



EAST HAMPTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

East Hampton, Connecticut

Superintendent's Update

Week of October 30, 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.

We don't know what many of the jobs of the future will look like,
but we do know which skills and dispositions will be critical in order for people to navigate this new world.
~ Emily Gasoli, cofounder of Artful Education

This week in our Schools

- **Monday, October 30 – Town Meeting in the Middle School Library, 7:00 PM.** The purpose of the Town Meeting is to forward to referendum an appropriation in the amount of \$18,981,000 for the Municipal Building (Town Hall, Police Department, and Board of Education offices). Upon approval at the Town Meeting, the project will be sent to referendum as part of the November elections – Tuesday, November 7.
- **Tuesday, October 31 – Mix It Up at Lunch Day at the Center School.** This is an opportunity for students to sit with other people at lunch strengthening connections and relationships.



Tuesday, October 31 – Halloween. Have a fun, but safe evening of Trick or Treating!

- **Wednesday, November 1 – All Budget Request due to Building Principals.** Very simple forms have been sent to all district staff in order to make requests to building principals for new textbooks, equipment, staffing, and programming. Please make sure that forms are in the hands of Principals by Wednesday as Principals are under a deadline to have complete building packages to the Central Office by Friday, November 17. Students, teachers, staff members, and parents are urged to then speak to these requests at the **Monday, November 6** Board of Education meeting at 6:30 PM in the High School T-Bell.
- **Wednesday, November 1 – Elementary PTO Meeting at the Memorial School, 6:00 PM.**
- **Wednesday, November 1 – Project Graduation Meeting in the High School Library, 6:00 PM.**
- **Thursday, November 2 – Teacher of the Year Reception at LEARN in Old Lyme, 4:00 PM.** East Hampton Public Schools Teacher of the Year, Kristen Keska (High School) will be honored along with other teachers in the region.

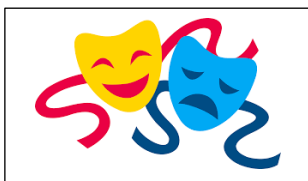


Friday, November 3 – Coffee and Chat with the Superintendent at 94 Main Street, 7:30-9:00 AM. Come in for Coffee! Stay for a quick chat, too!

- **Friday, November 3 – Flu Shots for East Hampton School Employees.** The Connecticut Partnership is providing access to free flu shots at 2 district locations immediately after student dismissal. Shots will be free to all insured staff, including those not on the Partnership United Healthcare Oxford program (with insurance card). Family and children of staff may be included as well.

Location for High School and Middle School staff: East Hampton High School beginning 2:10 PM

Location for Center and Memorial staff: Memorial School beginning 3:20-3:30 PM.



Friday-Saturday, November 3-4 – East Hampton High School Drama Club presents, "The Children's' Hour" in the High School Auditorium, 7:30 PM.

Don't forget to change your clocks! Daylight Saving Time ends on Sunday!





November Calendar


Get your event on this calendar!

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

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29	30	31	November 1	2	3	4
	 Town Meeting Middle School 7:00 PM	<div>National MIX IT UP at LUNCH DAY</div>  Grade 6 Halloween Dance	 All 2018-19 Budget Requests due to Building Principals Elementary PTO Memorial School 6:00 PM Project Graduation High School Library 6:00 PM	 Teacher of the Year Reception LEARN/Old Lyme 4:00 PM Kristen Keska and area teachers honored.	 Coffee & Chat With the Superintendent 94 Main St. 7:30-9:00 AM <div>FLU SHOTS For Teachers & Staff After School @ High school & Memorial High School Drama Club "The Children's Hour" EHHS Auditorium 7:30 PM</div>	 High School Drama Club "The Children's Hour" EHHS Auditorium 7:30 PM
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
 Daylight Saving Time ends on Sunday!	<div>Board of Education Meeting - EHHS T-Bell, 6:30 PM <div>Appointment of HS Principal</div></div>  <div>Budget Requests welcome by Public</div>	<div>No School Election Day & Professional Developemnt</div> 	 East Hampton High School Veterans Day Breakfast and Assembly	<div>No School Veterans Day Observance</div> 	 Veterans Day Official  Turkey Plunge for East Hampton Food Bank 9:00 AM-Sears Park	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	<div>World Kindness Day!</div> 	<div>Project Graduation Butter Braid Delivery</div>	<div>Half Day for Middle School Parent Conferences</div>  Teacher of the Year Recognition Bushnell Theater 5:00 PM Kristen Keska and state teachers honored.	<div>Half Day for Middle School Parent Conferences</div>  High School Fall Concert EHHS Auditorium 7:00 PM		 East Hampton High School presents <div>All Around the World Fest 1:00-5:00 PM Students \$5.00 No fee for parents who accompnay children</div>
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	<div>Board of Education Meeting - EHHS T-Bell, 6:30 PM <div>NEW MEMBERS First Meeting!</div></div>		 Coffee & Chat With the Superintendent 94 Main St. 7:30-9:00 AM <div>Half Day Thanksgiving Recess</div>	<div>No School Thanksgiving</div> 	<div>No School</div>	
26	27	28	29	30	December 1	2
		<div>Half Day for Memorial & Center School Parent Conferences</div>		<div>Half Day for Memorial & Center School Parent Conferences</div>		

