

## Adjusting To School and Covid-19

By: Jasmine Zimmermann

### How COVID 19 has affected Star Academy ★

Lakeland Star School/Academy was affected by COVID 19. Students are now required to wear a mask when inside the building. The desks are socially-distanced, 6 ft apart from each other. Students have to sanitize their desks and the top of their seats before departing their classrooms. You must sanitize your hands before accessing the lunch line, and you cannot pick your own tray. Tray's, along with plastic utensils will be handed out to every student, as they enter the lunch line. Most of the food in the lunch line is bagged, or packaged in plastic containers. However, the main meals in the hot lunch line are handed out by the lunch ladies. (Of course, they have gloves on, don't panic.) Due to COVID 19, students cannot use their lunch pins, and a lunch lady must enter it. This year, some of our students are participating in online education, which can be a hassle. Teachers get in a video call with the students, and sometimes technical difficulties occur. Occasionally students cannot hear the teachers, and sometimes, teachers can't hear the students. (This being one of the examples.) Another challenge to overcome is when students have close relationships (couples, friends, best friends). Since you now have to be socially distanced, this is extremely rough on some students.

### How STAR adapted to these changes ★

As we all know, wearing a mask can be uncomfortable, especially for students with sensory needs. Due to the pleasant weather, if a student needs a break from the mask, they can go outside. Students can then breathe the fresh oxygen and take a break from their mask. If you need a break, and the outdoors is not available, as long as you're 6 ft apart, you can momentarily remove your mask. Talking can be rough, especially with your mask on. So, students and teachers considered using non verbals, or sign language. This benefits students and teachers because wearing a mask and speaking simultaneously can be difficult, and can make you feel out of breath. We're beginning to teach students simple nonverbals, like "Stop", "Bathroom", etc. We also recently had plexiglass barriers installed on our desks. This is another prevention against COVID 19.

## In This Issue:

- ★ Adjusting to School and Covid-19
- ★ [Work Experience at Trigs](#)
- ★ Out of the Box Thinking:  
Girls Group
- ★ [Remote Learning](#)

Our monthly newsletter is student drive, featuring articles written by the Students of STAR!



## Work Experience: Trig's

By: Ethan Driver

My name is Ethan Driver. This is my third year at STAR Academy . This year is special for me. Through the school, I have been able to participate in a work study program . Trig's has agreed to let me work for them and I enjoy it. My responsibilities include organizing milk and other dairy products, straightening shelves, stocking bags in the bagging area, and retrieving carts. If I keep doing a good job Trig's will offer me a permanent part time job. I can't wait to be a part of a great Trig's team and make money. I am grateful to the people at both STAR and Trig's for giving me such a great opportunity.

# Out of the Box Thinking: Girls Group

By: Claire Malchow



I always wanted to have guest speakers come to Girls Group in the past, but ultimately I was sidetracked by logistics – the speakers I had in mind were out of town, so how would I get them here?

Then, COVID-19 happened, and we were all forced to think out-of-the-box even more. And with COVID-19 came the emerging popularity, and necessity, of live streamed online classes. There was my solution for bringing in guest speakers from not only around Wisconsin, but across America, and even internationally. I had never even thought of using Google Meets to bring in guest speakers, but now here was a solution.

Our current lineup of guest speakers includes women from all over the world who come from a variety of different backgrounds and who live in very different places. They include a Bangladeshi-American writer born and raised in New York City, an American expat living and working in London, England, and a Wisconsinite from Mukwonago, WI who is currently living with a chronic illness.



Before school started, Kris Webster and I knew that the year would bring a host of challenges, difficulties, and struggles. The past 6 months had already been challenging and difficult, so we decided going into a new and strange school year, our mission was to make things as fun as we could. It would be a fun and engaging learning opportunity for the girls in Girls Group to have the opportunity to see what life is like for other women around the world.

## Remote Learners

Some of our STAR students have chosen the remote option for learning this year. Occupational Therapy is seeing these students through tele-therapy to continue work on their IEP goals. Self-care, cursive writing, Instrumental Activities of Daily Living and even some work skills are worked on in the home environment. Great parents, working together with the school makes for outstanding outcomes. Check out these photos from the Semmerlings!

