



FALL / WINTER 2022

# FREEDOM ACRES NEWS

## From the Principal's Desk

WRITTEN BY ANGELA MILLER, PRINCIPAL

### Freedom Acres Playground

The playground welcomed students, staff, and community members on Friday, August 26th, and this picture is an aerial view of our new adaptive play empire. Energy abounded the campus for everyone! The positivity that was felt by the unveiling is impressive and has become the heart of the campus. Freedom Acres school is a magical place in many ways from the devoted staff to the most supportive parents. Our students have waited several years to have a safe play space outside to grow their memories with friends, staff, and their families!



THANK YOU to the believers, who have made this DREAM a REALITY! I have many people to thank and I will apologize from the start if I have forgotten someone. Thank you to every person who purchased an item during any fundraising for the playground (from the garage sale, a t-shirt, art, cutting board, and more). So many people jumped in to help with this project! My appreciation goes out to the ISD Board of Education, Jim Lóser (ISD Assistant Superintendent of Special Education), Ethan Ebenstein (ISD Superintendent), Jamie Carnes (ISD Director of Fiscal Services), and Ron Klumpp (ISD Director of Maintenance and Operations) for their support through the building renovation and playground.

Many thanks go to the Durrant, Pline, and Kreiner families for their amazing donations to the playground from their fundraising efforts through their annual golf outing, Scramble For a Cure, in honor of Rhett Syndrome awareness.



THE 2022-23 SCHOOL YEAR HAS STARTED WITH MANY LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STAFF, UNVEILING A PLAYGROUND THAT PROMOTES CONNECTEDNESS FOR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS, BUILDING OR CONSTRUCTING POSITIVE AWARENESS FOR FREEDOM ACRES SCHOOL, AND MUCH MORE!

Stephanie Brown took the lead with two amazing fundraisers, t-shirts from Fabricated Customs, and a bowling night at Wagon Wheel in Portland! Many staff have contributed to the playground! Our school office has been a spot to buy many amazing goods with 100% of the proceeds being placed in our playground account. Becky Sterzick (Nurse) brought in beautiful cutting boards, Julie Wood (Whirlpool HCA) created many one-of-a-kind crafts and pieces of art. Amy Bagnasco retired as our social worker two school years ago and her family and friends donated money to support the playground development.

Thank you to the numerous donors, who have sent a check to support this dream and our learners at Freedom Acres. Cultivating awareness of the work we do and the students we serve is one donation or donor at a time!



If you spot any of these contributors or believers in the community, please thank them for the amazing playground at Freedom Acres and the first adaptive play space in Ionia County!



## Highlights from 2022 – 23 School Year

Dreaming of awareness, being the BEST center-based school, and navigating great public relations are the foundation of every decision I make on behalf of the parents, students, and staff, who have captured my educational heart!

Our school year has been adventurous and has welcomed many new learners! Our SCI (Severely Cognitively Impaired) program has welcomed five new learners to our youngest classroom. Our class lists have felt the ongoing transitional impact, as we try to navigate balanced classrooms and prioritize the attention every learner deserves. Flexibility has been key to navigating the changes and supporting our learners on this journey.

Michigan weather is never predictable and presented some challenges for our Freedom Acres open house. Our open house evening showcased many community partners (United Way, Have Mercy, EightCap, Right Door, and DHHS) and resources (Renew Mobility) working collaboratively to support our families. Fox 17 news aired a great story on November 14th about our open house and partnership with Renew Mobility to complete an adaptive equipment popup for families to donate and receive equipment. Fox News 17 reporter, Tessa DiTirro, captured and highlighted the impact the playground has had on families, staff, and students; while inviting families and community members to learn about the amazing campus and work we do at Freedom Acres during our scheduled open house.



Freedom Acres is blessed with staff, who are always willing to go the extra mile for the kids and families we serve. They welcome the opportunity to learn and collaborate with the end goal always being improved outcomes. This year has been consistent with this shared vision! Our staff has embraced learning around IEP facilitation, MOVE curriculum, poverty simulation, personal curriculum guidance from the Michigan Department of Education, Youth Mental Health First Aid, and health updates or needs for students. Team building is crucial to a strong team and we cheered our staff through a game of simulated kickball that validated players with disabilities and an amazing scavenger hunt on the Goose Chase App. We shared some mindfulness during our yoga experience recently.



