

By Brianna Weirick
Sinclair gains experience and friendship through working at the school store

WIKI TOGETHER

SPOTLIGHT

What do you enjoy most about Wando?



"My favorite part about Wando is all my classes... my favorite class is Algebra because I get to learn new things. I like all my classes, but Algebra is my favorite," **Paige Piernatozzi**, 10, said.



"[My favorite part of Wando is] gym. [I like when] we get to play kickball," **Gabriella Carini**, 10, said.



"[I like] going to advisement because I like to watch Tribe Talk: I would host a show on Tribe Talk," **Nicole DeWitte**, 12, said.

16 SPRING

Tatyana Sinclair, 11, helps carry in the hefty boxes that arrived from their snack supplier, containing food and drinks for the school store that all students can purchase.

Sinclair was a student who became part of Wando's student school store, along with the five members who work there full time.

"I restock chips and candy and drinks. It's fun with all of my friends in there," Sinclair said.

Kaitlin Healy, 11, was a student who worked in the school store first semester of the 2018-19 school year. She spent a lot of time with Sinclair and other students who work there.

"I think it's fun with her. We're learning a lot and she is learning a lot, too, and I think it's cool that she is in a somewhat professional environment," Healy said.

The time they spent in the store allowed for the students in the class to become close throughout the semester and develop friendships amongst themselves and regular customers. Their bond was strengthened when Sinclair joined the class, and they had another student join their team.

"She didn't start working there at the beginning of the year, at the beginning no one knew what to do, so we had to teach her how and she caught on very quickly," Healy said.

Sinclair's participation exemplified the integration of exceptional education students into a setting where they can interact freely with Wando's whole population. This was a new change for Sinclair as well as her teacher, **Paula Carr**, who oversaw some of the exceptional education students.

"We realize there is such a big gap between typical and non-typical student and it's not because

the [general] ed kids want it like that, the more I interact with [typical students], the more I find out you guys wish you had more interaction with my kids which is super exciting to hear," Carr said.

The opportunity that Sinclair received was not one that would be fitting for all students. When it comes to students in a setting as demanding as a student run store, this job highlighted her helpful qualities.

"What's so specific about students with different disabilities, specifically students with autism, [is] they are so individual. Some disabilities you can cross paths with some different characteristics and behaviors but students with autism are specifically unique. So some of them do benefit from being around typical [kids], they model that behavior more,

"WHAT'S SO SPECIFIC ABOUT STUDENTS WITH DIFFERENT DISABILITIES... [IS] THEY ARE SO INDIVIDUAL."

and some kids have that fear and anxiety," Carr said.

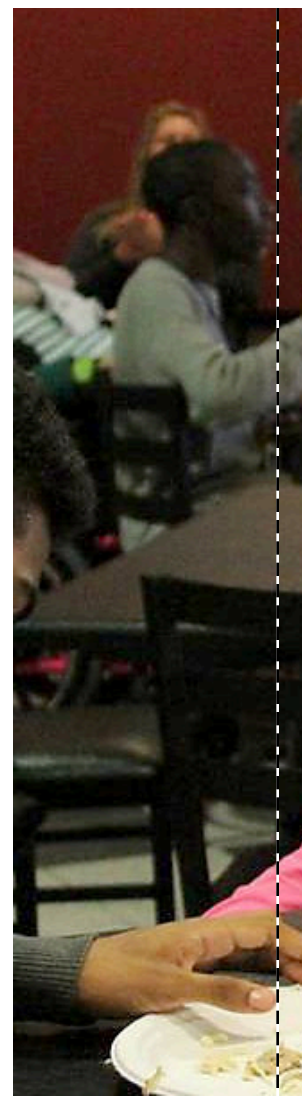
Not only was this a learning experience for Sinclair, but also a time of growth for students working in the school store. The teaching style of

their advisor and the responsibility of successfully running the store taught them many life skills.

"Professionalism, [and] responsibility. [Raymond] McGrath grades us as a team so if one person doesn't do their job, everyone gets points off, so you have to learn accountability," Healy said.

The responsibility that this job entailed would not be expected by many but it was a perfect fit for Sinclair that enhanced her high school experience where she was able to branch out.

"It's fun having her around. Sometimes kids in the school store will give her weird looks and it's not cool. We treat her like normal because she is normal. She does just as much as everyone else does, she's super helpful," Healy said.



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STAYING THANKFUL: (top) While celebrating the Thanksgiving season with his classmates, **Jason Pham**, 12, fills his plate of food with a variety of choices. "I was making a plate [with all of my favorite] foods," Pham said.

FRIENDSGIVING: (above left) **Kenneth Simmons**, 11, enjoys a plate full of food at the class Thanksgiving feast before break. "[I was eating] sweet potatoes," Simmons said.

DANCE OFF: (above right) During a class freeze dance activity, **Kobe Oree**, 11, shows his best moves to a circus song along with his classmates. "[I was playing] an elephant," Oree said.