



EAST HAMPTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

East Hampton, Connecticut

Superintendent's Update

Week of September 11, 2017




The vision of the East Hampton Public Schools: Preparing and inspiring our students to be innovative, responsible, contributing members of an ever-changing global society.

Kindness is a language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see.

~ Mark Twain

This week in our Schools

- **Monday, September 11 – Middle Sports Parent Meeting at the Middle School, 4:00 PM-Cross Country, 5:00 PM-Soccer.**
 - **Monday, September 11 – High School Senior Parent Night at the High School Auditorium, 6:30 PM.** If you are the proud parent of a High School Senior, you should attend this meeting to get all the information you need to know about the year!
 - **Tuesday, September 12 – Middle School Open House, 6:30 PM.**
 - **Tuesday, September 12 – East Hampton Music Boosters in the High School T-Bell, 6:30 PM.**
 - **Wednesday, September 13 – Character Day – *Let it Ripple!*** Character Day is a global initiative that focuses on developing strengths (empathy, grit, courage, and more) based on scientific research. There are films and materials that are very helpful at <http://www.letitripple.org/>. **The best thing you can do is display good character for 24 hours.** Just be kind today and be part of our *Making Kindness and Caring Common* initiative.
 - **Wednesday, September 13 – Middle School PTO in the Middle School Library, 6:30 PM.**
 - **Thursday, September 14 – Center School Open House, 6:30 PM.**
 - **Friday, September 15 – United States Constitution Day.** (Constitution Day is actually September 17, but we will honor it with the nearest school day to September 17). There are great resources for teachers and families at <http://www.constitutionday.com/>.
-  **Friday, September 15 – Coffee and Chat with the Superintendent at 94 Main Street, 7:30-9:00 AM.** Come in for Coffee! Stay for a quick chat, too!
- **Saturday, September 16 – The Inaugural Bellringer Regatta on Lake Pocotopaug.** Join the High School Rowing Club for races featuring ten high schools teams beginning early Saturday morning and continuing into the afternoon.



Join the fun and cheer the rowers as the regatta will be a competitive rowing event with ten area High School crew teams invited to participate. In addition to the races, food vendors and music will all be part of the festivities to celebrate East Hampton's 250th Anniversary.

Coming up!



The Board of Education meeting on **Monday, September 18 in the High School T-Bell, 6:30 PM** will feature a presentation by the architect for the new Municipal Building/Town Hall slated to house town offices, the Board of Education central offices, and the police department. The Building Committee will be on hand to answer questions by the Board and the Public.

Next week are the Open House evenings for the Memorial School. *Have you marked your calendar?*








- **Tuesday, September 19 – Memorial School Open House for Pre K, Kindergarten, and Grade 1, 6:30 PM.**
- **Thursday, September 21 – Memorial School Open House for Grade 2 and Grade 3, 6:30 PM.**



September / October Calendar

Get your event on this calendar!