Parents are the backbone of our success! Our library validates this statement and it is because of our significant donations of gently used books from our Freedom Acres families that our learners have a space to cultivate their reading, and grow social and employment skills! Our Freedom Acres Parent Council will begin their work on Friday, December 2nd. At this time, we have two wonderful parents meeting with me to explore parent involvement and goals for our school. We welcome more parents to join us! Please email or call the office for more information on joining our team to reach for the stars and attain the goal of being the BEST center-based school.

**IF YOU ARE  
INTERESTED  
JOINING THE  
FREEDOM ACRES  
PARENT  
COUNCIL,  
PLEASE CALL OR  
EMAIL THE  
OFFICE FOR  
MORE  
INFORMATION**

## Highlights from 2022 – 23 School Year: Continued

Blessings and joy definitely come to mind when I think of the many accomplishments and connections that have been made so far this school year! The Daily News and FOX 17 News highlighted the adaptive playground. Our efforts with adopting a social-emotional curriculum, TRAILS, for learners in our SEI (Severely Emotionally Impaired) program was validated in the monthly TRAILS newsletter by recognition of adding an art class focused on skills learned and our implementation of TRAILS tier two group. During our poverty simulation, we welcomed community partners (United Way, Have Mercy, EightCap, Right Door, Michigan Works, and DHHS) to share in the experience and had a heartfelt debriefing around the experience.



Most rewarding part of being the principal of Freedom Acres School is the building and fostering of relationships with dedicated staff, walking beside parents who strive for their children to have the best education, and listening to learners as they reach their learning targets and reach for the stars of success!



## On a More Personal Note



My three sons continue to grow into young men and are navigating our new world one day at a time! Keegan, the youngest, is officially a freshman and has begun his high school journey. Conner graduated last year and continues to work at Greenville Tool and Die, while completing classes at Montcalm Community College. My oldest son, Kyle, decided it was time to be a father and made me a grandma on September 22nd.

Being a grandma is the BEST and it is the most mindful state to sit and hold my grandson, Lukka. My husband, Jeff, continues his life career in tool and die and supporting a wife that never stops dreaming! Being a principal and serving children through respite are truly the best career aspirations. I have a vision of returning to college and continuing to chase my BCBA credential and love supporting learners with behavioral challenges!

Above all, thank you for sharing your child with me and allowing me to serve as your building principal at Freedom Acres!

Educationally yours,  
*Angela Miller*

CHILDREN WITH  
SPECIAL NEEDS  
COME INTO OUR  
LIVES, LEAVING  
FOOTPRINTS ON  
OUR HEARTS,  
AND WE ARE  
NEVER THE  
SAME.

# Elementary School with Mrs. April Cavanaugh

## Your Mind is a Garden, Your Thoughts are the Seeds

WRITTEN BY APRIL AND KATHY M

The Elementary SEI classroom is off to a great start this school year. We are loving our new library and checking out books each week. We take time everyday to read together as a class. We are enjoying the book SuperCat vs. the Fry Thief at this time. We love to guess what will happen next.

Our Freedom Acres garden was a success! We loved sharing our veggies and herbs with staff and students. We recently pulled the plants to prepare the soil for next year. The tomatoes and dill seemed to be the favorites among staff and students.

On Wednesdays we have our social/emotional lessons through Trails. Every Thursday we have art with our peers and Ms. Emily H. Emily bases our art projects on our social emotional lessons. So far in art class we have completed Emotional Monsters, Goal Vision Board, Personal Mantra, and Circle of Control.

We recently celebrated Halloween and had a wonderful fall festival. The students had a parade to show off their costumes and made some fun Halloween crafts.

The new playground is a hit! The zipline is one of our classroom favorites. We are looking forward to the 2nd marking period and our upcoming Thanksgiving and Christmas celebrations.