Notes

At the next Board of Education meeting



**Please plan to make your
Budget Requests!**

Board of Education Meeting
Monday, November 6
East Hampton High School T-Bell,
6:30 PM

Please join us at the November 6 Board of Education Meeting. This meeting is a chance for teachers, students, and parents to make budget requests for 2018-19 to the Board of Education. **Your opinion matters** – and your voice is heard loud and clear by the Superintendent of Schools and the East Hampton Board of Education as we work together to make our schools the highest achieving schools in Connecticut!

Below is the timeline for the 2018-19 Budget:

Monday, November 6, 2017	Budget Request Public Forum at the Board of Education Meeting 6:30 PM at East Hampton High School T-Bell Faculty, staff, students, parents, and members of the community are welcome to express support for budget items or programming to be included in the 2018-19 Budget.
Friday, November 17, 2017	Principals' School Budgets are due to the Superintendent of Schools Copies of all Forms 1 and 2, packaged in priority order along with line item funding requests are due at the Central Office.
Tuesday, January 16, 2018	Superintendent's Proposed Budget for 2018-19 presented to the Board of Education 6:30 PM at East Hampton High School T-Bell (public invited)
Thursday, January 18, 2018	Superintendent's Proposed Budget for 2018-19 reviewed at Superintendent's Advisory Council 9:00 AM at Central Office, 94 Main Street (public invited)
Wednesday, January 24, 2018	Superintendent's Proposed Budget for 2018-19 reviewed with Faculty and Staff Members Optional faculty meetings at East Hampton High School T-Bell 2:45 PM and 3:45 PM
Monday, January 29, 2018	Board of Education Budget Workshop 6:30 PM at East Hampton High School (public invited)
Monday, February 5, 2018	Board of Education Budget Workshop 6:30 PM at East Hampton High School (public invited)
Monday, February 26, 2018	Board of Education Budget Approval Submitted to Town Hall by March 1, 2018

Advice on Teen Smartphone use



In a recent article in *Phi Delta Kappan Magazine*, Larry Rosen writes that **“Due to the constant temptation to check their smartphones, today’s students are spending less time on their schoolwork, taking longer to complete assignments, and feeling more stressed in the process.”**

Kim Marshall, author of the weekly *Marshall Memo* wonders if we have reached the saturation point.

Rosen answers the question with, “The smartphone is still only 10 years old, and many of us are still falling deeper into our obsessive relationship with these devices.”

Consider the following from the article:

- College students unlock their phones at least every 15 minutes, look at them about five minutes each time, and spend a total of 4½ hours a day glued to their devices.
- Online conversations are teens’ lifeblood, accounting for much, if not most, of their social lives.