Send additional events and dates to
psmith@easthamptonct.org.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	<p>Middle School Sports Parent Meeting Cross Country-4:00 PM Soccer-5:00 PM</p> <p>High School Senior Parent Night High School Auditorium 6:30 PM</p>	<p>Middle School WELCOME BACK OPEN HOUSE 6:30 PM</p> <p>High School Music Boosters High School T-Bell 6:30 PM</p>	<p> Character Day <i>Let it Ripple!</i> www.letitripple.org</p> <p>Middle School PTO Middle School Library 6:00 PM</p>	<p>Center School WELCOME BACK OPEN HOUSE 6:30 PM</p>	<p> Coffee & Chat With the Superintendent 94 Main St. 7:30-9:00 AM</p> <p>United States Constitution Day</p> <p>Deposit due for CHINA – June 2018</p>	<p>High School Crew Regatta at the Lake 250th Celebration Event</p> <p></p>
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	<p>Board of Education Meeting - EHHS T-Bell, 6:30 PM</p> <p>Info on new Town Hall</p>	<p>Memorial PK, K, 1 WELCOME BACK OPEN HOUSE 6:30 PM</p>	<p>Delayed Start for High School TWO HOUR DELAY for NEASC</p> <p>CODE RED/LOCKDOWN TRAINING for Teachers & Staff Members High School T-Bell 2:45 PM & 3:45 PM</p> <p>High School Washington DC Information Meeting 6:30 PM</p>	<p> Superintendent's Advisory Council 94 Main St. 9:00 AM</p> <p>Grade 4 Summer Reading Celebration</p> <p>Memorial 2, 3 WELCOME BACK OPEN HOUSE 6:30 PM</p>	<p>First Day of Autumn</p> <p> Directory OPT-OUT requests due.</p> <p>Memorial School PTO JOG-A-THON</p> <p>Grade 5 Summer Reading Celebration</p> <p>Middle School Pantherfest! 3:00-9:00 PM</p>	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
		<p>High School College Funding / Financial Aid Workshop Junior & Senior Parents High School Auditorium 6:30 PM</p>	<p> East Hampton HS Band at BIG E</p>		<p>Center School JOG-A-THON</p>	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	<p>National STOMP OUT Bullying Day</p> <p>Board of Education Meeting - EHHS T-Bell, 6:30 PM</p> <p>Friends of Education Night!</p>	<p>High School Music Boosters High School T-Bell 6:30 PM</p>	<p>Elementary PTO Center School 6:00 PM</p>	<p>Kindergarten Ice Cream Social Memorial School Cafe 6:30-7:30 PM</p>	<p> Coffee & Chat With the Superintendent 94 Main St. 7:30-9:00 AM</p> <p>Professional Development No School</p>	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	<p>Columbus Day No School</p> <p>National Fire Prevention Week</p> <p>National School Lunch Week</p>		<p>PSAT Day High School Sophomores & Juniors</p> <p>Middle School PTO Middle School Library 6:00 PM</p>			

Join REMIND! Get a text when there is important cancellation information!

There are many ways to find out about routine school cancellations due to hurricane, snow, or other emergencies: television, the Internet, and Facebook. **The most immediate information is available by joining the Superintendent's "Remind" texting list. This particular group is only texted by the Superintendent of Schools, Paul K. Smith.** No one else has access to this list. Texts are sent to your mobile phone directly by the Superintendent of Schools for emergencies and other important reminders. (You may discontinue texts at any time.)

Last year, the school district stopped phone calls that woke up the whole house at 5:30 AM after school had already been cancelled as it only served to wake children who could sleep a little longer. Again this year the East Hampton Public Schools will not be alerting families to snow or other cancellations via the telephone call system. Parents and staff will get an e-mail from the school's automated system; however, for immediate contact, parents and staff are urged to sign up for a "Remind" text message. If you signed up in previous years, there is nothing you need to do at this time.

The East Hampton Public Schools will still continue to use the telephone call system for any situation of an emergency nature that warrants additional information.

The Superintendent of Schools will be sending out text messages and other information using **Remind**. This is the fastest way to get the information. *Remind* is a one-way text messaging and email system. With *Remind*, all personal information remains completely confidential. If you would like text message reminders about East Hampton Public Schools events directly from the Superintendent of Schools (including snow cancellations) please join either one of two ways:

1. Visit <https://www.remind.com/join/easthampto> and simply enter your mobile phone number.
2. Text "@easthampto" to 81010.
3. You can opt-out of messages at any time by replying, 'unsubscribe@eastmapto'.

Or, to receive messages via email, send a (blank) email to easthampto@mail.remind.com. To unsubscribe, reply with 'unsubscribe' in the subject line.



Please note that this APP will only be used by the Superintendent of Schools and information is not shared with any other party.

NOTE – ALTERNATE WAYS TO LEARN ABOUT CANCELLATIONS:

1. Parents will receive an **email** from the school's communication system.
2. Cancellations will be posted on the district's Facebook page. [Click here for East Hampton Public Schools.](#)
3. Families can subscribe to the text alerts from a favorite television network.



Get school cancellations directly from the Superintendent of Schools, Paul K. Smith right at the moment the decision is made!

Emails will still be sent to each family, but the process requires a longer wait than the *Remind* texts.

East Hampton Board of Education Highlights (9/5/17)



Visit East Hampton

YouTube

You can view this meeting and past meetings at:

<http://www.easthamptonps.org/2017-2018-boe-meetings>

Scroll down the page and click on **"VIDEO"** of the date you wish to view.