# Middle School with Mrs. Michelle Allen

## Life Skills

WRITTEN BY MICHELLE, EMILY H, AND KACI



Our learners have the opportunity to spend time in the community working on life skills. We typically go grocery shopping for our classroom supplies and cooking ingredients, as well as taking our classroom laundry to the laundromat. These activities help strengthen their social skills, money management, and team building. Pictured on the left, Markus and Gabe at the laundromat drying our classroom weighted blankets.

During the months of September and October, students took turns cooking by reading a recipe, measuring ingredients, and making a tasty dish to share with classmates and staff.

In September, we received a kind donation of apples from Heffron Farms. Our learners each got the chance to use an apple peeler and help make a large batch of apple crisp that our class got to enjoy as a fun treat! Thank you Heffron Farms! Pictured on the right are Ms. Emily H, Ms. Kaci, and Gabe peeling and coring apples!

Everyone enjoys going to Adaptive PE each week and participating in the fun and engaging activities that Ms. Emily A plans for us. We also like going to another classroom to participate in health class on Tuesdays and art on Thursdays, where we join the students and staff from the other classrooms in our wing. We look forward to the upcoming holidays, with cooking and art in mind.



# High School with Mrs. Jessica Rodgers Inspiration, Motivation, and Drive!

WRITTEN BY JESSICA, GINA AND MEGAN H

There have been a lot of exciting changes in the Upper Severely Emotionally Impaired program this school year. We welcomed two new Health Care Aides, Mrs. Gina and Ms. Megan, who have adapted to classroom and supported learners with amazing grace, fidelity, and empathy. Mrs. Gina and Ms. Megan have and continue to build fabulous relationships with each learner through weekly Food Buffet, daily games of UNO, trips to our gorgeous new playground, and academic support.

Our classroom continues to implement our weekly food buffet fundraiser, planning a meal, shopping for the ingredients, cooking each item, and then interacting with different staff throughout the building as they arrive in the classroom to pay for their meal. This exciting weekly event allows our students to work on life skills such as budgeting, making lists, grocery shopping, prepping food, handling money, and appropriately interacting with staff members throughout our school building.

We have had the excitement of implementing a new social emotional curriculum, TRAILS, during this school year. We have weekly lessons focusing on different social emotional topics. A core group of students have also been participating in a TRAILS Tier 2 group, delving deeper into different topics with Ms. Angie, building principal, and Ms. Elizabeth, building behavior coach.



Ms. Elizabeth is a name you may have heard your student verbalize in recent weeks, we welcome her in supporting our learners with her background in behavior coaching and many years of servicing adolescents. Ms. Elizabeth can often be seen in classrooms, on sensory breaks with learners, brainstorming with staff members, or implementing TRAILS curriculum with small groups.

One of our greatest coping skills is laughter, and there is no shortage of laughter in our program. Whether we are enjoying time in our adaptive physical education class with Miss Emily A, playing an intense game of UNO, or just simply enjoying our time together as a classroom family on breaks. We are walking our academic and social emotional journeys with grace, empathy, and drive to do better.

Thank you for sharing your learner with us this school year. We are motivated by the amazing progress we have already witnessed in the few short months we have been together this school year, and know that with the collaboration and support of everyone, we will continue to see success.

Enjoy this winter season with those who mean the most to you.

## Adaptive PE with Miss Emily Armentrout

### Welcome to Adapted Physical Education!

WRITTEN BY EMILY A

This year has been off to a great start between our new playground and the return of events within our building. For all new families, my name is Emily Armentrout. I am currently planning my wedding (June 2023) and enjoying all the fall things! This is my second year at Freedom Acres and I am beyond grateful to be back with our amazing staff and students.

This year we can look forward to growing as learners. Students are still receiving APE twice a week to improve skill level and maintain routines. Students are working on teamwork and sportsmanship while facing challenging activities within class. We have worked hard on our throwing and striking skills thus far through games like tennis, bocce, and bowling. We can look forward to basketball, baseball, and kickball in the spring!

All students are continuing to make great strides in their abilities within class. There have been so many smiles, joy, and excitement throughout the year so far. I am excited to continue to support this team and all of their adventures the rest of the school year.