- Teens are constantly multitasking, even though they know it's not efficient.
- When teens have their phones taken away, they become highly anxious.
- Phone-related anxiety is closely linked to poor academic performance and sleep deprivation.
- About 80 percent of teens say they rarely if ever sleep well, usually because they have a smartphone at their bedside and check it before going to sleep and during the night.
- The average adolescent finds it difficult to study for 15 minutes at a time.
- During a 15-minute stint of studying, teens spend at least five minutes in a state of distraction.
- 80 percent of high-school teachers and 63 percent of elementary teachers say technology is making students less able to sustain attention.
- Office workers are interrupted (or interrupt themselves) every 3-5 minutes, take as much as 20 minutes to get back to work, and feel stressed by having to work faster to make up for the lost time.

Rosen offers the following suggestions for messages that educators and parents should be giving kids:

- *Your brain needs an occasional "reset."* Elementary-age children should spend no more than a half hour at a time on a device, followed by a break at least that long. Preteens and adolescents should spend no more than 90 minutes at a time with technology, followed by at least 10-15 minutes on an activity that calms their brain – going outside, exercising, listening to music, meditating, taking a shower, having an in-person conversation with a friend, playing a musical instrument, practicing a foreign language.
- *Build stamina for studying without technology.* Treat this like any kind of strength training, says Rosen: start off easy and gradually increase the amount of time without a tech break. He suggests 15 minutes at first, turning off all websites and apps that aren't relevant to the study topic, setting an alarm, and placing the phone within sight, face down. When the alarm goes off, the student can check for messages and notifications for a minute, then set another 15-minute alarm. When the student can tolerate 15 minutes, perhaps finishing a paragraph when the alarm goes off rather than immediately grabbing the phone, push the time to 20 minutes, then 25, and so on. During this strength-building sequence, it's helpful for the teen to notify friends that there might not be an instant response to messages so they don't keep texting.
- *Sleep is sacred.* Nine hours is the recommended amount for high-school students, and kids should know that melatonin is naturally secreted in the hours before bedtime to produce sleepiness – unless they're peering at a blue-light device. Ways to keep the melatonin pumping: use a pink-light setting in the hour before bedtime, or listen to familiar music or TV shows, read a paper book, and ramp down mental effort.
- *Cut down on the number of alerts and notifications.* It may not occur to teens that they can de-activate apps that aren't of strong interest, cutting down on distracting notifications. Rosen says he's amazed at the number of apps he uses each day, often without even thinking.
- *Carve out tech-free zones.* These might include the dinner table, restaurant meals, the car, the family den, and the bedroom. During the day, teens might need occasional one-minute breaks to check their phones and keep FOMO (fear of missing out) under control.



We are welcoming a delegation from China in early December



On **Thursday, December 7** our four schools will be visited by 20 Chinese administrators and teachers from the Guangdong province of the People's Republic of China. The group will be in our district from 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM visiting the school that corresponds to their level of expertise. This will be the fourth group of Chinese administrators who have spent a day visiting our schools. The opportunity for conversation and comparisons between our school systems makes a day like this invaluable for all involved.

We are looking to treat them as well as our group of 39 East Hampton students, parents, and teachers will be treated when they visit China in June 2018 for 11 days touring Beijing, Jinan (the capital of the Shandong Province) and Shanghai.

Thoughts



The arts for sake of the arts - *and* the arts for sake of learning.

Many articles that speak to the benefit of the arts address the benefits of the arts in terms of their importance in the lives and culture of mankind. None of that has changed, but as we realize that we are looking toward developing a profile of our graduates that includes the ability to creatively solve problems and engage in critical and creative complex thinking, exposure to the arts moves well beyond an appreciation level in our classrooms to an essential skill. The arts afford students opportunities to dramatically increase their thinking and processing skills – and these are transferred to all areas of learning once the arts and creativity are weaved into the learning and assessments.

Never assume that the arts are an “extra.” In the our students’ future, the type of learning that goes on in the arts and the type of assessments demanded in the arts help our students develop the most critical and valuable skills they need for success.

How will you infuse the arts, creativity, and complex thinking into your lessons? As you **think** creatively about it, you are using the skills we want our students to possess for their own achievement!



The Arts Need to Be a Central Part of Schooling By Mariale Hardiman in *EdWeek*

Arts education may deliver an academic boost

The great education thinker John Dewey claimed that art is not the possession of a recognized few but the authentic expression of individuality for all. Among those who care about education, few would deny that the arts now struggle to survive in our nation's schools. The visual and performing arts frequently are marginalized as fringe subjects, taking a back seat in school curricula when funds are tight or teaching time is usurped by subjects that count toward school accountability measures.