- The Board acknowledged that Board Chair, Chris Goff was absent as he is with an American Red Cross team in the Houston area for two weeks assisting victims of Hurricane Harvey.
- The East Hampton Board of Education honored Meghan Ryczek, the Rookie Teacher of the Year and Kristen Keska the Teacher of the Year and Semifinalist for Connecticut State Teacher of the Year. (Tammy Angeli, the Paraeducator of the Year was unable to make the meeting.)
- The Board welcomed East Hampton High School students, Hannah Balda and Kristin Whitney who will serve as student representatives to the Board of Education.
- The Superintendent updated the Board on the program for the September 8 Ribbon Cutting.
- The Board received a timeline for the hiring of the High School Principal. Applications will be due on October 6, with the various rounds of interviews beginning on October 17, October 24, October 27, and October 30. The Board of Education will appoint the new Principal at their November 6 meeting and the candidate will be expected to begin on January 2, 2018.
- The Board was informed that the architect for the Town Hall Building Project will attend the September 18 Board of Education meeting to answer questions about the building.
- The Board was informed of a Meeting the Candidates for Board of Education Evening to take place on Monday, October 23 at the High School T-Bell from 6:00-7:15 PM. Center School students will ask questions of the 7 candidates (for 5 seats). The event will be moderate by Jonathan Baine, Grade 5 Teacher at Center School.
- The Board was given the opening day enrollment of the schools: (PK – 44, K – 144, Gr 1 – 147, Gr 2 – 155, Gr 3 – 131, Gr 4 – 153, Gr 5 – 169, Gr 6 – 161, Gr 7 – 136, Gr 8 – 151, Gr 9 – 121, Gr 10 – 116, Gr 11 – 129, Gr 12 – 106.) Memorial: 621, Center: 322, Middle: 448, High: 474.
- The Principals shared the Building Goals with the Board that are based on the District Goals. (These documents can be found on the District website)
- The Board continued to discuss the memorial tribute to John Fidler. Of the tribute ideas shared by the public at the last meeting, the family is most interested in the naming of the driveway into and out of the school as the "John Fidler Way."
 - Name the T-Bell after Mr. Fidler.
 - Name the Gym after Mr. Fidler.
 - Name the Athletic Field Complex after Mr. Fidler.
 - Start a scholarship in honor of Mr. Fidler. (Please note: A scholarship in John's name has been established already.)
 - Street to School named after John – The John Fidler Way or John Fidler Path.
 - Rename North Maple Street after Mr. Fidler.
 - Rename the High School – The John Fidler Memorial East Hampton High School
 - Dedicate a Memorial Bench to Mr. Fidler.
 - Have a Bronze Plaque in the building in honor of Mr. Fidler's career.



CODE RED Training for new staff

There will be **Emergency CODE RED – LOCKDOWN training** for East Hampton School Employees on Wednesday, September 20 High School T-Bell at 2:45 PM and 3:45 PM. This training is for all new teachers, staff, and volunteers plus any others interested in a re-fresher.

With every emergency procedure EXCEPT Code Red/Lockdowns, there are announcements and directions. As an employee of the East Hampton Public Schools we expect to lockdown every one of our students in 3-5 seconds.

The training is 45-minutes and there are two sessions to accommodate High School/Middle School and Center School/Memorial School.

Don't miss this event! It will help you make important decisions at the polls!

Meet the Candidates for Board of Education

Monday, October 23
East Hampton High School T-Bell
6:00 - 7:15 PM



Questions by students from East Hampton Center School
Moderator: Mr. Jonathan Baine, Center School Teacher

*Save the date and get to know
the candidates for the
East Hampton Board of Education:*

Amanda Amtmanis (D)
Lori Caldwell (D)
Jeffrey Carlson (D)
Christopher Goff (D)
Lois Villa (D)
Marc Lambert (R)
Mary Ann Dostaler (C)

In order to promote the communication of East Hampton Board of Education candidates' specific ideas for education, the East Hampton Public Schools will be hosting a **"Meet the Candidates Evening"** on **Monday, October 23** from **6:00 – 7:15 PM** in the East Hampton High School T-Bell. The evening will be a forum that allows each candidate time to make brief opening remarks (2-3 minutes), followed by questions from students in the East Hampton Center School (moderated by Grade 5 Teacher, Mr. Jonathan Baine), and concluding with closing remarks by each candidate (1-2 minutes).