# Pre-School SCI with Mrs. Stephanie Brown

## Steph's Crew

**WRITTEN BY STEPH, DENISE, KATHY L, AND TYLER**

Welcome to preschool!! This year we have quickly expanded our classroom family. While we are sad to have to say goodbye to some of our older students as they move on to the elementary classroom, it also means we get to meet new friends!! This year we welcome Fisher, Sawyer, Jocelyn, Lillian, and Jameson to our classroom. We welcome back Kinsley, Kent, and Jonny.

Since we have so many new families that have joined our Freedom Acres family, I felt that it was a good time to share some information about myself. My name is Stephanie Brown, I am a CMU graduate (FIRE UP!!), and I am starting my 19th year of teaching for Freedom Acres School. Not very many people get to say that they love their job, but I am one of the lucky few that indeed do! I am so blessed to be a part of such a talented and devoted school family. In my classroom I have 3 amazing health care aides, Denise, Kathy, and Tyler. These three ladies are hard working and loved greatly by our students. They help to keep the classroom running smoothly. I am lucky to have them on my team!

In PSCI (Preschool for students with Severe Cognitive Impairments), we focus on learning through play and everyday activities. We take every opportunity to increase communication and movement. Our goal is to help our students to be as independent as possible and to achieve functional skills that will help in day to day life.

Outside of the regular daily schedule, our students enjoy the library, adapted physical education class, speech and occupational therapy group, our fabulous new inclusive playground, and Reading Buddies (older students read to us daily via Zoom). We try to incorporate FUN into everything we do!



# Elementary School SCI with Mrs. Leigh Chick

## Working Hard and Playing Hard

**WRITTEN BY LEIGH, GYWEN, ASHLEY, AND ALEXA**

It has been a great start to the 2022-2023 school year in our classroom! The students and staff have been working hard and playing hard too. New this year, we have been visiting the school library each week where we get to look at books, listen to stories and pick out a book to enjoy in the classroom for the week. This has quickly become a favorite activity for both the staff and students. Thank you to everyone who have donated and worked hard to make this a possibility for our school and students.

Our students have also been doing an amazing job implementing our MOVE (Mobility Opportunities Via Education/Experience) curriculum. Students have been building strength, trying new equipment and working on independence daily within the classroom. All of the students are making amazing progress!!! We have also been working very hard on communication within the classroom. Trying new eye gaze games, new communication apps and enjoying our WOW (Word Of the Week) activities. We are thrilled to see the students making such great progress. Thank you for sharing your kids with us each day.



# Middle and High School with Mrs. Laura Fish

## The Fishbowl

WRITTEN BY LAURA, TONY, CYNDI AND DANIELLE

2022-23 started off with much excitement! We gained four new learners from Leigh's classroom, since July 1, and moved three up to Ms. Lynne's class. The minnows enjoy swimming to gym class with Miss Emily. Several new minnows work on various transition tasks such as recycling, shredding paper, vacuuming, lunch cart and mailing items in the office.

The Halloween Parade and Fall Fest were a lot of fun! Our minnows dressed in great Halloween themed outfits; It was so nice to have a few of our parents attend. The magic of Christmas was felt by all learners during visits with Santa and our amazing holiday celebration

Gym class has been quite an experience! Speech and Language has been a great opportunity for our little minnows to communicate with their peers, family and staff! We are learning how to use the joy player in an effort to play music or listen to stories. Physical Therapy goals are worked on daily with the assistance of our amazing Health Care Aides. We have enjoyed the opportunity to visit the new playground as the weather has been amazing!



