

## WEF awards grant to Intensive Special Needs Preschool Program

As part of WEF's 2009-2010 grant program, teacher Laurie Sokol recently received funding to purchase Boardmaker Software products that will be utilized in her Intensive Special Needs Preschool program. The purpose of the Boardmaker program is to open up the lines of communication during class, thus reducing frustration and enabling a child to express his/her wants and needs more easily. Magnetic tiles with tasks, actions, objects, weather conditions and daily activities drawn on them allow the children to visualize what activity is about to take place ('lunch', 'circle time') as well ask for a drink of water ('I', 'need', 'water'). A task, for example washing hands, would chronologically display everything from turning water on to throwing a paper towel into the garbage. Visually seeing these specific steps increases a child's independence, thus improving the lifestyle of the child while also allowing those in contact to converse more effectively.

***Pictured (front): Physical Therapist Susan Carideo-Johnson, Jack Dowdie, Gannon O'Leary, Tim DeBenedictis, Seth Penziner, Jacob Goldlust. (standing): staff member Laurie Sokol, paraprofessionals Patrick Sullivan and Dina Farrell, principal Mr. Brian Middleton-Cox***