Questions by the students will focus on budgeting for the schools, support for various programs PK-12, and the goals for East Hampton's schools. The format will be a series of questions during which all candidates will be given 1-2 minutes to respond. This is a great evening to learn about the candidates for one of the most important Boards in our community!

School Directories to be available on October 2 – opt out by 9/22/17.

Reminder: Directories will be available in early October and we are currently giving families enough time to "opt out" of any portion. For Memorial School and Center School, the directory for the school will be organized by classroom teacher. At the Middle School and High School, the information will be organized by grade level.

Each listing will include the following:

Student Name	Grade	Teacher (PK-5 only)	Parent/Guardian Name(s)	Address	Town	Phone(s)	Parent E-mail(s)
			1	2	3	4	5

Parents may opt to omit information in any of the columns, #1-5 as indicated above. Simply e-mail kcarpenter@easthamptonct.org and indicate which column(s) you would like omitted for your child. You can simply identify them by number.

All opt out requests are due by Friday, September 22, 2017.

We hope you will find this directory information helpful in maintaining a strong connection to each other and our school community.

Thank you for Running for Houston!



We had a very dedicated group of students, parents, teachers, staff members, and community members who arrived on the High School Track at **6:30 AM** on Friday morning, September 8. The Hartford Marathon Foundation encouraged participation in a virtual 5K to support Houston. Our own East Hampton 5K for Houston proved to be a strong showing of about 80 runners. Each runner donated \$25 to the HMF with 100% going to the American Red Cross efforts in Houston. Thank you to all who walked or ran the 3 miles!

Thoughts



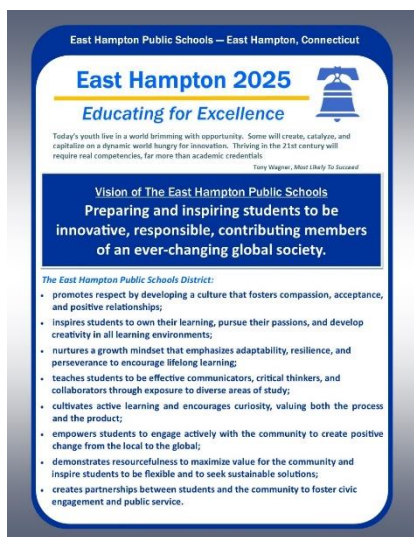
Drop one “graded” assessment. Add one assessment that requires “mastery.”

Change one assessment this year. Instead of giving a “test” at the end of a unit, simply *get rid of the test*.

Instead, assess what the students have learned by creating an opportunity for students to design their own assessment. Ask them to design a project or something of their own in order to demonstrate to you what they have learned. Create an opportunity for **Genius Hour** in your classroom. Create an opportunity for student control. Offer a chance for students to pose a question and then **give them an opportunity to lead their own learning**.

Try it one time this year (if not more).

Encourage students to access **learning skills** that they have acquired – regardless of the grade in which they are currently enrolled. An activity like this will also require that students develop **new learning skills** that we want them to master at the age they are now and on which they can rely in the future. Together, as we watch students access and develop these skills, we will begin our journey as a district in identifying those **learning skills** that will be essential in the **East Hampton Vision of the Graduate**.



I have talked about taking our core values from East Hampton 2025 and turning them into a **Vision of the Graduate**. Our hope is to identify a set of deeper learning skills that every student masters, PK-12. These skills are not to be “graded.” They are to be “mastered” – by everyone. We must demand a high level of mastery of every one of the skills in *every one of our students* throughout grades PK-12. These are not just life skills; in today’s world, they are referred to as “survival” skills. Determining these skills as a result of teachers’ classroom experiences in Genius Hour at Memorial School, self-direction at the Center School, mastery of success skills at the Middle School, and tackling such assessments as the Capstone Projects at the High School, will lead us to craft a very ambitious vision of the East Hampton Graduate.