# Transition SCI with Mrs. Lynne Geiger-Wester

## In the Kitchen with Kim!

WRITTEN BY LYNNE, TRINA, GLENDA & KIM

Our class has been in the kitchen with Kim! Our Freedom Acres family has come to love Wednesday because we bake fresh homemade cookies! Some favorites are butterscotch chip, chocolate chip, and chocolate-chocolate chip. Many of our friends even pre-order to make sure they can get enough of our yummy cookies before they sell out in our snack shop. And they do sell out! We all do our part to make the cookies. Some of us pour the ingredients in the bowl. Some of us use the switch to run the hand mixer: either with our hand or our head. Some of us hold the hand mixer with our hand and help cream the goodness together that way. We practice our counting skills when adding eggs and scooping cookie dough onto the cookie sheets. We practice food safety by making sure our hands are clean before making cookies and while bagging them up. We sell two scrumptious cookies for just 50 cents! We all love COOKIE DAY and being IN THE KITCHEN WITH KIM!!!

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# HALLOWEEN





# VISIT FROM SANTA



# Elementary ASD with Miss Khloe Kremer

## Always Something Fun in ECSE ASD

WRITTEN BY KHLOE, MEGAN R, BECKY H, LAUREN, MEG, KENDRA, AND DEANNA

The ASD ECSE classroom has been making great gains in these first couple months of the school year. We are focusing heavily on play skills, this includes sitting at circle time for large group where we do attendance and say hi to all of our friends for the day. We also try to make a lot of opportunities for the students to interact with one another in their day to day schedule. Ways we do this are by using their highly preferred toys that allow for peer interaction, making a ball pit, playing catch, or simply having a jam session with instruments. All of the students are making progress as we have been incorporating their goals into teaching them in a natural environment style. We are using their preferred toys to build imitation, requesting opportunities and joint attention skills, along with building peer relationships to focus on sharing, and turn-taking all while meeting their IEP goals!



# Middle School ASD with Miss Katelyn Burns

## Starting the Year STRONG!

WRITTEN BY KATELYN, ALAINA, KATIE, JORDAN

Welcome to Middle School ASD! We are so excited for this year! Since I am new to the Middle School ASD family, I feel that I should share a little bit about myself. I am originally from the eastside of the state and graduated from Saginaw Valley State University; Go Cardinals! I am going into my 6th year of teaching. I love my job and I am so excited to be a part of the Freedom Acres School family.

In my classroom I have three AMAZING health care aides: Alaina, Katie, and Jordan. These three are hard working and give their best everyday and adore each and every student. They are the glue that holds us all together. I am so lucky to have such a FABULOUS team!



As the school year has started the students have been working hard at participating in group activities. We have started a morning meeting/calendar time and a social skills or life skills activity in the afternoon. Our students have been participating in physical education and library activities as well.

I look forward to seeing the students' skills progress as the year goes on. Here's to a successful school year!



# High School ASD with Ms. Maria Olvera

## Changing with the Seasons

WRITTEN BY MARIA, ERIN, TAYLOR, AND BILL

My name is Maria Olvera and I am new to Freedom Acres this year in the ASD High School classroom. I have taught for 13 years and took a short break in an ABA clinic as a BCBA. Freedom Acres has given me such a wonderful welcome as I transition back into the classroom for my 14th year.

The ASD High School class has had a fantastic start to the school year. We are working hard on social interactions and group activities. Each day we answer a question of the day about our favorite activities. Based on a recent daily survey our favorite leisure activity is bowling (learners) and a movie (staff). Sounds like the makings for a fun afternoon!

We have all enjoyed having access to the new playground. The swings are our favorite place to spend time on sunny afternoons. With the weather cooling, we plan to start spending more time on games and indoor activities while working on expanding our leisure and social skills. Although we will miss the nice weather and playground time, we are ready for the holiday season.



## Health News from Nurse Becky

### Avoid the Flu

- Eat a well-balanced diet
- Get plenty of sleep
- Exercise regularly
- Consider getting an Influenza vaccine
- Stay home when you are ill
- Wash hands or use hand sanitizer before you eat or drink touch your face



### How the Flu is Spread

People with flu can spread it to others up to about 6 feet away. Most experts think that flu viruses are spread mainly by droplets made when people with influenza cough, sneeze or talk. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. Less often, a person might also get flu by touching a surface or object that has flu virus on it and then touching their own mouth or nose.

