



ED Corner

Updates from Daryl Lucke, Executive Director

Happy New Year, Team!

As we step into 2025, we're embracing our focus on agency quality improvement. The new year is always a time to reflect and find ways to improve. This year, we're committed to building on our successes and finding innovative ways to enhance our strategies.

To kick things off, we're excited to introduce our **New Year Challenge!** This initiative is designed to spark creativity and collaboration by inviting you to share your best ideas for enhancing our programs or improving our policies. Whether it's a small tweak or a big transformation, every idea matters and has the potential to make a meaningful impact.

You'll find more details about the challenge in this month's newsletter, and we'll be following up with an additional informational email at the center. Keep an eye out, and start thinking about how you can help shape the future of our agency. There is a reward for the winner(s) of the challenge,.

Thank you for your continued dedication and enthusiasm. Let's make 2025 a year to remember!

Warm regards,

Daryl

Executive Director



January Birthdays

Please wish Happy Birthday to:

Jen Laux, Hoover 1/13

Lisa Cushman, Hoover 1/5

Welcome New Staff

Welcome back to Adella Antkowiak who previously worked at Lincoln and will now join the staff at Hoover KC and Washington.

All Staff Training

Building skills and fostering community are so important, especially when it comes to creating a positive environment for the kids. We will hold an all staff required training day **January 17th from 9 am to 1 pm at Howe MLEDP**. This will be our required training day for all MLEDP staff. Light refreshments will be provided and Toms Coffee Truck will be available at 8:15 am to get your day started!

MLEDP TRAINING EVENT

Join us on January 17th, 2025 from 9-1 for a day of skill development and community building.

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

9:00-10:30 Structuring for Success: Behavior Management and Visual Supports

Lisa Plastino, M.Ed. She has been an Educational Consultant for the Watson Institute for over 20 years. In addition, Lisa has been an Advanced TEACCH Consultant and assisted in the annual TEACCH training at the Watson Institute for many years. TEACCH is a nationally recognized program for persons with Autism which involves structuring the environment, presenting tasks and work in a very visually organized way, utilizing visual supports and individualized schedules.

10:30am-10:45am: 15 Minute Break

10:45am-12:45pm: Team Theme Planning

The Carnegie Children's Museum will be presenting a hands on training focused on program theme development. We will practice brainstorming as a team and creating artifacts/materials that can be used for play, instruction or demonstration of a long term theme. Please come to the training prepared with an upcoming theme that you will be using at your center. You will leave the training with an actionable program plan specific to your site!

9 AM - 1 PM HOWE MLEDP

**JANUARY
17**

HOWE ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL
400 BROADMOOR AVE.
PITTSBURGH, PA 15228



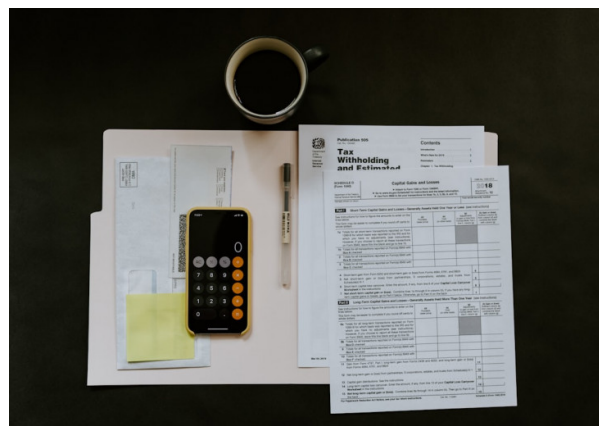
Travelin Tom's coffee truck will be available for staff starting at 8:15 Please enjoy a well deserved cup of joe on us!



Park in the basketball court off of Anawanda.
Entrance # D14



January Pay Dates



W-2's

1/15 pay is for hours worked 12/9-12/29

1/31 pay is for hours worked 12/30-1/19

W-2's for 2024 will be mailed to your home address by the end of January.

2025 New Year Challenge!

As we welcome the New Year, we're excited to launch a special challenge to ignite creativity and collaboration across the agency!

The Challenge:

We're inviting all staff to participate and propose an idea that could **benefit the agency** by enhancing our **programming** or **policies**. This is your opportunity to share innovative solutions, big or small, that can make a meaningful impact on how we work or what we deliver. If your idea requires financial support for implementation, the support will be limited to \$1,000.

What We're Looking For:

Ideas that improve efficiency, creativity, center collaboration and/or teamwork within the agency. Suggestions for improvements. Creative solutions to challenges we face. Fresh approaches to better serve our children and families.

The Prize:

The winning idea will be recognized with a Challenge Award of \$250.00

How to Participate:

Submit your idea via the Challenge Form located in the staff section of the website - <https://www.mledp.org/staff-only/program-forms/2025-new-year-innovation-challenge-response-form> You may work alone or in teams. If you choose to work in teams, the award will be divided among the team members. The Administrative team will review the entries based on creativity, feasibility, and potential impact. **The deadline for submission is 1/31/2025.**

Let's start 2025 with a burst of innovation and teamwork. Your ideas can inspire improvement – so think big and let your creativity shine!

Questions? Feel free to reach out to Daryl Lucke, Executive Director.

We can't wait to see what you come up with!



Behavior Corner

Make It Right Consequences: Learning to Repair and Restore- A New Start

Sometimes nothing seems to work. Consequences only inflame a bad situation, incentives lead nowhere, and reasoning is completely futile. It can be frustrating when methods that typically work for others are not for the stubborn child. Time to focus on creating a sphere of safety and kindness. This is likely happening at your center already, but this child may not recognize it and very much needs to know (s)he is secure and loved. Connection is important... to help the child calm down, to be understanding, to find solutions. Continue the logical consequences discussed last month to teach empathy, not just a quick fix.

Example: You may see the child say, "I'm sorry" for the wrong, but see no genuine remorse and reconciliation. The child may think that they can say or do whatever they need to get out of trouble. Quick, forced "reconciliation" may even foster a pattern of, "I can hurt someone; just do a little something nice, and it's all good." Instead take a moment ask guiding questions to help the hurt child articulate the impact of the grievance and their feelings. This can be empowering and even healing for both. As you suspend any judgments and help the aggressive child really listen to the one they hurt and make right what they did wrong, this can grow compassion and confidence that will decrease the likelihood of continued aggression.

When you take time building personal connections you can provide the security and love children need to have fun and navigate difficulties while respecting others.



Center Spotlight

Hoover

What a fantastic success story from **Hoover School Age**! Their gratitude week was a tremendous hit, filled with activities that really sparked the students' curiosity and creativity and built on the idea that there is always something to be grateful for. The addition of a maker space was a highlight—nothing beats hands-on learning when it comes to engaging young minds in science and engineering. The focus was on designing something that sparks gratitude within you using various art and building materials. Collaboration, analytical thinking, and critical thinking skills are such vital areas for development, and it's wonderful to see the students thriving in these aspects. It's clear that the staff's hard work in planning and executing these activities paid off, and the students' enthusiasm is a testament to that effort. Huge congratulations to the Hoover School Age team for fostering such an engaging and positive environment, and for helping the kids build an attitude of gratitude!