This year, as we identify those skills that ultimately may include such things as active learning, problem solving, and creative thinking, we must be willing to allow every student multiple opportunities to **lead their learning**.

Watch our students lead their own learning and then help us determine the deep learning skills that will become the basis for every one of our students.

Ultimately, we should be free from a “grade” as the basis for every assessment and free from time constraints. Begin to acknowledge that **the mastery of student outcomes is essential to our students in their lives right away!** A grade based on an “average” of tests at the end of the semester is meaningless to a student’s future. The acquisition of skills, the mastery of skills, and the ability to utilize those skills in new settings are all essential to our students – now, and in their future.

Thank you for providing student ownership in learning and helping us determine the skills that we will proudly watch our graduates master over time.

***From Teaching in the Fast Lane* (from Chapter 1 – Why Active Learning Matters)**

By Suzy Pepper Rollins - published by ASCD

Creating learning experiences that balance teacher explanation and student discovery requires some rethinking about what a lesson looks like and perhaps even the role of a teacher. The professional reward lies in seeing students' work develop and providing feedback—to share in their learning and what they found interesting. The best moments are when students wave off our help: "We got it." Working side by side with teachers creating more active lessons, teachers sometimes ask, "Well, what am I supposed to do? ... They don't really need me right now." **Student independence, one may contend, is a measure of a highly effective lesson.**

Giving students more academic control can be a bit unsettling at first. Like many teachers, I did not want to let go of the grip I had on my classes. This fear I had of losing control over a bunch of freshmen resulted in a classroom of "cemetery rows" filled with students copying my lecture notes. Whatever discussion was had over the topics was highly controlled and brief. I worked late into every night making comments on their papers to further extend this message that I alone possessed subject expertise, so just sit there and take it. My class was so quiet that we could hear the jubilant noise through the walls of the veteran teacher next door, who taught the same subject. Students poured out of her door laughing and talking about the content. Mine reacted to the bell as if they'd just escaped Alcatraz with prison guards in hot pursuit. Any pleas from my students of "Couldn't we do something different today?" were dismissed. This was what rigor looked like, I explained, with feigned confidence. In fact, my class was more difficult and my students' grades were lower because it was brutal. Tragically, I was commended by building leaders for effective classroom management, but my students weren't just quiet, they were terrified. The leaders stopped by my fabulously talented neighbor's class a few times during that year to tell her, "Your students are getting a little too noisy." Had it not been for this teacher's guidance in helping me view my role differently, I would have surely left the profession, perhaps not of my own volition.

The professional rewards of letting go in a thoughtful, structured manner can be great. After all, **rigor is about the level of thinking our students' minds are engaged in, not ours.** Our tough work is creating and implementing masterful lessons in which students have varied opportunities to explore and discover the content—to dig in and reach their learning targets. **These varied experiences in which students are collaborating with one another, working through trials and tribulations in their teams, and reaching goals will provide practice for the real world. Because employers are looking for thinkers, leaders, and problem solvers ... and they are sitting in our rooms.**

How to Build Community Leaders of Today—and Tomorrow—Through Student Genius Hours

By Jen Schneider in www.edsurge.com.

When it comes to **personalized learning in the classroom**, no single thing has been as powerful as **Genius Hour** for my students.

Genius Hour has its early foundations at companies like Google which gave their employees 20 percent of their work week to study and implement innovative ideas that would better the company. Ideas like Gmail, Google News, and AdSense were born from this time.

It's not a bad model for teachers to emulate, either.

In my classroom, **Genius Hour means students get to use at least one hour of their class time each week to explore their own questions, create projects, and share with others.** When I first heard about carving out this time, I was excited to try it with my students because I thought it would be a fresh way to integrate research and questioning into my Language

Arts curriculum. What happened, however, was a side effect I could have never envisioned: This form of personalized learning turned a team of 120 individual eighth graders into a community.

Classroom Community

Genius Hour has three main rules. First, the students must generate a question that cannot be answered by a simple Google search. Next, they must create something, whether it is a book, blog, video, or a physical object. Finally, they must share their creation with either their classmates, school, community, or even the world via the web.