Yet a growing number of researchers and educators are in agreement that participation in the arts should become a central component of schooling, as research suggests that the arts can be a significant factor in improving academic outcomes. This premise may cause some arts advocates to bristle, believing that arts experiences are important for the sheer joy of human expression and that educators should not have to justify access to the arts as a way to increase learning.

That may be true, but it is hard to ignore the growing body of research that correlates arts experiences with multiple domains of learning, including academic achievement, motivation, and thinking skills. Moreover, using art forms as a pedagogical tool in teaching other subjects—known as arts integration—is showing promise for enabling students to learn and retain academic content, according to a thorough literature review by Gail Burnaford and other researchers published for the **Arts Education Partnership**. Students in schools that offer arts-integrated learning are more likely to show better academic outcomes, transfer knowledge from arts to nonarts domains, and demonstrate greater motivation and engagement in learning.

Despite those findings, some educators resist using the arts as a way to teach and reinforce content. In my experience leading schools, offering professional development, and teaching graduate and doctoral-level courses, I have encountered reluctance for incorporating the arts into instructional practices. Three common scenarios stand out for classroom teachers:

- The teacher would like to use more arts-based activities, noting that students remember more content and seem to enjoy the subject matter better when the arts are incorporated into lessons compared with using only traditional methods. The teacher worries, however, that using arts activities will reduce the time needed to cover all the required curriculum.

- The teacher believes that she is not very artistic and finds it hard to imagine the kind of arts activities that would enhance learning math; it is easier to follow traditional teaching strategies.
- The teacher worries that low-performing students need more time in remediation and would not learn as much without highly structured curricula that offer repetition of essential content and skills.

Noting the concerns of educators and the dearth of research that explores the causal effects of arts integration on memory for academic content, our research team at Johns Hopkins University's School of Education conducted randomized control trials to test the efficacy of arts-integrated science units (the treatment condition) compared with conventional science units (the control condition). We designed treatment and control units using the same science content and designed arts activities that would require the same amount of teaching time as in conventional lessons.

We also matched the mode of delivery (visual, auditory, kinesthetic) to assure active learning experiences in both conditions. In the course of the studies, we provided professional development for teachers to show that **robust arts-based teaching can be easily incorporated into lessons**. For example, using songs, movement, and visual vocabulary does not require extensive arts training or elaborate materials.

In our studies, each randomized group of students received a science unit in either the treatment or control condition and a second science unit in the opposite condition. According to the results of delayed post-tests, **arts-integrated teaching showed an advantage for long-term retention of science content**. That increase in retention in the arts-integrated units was especially strong for students at the lowest levels of reading achievement. We believe, therefore, that **the arts provide another vehicle for students with limited language or lower academic skills to demonstrate mastery of academic content**.

Our studies provide some preliminary causal connections between arts-integrated learning and memory for content. The findings also raise some interesting questions about whether learning through the arts transfers residual benefits. We observed that students who experienced the arts-integrated units first performed significantly better in subsequent conventional units compared with students who had not yet experienced the arts-integrated units. That made us wonder if students who were taught using arts-integrated instruction may have later applied arts-based strategies, even when not taught through the arts.

These observations open interesting possibilities that warrant further investigation. **Do the arts aid in thinking dispositions and problem-solving skills**, as some researchers have suggested? **Perhaps the current focus on 21st-century skills of creative problem-solving will lead us back to the arts as a fruitful alternative to conventional teaching**—as Dewey suggested at the start of the 20th century.

How to Assess Arts Education—And Why You Should By Emily Gasoi & Sonya Robbins Hoffmann in *EdWeek*

Only an arts education can prepare students for the future

There is broad acknowledgment that schools are playing catch-up as we head into the 21st century. Technology and resulting innovation are rapidly changing our culture, making it imperative that schools change as well. **We don't know what many of the jobs of the future will look like, but we do know which skills and dispositions will be critical in order for people to navigate this new world**. As our learning institutions adapt, the emphasis placed on teaching content will be supplanted by a focus on teaching process.