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

**Thank you for helping to keep Freedom Acres healthy.**

### Common Flu Symptoms

Influenza usually starts suddenly and may include the following symptoms:

- ⊠ Fever (usually high)
- ⊠ Headache
- ⊠ Tiredness (can be extreme)
- ⊠ Cough
- ⊠ Sore throat
- ⊠ Runny or stuffy nose
- ⊠ Body aches
- ⊠ Diarrhea and vomiting (more common among children than adults)

If you experience any of these symptoms stay home until you are feeling better and for at least 24 hours after you have had a fever, vomiting or diarrhea in order to help stop the spread of the flu.

**For more information on Influenza go to [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).**



# Speech Therapy with Sue Wizorek

## Find Your Way to Communicate

### WRITTEN BY SUE

It has been a great start to the year! I am amazed by the growth of our learner's ability to express themselves. Freedom Acres is a place of possibilities and we are working towards those possibilities every day.



We had a great time at the Fall Fest this year. Our learners had a spooky time creating magic spider webs! Autumn Wissner joined me as a GVSU intern and she helped our learners use their expressive abilities to watch the spider webs appear! She is seeing first hand, the benefits of supportive communication by using iPads, dedicated devices, PECS, eye gaze, and their own voice! We look at each learner's abilities and focus in on what works best for them.

We are in the rooms to help with communication every day and also have weekly Occupational Therapy-Speech groups to coordinate movement activities and communication. This helps all the team members focus on the total person. It is my favorite activity of my week and I suspect it is many of our learner's as well.

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



# Visual Therapy with Amy Blunt

## Explore Your Needs with Visual Therapy

### WRITTEN BY AMY

Welcome to the visual world at Freedom Acres. We have had a semester of learning and fun! We have been reading tactile books (Pete the Cat, is one of the favorites), practicing tracking with our eyes to both light and sound, learning to use a Joy Player (a personal electronic device that allows access to music and books) to make music choices and a dance a bit. It makes my day when their eyes brighten up and I get a smile.

My New Year's goal that I am working on is to create a connection with myself and parents/families by using an app that is simple, easily accessible and consistent communication. We can share updates, pictures, messages and even videos quickly and swiftly. Please watch for your online invite soon. I look forward to creating this virtual community with you.



Enjoy this Holiday Season!

Be Safe! Be Happy! Be Healthy!

Please reach out if you have any questions and/or concerns regarding your child. My email address is: [ablunt@ioniaisd.org](mailto:ablunt@ioniaisd.org) or you can leave me a message at (616)527-4900.



# Occupational Therapy with Jacob Heppe

## Motivation Through Play

WRITTEN BY JACOB, OTR/L AND KARA, COTA

It's hard to believe that fall has come and gone already, brrrr! The school year has started off well here at Freedom Acres with lots of new faces. The occupational therapy department has been hard at work to help our students increase their fine motor and daily living skills through a variety of crafts, games, and activities. The playground has been an exciting place to take our students for sessions as it allows us to get outside, have sensory experiences with the smells and sounds of nature and even incorporate therapy through play on the playground equipment. The sensory areas have been expanding at Freedom Acres with the addition of swings on the playground and the addition of sensory pathways on the floors throughout the building.

If you happened to stop by our table at the Fall Festival you may have gotten to play mad scientist and melted some pumpkins! It was a great experience for all of Freedom Acres to get back to some of the experiences that this school is used to. Seeing all the different classrooms and departments come together and put on a special day for our students is always a sight to see. Can't wait to see what the rest of the year has in store for us!



# Physical Therapy with Brenda Brown

## Fall Stands for Fun

WRITTEN BY BRENDA PT AND KACEY PTA

We are so very excited to have the playground open and accessible for our students. It gives students another opportunity to practice their movement skills here at school in a FUN and functional way. The surface on the playground allows our students that need physical support to be upright and moving in their devices along with the students that are more mobile.

We continue to implement the MOVE curriculum throughout the SCI classrooms and also working on maximizing the physical abilities of each and every student. We utilize equipment to provide good upright positioning. Our goal is to work with families on goals and equipment needs to make it easier for you and your student at home.