Inevitably, some students struggle to come up with a question they want to investigate. However, letting them latch onto a classmate's project is not always such a bad thing. Friendships can be formed between students with similar interests, and students who struggle to find things to study may be inspired by the ideas of others. What transpires is a community of learners who are invested in each others' projects.

"Jacob" (not his real name) was a student, like many boys his age, who was fascinated with gaming and the hardware associated with certain gaming systems. "Alex" had no idea what he wanted to do for Genius Hour, but when students shared their proposals, he was eager to hear what Jacob was planning and asked a lot of questions. Jacob's project—to fix broken Xbox gaming systems—turned out to be a larger task than he thought, and he was happy to have Alex partner with him. The two students, who barely knew each other before the project began, not only formed a classroom partnership but a friendship. Jacob's mother reported at conferences that Alex's friendship had helped Jacob improve his grades and work completion as they would study together and then work on their project frequently outside of school.

Genius Hour also gives ownership to student learning. When my students walked into my classroom each Friday (our designated Genius Hour day), they were met with "Toby" strumming the guitar (his project was to teach himself to play), "Katie" designing an outfit by sketching out plans and sewing on her machine, or "Maddy" sprawled on the floor with paints to create a mural reflecting a novel we'd just read. This was our community. They were learning from each other, and I was learning so much from them. The relationships I was building with these 120 kids by knowing what they were passionate about, what they wanted to change about the world by learning, creating, and sharing was worth more than any student inventory or test I could give them.

School Community

When word got out about our Genius Hour classroom, other teachers and my administrators started to take notice of the learning and excitement exuding from our classroom walls. District administrators had me present to teachers on how to start Genius Hours in their own classrooms. As more teachers in the building began to get involved, the impact on the school was significant.

Two students helped another teacher start a Gay Straight Alliance club that helped LGBTQ students feel more accepted in school. Meetings would consistently have 40 or more students in attendance. Teachers reported that students who rarely spoke in class were starting to participate and hold their heads up. Student leaders were calling out other kids on bullying.

One group of students decided to raise money for new swing choir costumes by selling candy grams for their Genius Hour project. They researched business practices, advertising campaigns, and within four days raised \$400.

In a nearby elementary school, a student collected 2,500 books after learning about illiteracy statistics in the world. He wanted children in the community with limited access to books to have a window into reading.

Our tiny classroom project was making big waves in our community, and it was about more than personalized interests. Students and teachers were making a difference.

Community Outside of School

Teachers strive to teach kids to be productive members of society, and the links with Genius Hour to the community are incredibly impactful. Teachers can help facilitate mentorships with community members by reaching out to friends, colleagues, businesses, and connecting via social media.

When "Katie" wanted to design her own clothing, I helped find her a mentor, a 19-year-old college student who was designing clothes that would soon grace the runways of New York City's fashion week. This mentorship allowed Katie to attend Omaha Fashion Week and a business entrepreneurial conference at Metro Community College as well as make connections in the fashion industry. Katie plans to study business (in connection with fashion) in college.

As long as it's fiscally feasible and safe, a Genius Hour topic rarely gets turned down. In fact, some projects that seem too expensive can be subsidized by reaching out to community members. This not only helps our community give back, but it teaches our students how to reach out, write proposals, and communicate effectively. Inspired by Katie's creative endeavors and diligence, I called a local fabric store for donations. I was told I would need to fill out some forms, have a tax ID, and present paperwork. Katie went to the same store and came to school a day later with bags of fabric. **Genius Hour taught me to let go and let my students showcase their roles as active, engaged citizens. Their voices are powerful, and sometimes even stronger than our own.**

These connections are beneficial not only for our students but the community at-large. Fostering relationships within the places where our students will attend school and possibly contribute as working members of society is beneficial for the common good.

Our students are future employees and leaders, but we shouldn't be telling them that we're preparing them for the future. In fact, programs like Genius Hour are preparing them for right now. They can make a difference today in their classrooms, cities, and the world.

This story is part of the EdSurge Fifty States Project (representing the state of Nebraska) and made publicly available with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The thoughts and opinions expressed here are those of the individual contributors alone and do not reflect the views of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Note: the students' real names were not used in this story.



Do one kind thing for someone this week. Then, repeat 52 times per year.



Paul K. Smith

