden Street School
4/27	Autism Movie Night	First Avenue School
4/28	Sensory Awareness	Quitman Street

Various Autism Awareness activities will occur across the district during the month of April.

Check with locations for times and logistics.