Teaching and assessing skills gained through the arts, as well as in creative processes across other disciplines, will become the norm. Here are some examples of the kinds of demands we are already responding to in the 21st-century that compel us to advocate more and better arts education:

1. To sift through the constant flow of information, students need to develop skills to evaluate the quality and accuracy of content and recognize false information.
2. A wide variety of technology and media platforms necessitates the ability to think critically and work with a variety of tools.
3. **Employers are demanding creative problem-solving skills, as well as the ability to self-direct and collaborate.**

4. In a gig economy characterized by temporary projects and frequent shifts in occupation, students will be faced with both increased control of career path and no clear road map. Being able to imagine one's path and to pivot as external realities change is critical.
5. In our global society, curiosity, flexibility, and particularly the ability to see multiple perspectives are necessary building blocks for interacting with other cultures.

As decades of arts education scholarship have shown, engaging in high-quality arts learning develops these important skills and dispositions. And there is now broad agreement that schools need to explicitly teach them, as evidenced by widespread practices to deepen social-emotional learning, global citizenship, and 21st-century skills in general education.

However, assessment of these skills is difficult. Content learning, focused as it is on studying a set body of information, is easier to assess than process learning, which engages students in an ongoing cycle of inquiry, experimentation, and refinement. In order to devise strong assessments for arts learning, educators must grapple with how exactly to gauge these skills.

In our work as consultants, we help schools and arts education organizations strengthen creative teaching and learning practices. We have learned that when we are helping to craft assessment tools, we are often also helping to revise curriculum. Devising effective assessments in this arena requires schools and arts education organizations to clarify what it is they want students to learn in the first place.

Take this case study from our own work, for example: An arts-focused public school, which received Title I funding for disadvantaged students, was struggling with how to assess K-8 student learning across arts disciplines. When we began working with this school two years ago, the primary evaluations they used were performances and exhibits for families that showcased students' skills. In addition, within individual arts classrooms, teachers had come up with their own idiosyncratic methods for measuring student growth. Students moved from one arts classroom to another encountering wildly different expectations and values.

The school administration was eager to help teachers align their classroom practices and develop more substantive assessments that would bring cohesion to expectations for student learning, as well as to convey to families and other stakeholders—such as board members, community members, and students—the value of deep arts learning.

Though we've worked in a variety of settings, we share our work with this particular school because we have found that many other educational settings wrestle with similar issues when measuring learning in the arts. The steps we use to guide and improve practices may be helpful for schools or arts education providers looking to strengthen their assessment process:

- **Clarify site-specific goals.** We worked with the administration to understand its unique needs. In this case, that meant creating assessments that could be used to align arts instruction through developing process-based and cohesive arts curriculum.
- **Surface existing values and practices.** We met with all teachers and staff to learn about individual values and documented their language for describing practices and intended outcomes.
- **Identify areas of cohesion and aspiration.** We scanned transcripts from these meetings to identify shared language and desired outcomes.
- **Create shared expectations.** We shared our findings with the faculty to decide which outcomes they deemed most critical for students at a variety of developmental levels
- **Devise a site-specific assessment tool.** We produced an assessment framework anchored to the National Arts Standards and tailored it to the school's values, language, and practices.
- **Foster ownership through ongoing refinement.** Teachers were able to use this new tool to inform their curriculum development and assess student learning. That, in turn, created greater cohesion across arts classrooms.

While this work is not rocket science, it is also not easy. Developing strong, place-based assessments entails an investment of time and resources. But our future demands a dramatic shift in how we think about assessment, both in the arts and in education more generally.

Of course, this shift must happen in a way that does not diminish the beauty and mystery of creative processes. Fortunately, educators have a wealth of information to draw on as they move toward assessment in process learning. Where schools have thus far failed students, however, is in not making these values clear and coherent at the organizational level and explicit in all that teachers teach.

It is not only our schools that are dependent on this level of learning. It is our democracy writ large. If we do not teach students how to do this work in schools, how can we expect them to grow into thoughtful and engaged citizens?

Infuse the arts in every aspect of your teaching and your assessments!



Paul K. Smith



26 Miles of Hope