

SCHOOL CHOICE WISCONSIN FIGHTS FOR WISCONSIN'S STUDENTS AND FAMILIES



Funding for students participating in Wisconsin's parental choice programs will **INCREASE** by \$207 this year.



An expanded income limit for the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program will give **MORE** families access to the school of their choice.



Students with special education needs will have **EXPANDED** access to the Special Needs Scholarship Program.



SPECIAL NEEDS PROGRAM MEANS ALL KIDS CAN EXCEL

**INCREASED OPTIONS ARE EMPOWERING
MORE STUDENTS THROUGHOUT THE STATE.**

It's a quiet morning in the fourth grade classroom. Ceal Hunter, a learning specialist at Tamarack Waldorf Elementary School on Milwaukee's east side, extends a basket full of teas to her student Brandon Marshall. The fourth-grader opts for cinnamon.

Ceal fills a small teapot with hot water and lets the tea steep. As it cools, Brandon sips it, then sets it aside to tend to his daily educational tasks.

This is Brandon's first academic year participating in the Special Needs Scholarship Program at Tamarack. This is the second year the program has been in existence.



Brandon Marshall's day in his special needs classroom includes physical/spatial exercises as well as traditional subject matter.

Each day, during a few hours of one-on-one instruction, Brandon is coached through a series of precise activities that help him with a variety of physical challenges.

He begins by carefully walking the balance beam, which hovers about six inches off the smooth wooden floor.

"This helps him improve his overall balance," says Ceal. Then she guides him in tracing large number eights in the air.

"Slow and steady wins the race" might be this Tamarack classroom's mantra.

"This is good for hand dominance and short-term memory," she says.

Repeated and graduating activities like these help Brandon and other special needs students at Tamarack build the foundation they need to learn. Tamarack's approach to education is to integrate the whole body into learning.

"Slow and steady wins the race" might be this Tamarack classroom's mantra. Brandon clearly benefits from his teacher's measured approach.

"Brandon is always trying," says Ceal. She says he likes learning and is especially eager to begin writing in cursive.

Later, Brandon sits at a long wooden table, paper tiles scattered in front of him, each showing a letter of the alphabet. At Ceal's prompting, Brandon spells "man," then transforms the word to "mane." His lesson is all about the silent "e."

Reading has presented some obstacles for Brandon, while math is a subject in which he shines, often taking on the role of a group leader.

When asked what he wants to do when he's older, he talks about being a point guard on a professional basketball team, or owning his own business, or growing food for the homeless. Brandon knows some things about gardening because he helps his family with their vegetable garden.

Brandon has talents as well as dreams. When asked, he says he thinks more time for reading, writing, tutoring and math at Tamarack has been a good thing for him.

"Ms. Marks is a good teacher," he says. "I'm learning how to read."

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