Currently, Physical Therapy takes place in the building on Mondays and we stop in throughout the week. The ISD has hired a new PT, Sarah Larson, and she will be servicing Portland, Lakewood and some Ionia schools. The hope is that this will allow Brenda and Kacey to be more present at Freedom Acres starting in January.

We also continue to work with Renew Mobility, formerly Alternatives in Motion, to assist in getting equipment. They were present at the Open House! It is always exciting to see families so blessed and happy to get something that provides support and more independence for their child. It allows them to participate in their community and environment.

*Please reach out if you have any questions or needs for equipment, braces and or ideas for your student related to PT. My email is [bbrown@ioniaisd.org](mailto:bbrown@ioniaisd.org).*



Hope you all have a wonderful Holiday filled with all the things you love!



# HELP WANTED

If you or someone you know is interested in a job or would love to sub at Freedom Acres, please call our office (616) 527-2921 or apply at [www.ioniaisd.org](http://www.ioniaisd.org)

## FREEDOM ACRES SCHOOL SEI HEALTH CARE AIDE

### OVERVIEW OF POSITION:

This position involves working directly with children and school staff to provide prompting, academic modification, and behavior support as needed. Assists classroom teacher with instructional activities and skill acquisition programming.

### QUALIFICATIONS:

High school graduate or equivalent is required. Associate degree or RBT credential preferred. Experience working with children with ASD preferred but not required. Must be able to perform physical requirements. Must have the ability to interact with professionals and paraprofessionals in providing a positive educational experience for students. Strong interpersonal skills, eagerness to learn new skills, and an openness to feedback and input are preferred.

### STARTING DATE:

ASAP

### SALARY:

As high as \$19.02

### WORK SCHEDULE:

Hours per day may vary;  
184 days / school calendar

### SUPERVISOR:

Principal of Freedom Acres

## FREEDOM ACRES SCHOOL SCI HEALTH CARE AIDE

### OVERVIEW OF POSITION:

This position involves working directly with children and school staff to provide prompting, academic modification, and behavior support as needed. Assists classroom teacher with instructional activities and skill acquisition programming.

### QUALIFICATIONS:

High school graduate or equivalent is required. Associate degree or RBT credential preferred. Experience working with children with ASD preferred but not required. Must be able to perform physical requirements. Must have the ability to interact with professionals and paraprofessionals in providing a positive educational experience for students. Strong interpersonal skills, eagerness to learn new skills, and an openness to feedback and input are preferred.

### STARTING DATE:

ASAP

### SALARY:

As high as \$18.77

### WORK SCHEDULE:

Hours per day may vary;  
184 days required, up to 200 days  
preferred / school calendar

### SUPERVISOR:

Principal of Freedom Acres

## FREEDOM ACRES SCHOOL SCI TEACHER

### OVERVIEW OF POSITION:

To provide high quality, specially designed instruction to students with disabilities

### QUALIFICATIONS:

- Valid Michigan teaching certificate, as a teacher of the Cognitively Impaired (SA) or with the approval by the Michigan Department of Education in an area of special education;
- Ability to program for an motivate students to develop to their fullest potential in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains;
- Team player in a trauma-informed culture with a willingness to be innovative and student-centered;
- Interpersonal skills which promote positive personal relationships with students, parents, staff and community.

### STARTING DATE:

January 4, 2023

### SALARY:

Per IIEA Master Agreement

### WORK SCHEDULE:

Hours per day may vary;  
184 days required, up to 200 days  
preferred / school calendar

### SUPERVISOR:

Principal of Freedom Acres

## Substitute Employment Information

### 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](http://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.*

# THANKFULLY BLESSED BY DONATIONS AND SUPPORT

Freedom Acres wants to thank everyone who has made donations to benefit our students and their growth.

thank you

## Blessing Our Families with Holiday Cheer



Delivered 10 turkey dinners

Two families shopped with a Veteran

An entire family received brand new beds

A family car now has four new tires

Four families were adopted for Christmas

Diaper donations were given to EightCap

Pocket Change supports our families with clothes and coats



## Contributors to Freedom Acres Christmas Party



VFW Post 4461 of Lake Odessa

VFW Auxiliary Post 4461 of Lake Odessa

VFW Auxiliary Post 4090 of Portland

American Legion Post 175 of Saranac

Ionia County F.O.P.

Fraternal Order of Eagles Auxiliary 3782

VFW Auxiliary Post 4406 of Belding

VFW Post 12082 of Ionia

Knights of Columbus Council #944 -

Ionia, Father Fierle

Ms. Mary Veldes

Mrs. Colleen Goodman



## Contributors to Freedom Acres School

Lake Odessa Knights of Columbus

Pewamo Knights of Columbus

Ionia Knights of Columbus

Portland Knights of Columbus

Jim VanBeek

Amy Bagnasco - for supporting our families during the holiday season and volunteering her time to support our learners

## and Emme's Avengers

- Kurt and Mara Pline

- Chris and April Kreiner

- Ben and Brandy Durrant

## Freedom Acres Community Partners and Support



Renew Mobility  
(616) 493-2620  
[www.aimgr.org](http://www.aimgr.org)



Michigan Department of Health and Human Services - Ionia County  
(616) 527-5200  
[www.michigan.gov/mdhhs](http://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs)



EightCAP  
(616) 754-9315  
[www.8cap.org](http://www.8cap.org)



United Way  
(800) 887-1107 or 211  
[www.liveunitedm-i.org](http://www.liveunitedm-i.org)



The Right Door for Hope, Recover and Wellness  
(888) 527-1790  
[www.rightdoor.org](http://www.rightdoor.org)



The future looks bright as Herbruck's paves the way for our learners on our first work based learning journey.



Have Mercy  
(616) 225-8055  
[www.havemercymi.org](http://www.havemercymi.org)

# FREEDOM ACRES SCHOOL CALENDAR

## SCI AND SEI PROGRAMS

### AUGUST

- 15 **NO SCHOOL** Staff Professional Development #1
- 17 **First day of school for learners**

### FEBRUARY

- 13 **NO SCHOOL** Staff DPPD #5
- 17 **NO SCHOOL** Mid-Winter Break  
(February 17-20)

### SEPTEMBER

- 2 **NO SCHOOL** Labor Day Weekend
- 5 **NO SCHOOL** Labor Day

### MARCH

- 17 **NO SCHOOL** Staff DPPD #6
- 17 End of 3rd Marking Period **SEI**
- 23 End of 3rd Marking Period **SCI**
- 31 **NO SCHOOL** Friday of Spring Break

### OCTOBER

- 11 End of 1st Marking Period **SCI**
- 21 End of 1st Marking Period **SEI**
- 31 **Happy Halloween!** Halloween Parade

### APRIL

- 3 **NO SCHOOL** Spring Break  
(April 3-7)
- 10 Classes Resume

### NOVEMBER

- 21 **NO SCHOOL** Staff DPPD #2
- 22 **NO SCHOOL** Staff DPPD #3
- 23 **NO SCHOOL** Thanksgiving Break  
(November 23-25)

### MAY

- 17 Freedom Acres Annual 5K *Rain Date May 18*
- 26 **NO SCHOOL** Memorial Day Weekend
- 29 **NO SCHOOL** Memorial Day
- 31 Field Day

### DECEMBER

- 14 **Freedom Acres Christmas Party**
- 19 **NO SCHOOL** Winter Break  
(December 19 - January 3)

### JUNE

- 1 **Last Day of School**
- 1 End of 4th Marking Period **SEI**
- 12 **SCI** Summer Programming  
(June 12 - 15, 19 - 22)
- 22 End of 4th Marking Period **SCI**

### JANUARY

- 3 **NO SCHOOL** Winter Break
- 4 Classes Resume
- 10 End of 2nd Marking Period **SCI**
- 13 End of 2nd Marking Period **SEI**
- 16 **NO SCHOOL** Martin Luther King Day  
Staff DPPD #4

### OFFICE HOURS:

7:30AM - 3:00PM

### STUDENT HOURS:

8:00AM - 2:05PM

### TO REPORT ABSENCES:

(616) 527-2921