



# EAST HAMPTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

East Hampton, Connecticut

## Superintendent's Update

Week of December 4, 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.

The great jobs in Fortune 500 companies, now and in the future, are likely to go to people who have **thinking skills** that cannot be taught through memorization.

Roberta Michnick Golinkoff in *Becoming Brilliant, What Science Tells Us About Raising Successful Children*  
(Join us for a book discussion on February 15 at 9:00 AM – 94 Mains Street)

### This week in our Schools

- **Monday, December 4 – East Hampton Board of Education Meeting in the High School T-Bell, 6:30 PM.** This meeting will feature an introduction to East Hampton High School Seniors, Kathryn Rivard-Lentz and Tyler Seifert who were recipients of the Connecticut Association of Public Schools Superintendents Award for outstanding community service, academic prowess, and leadership in the school community. Kindergarten Teacher, Meghan Ryczek will be honored as a recipient of the Life Changer of the Year award. And, Director of Curriculum Mary Clark will give the Board an update on the status of curriculum in the district.
- **Tuesday, December 5 – Elementary PTO Holiday Shopping Night at Memorial School, 4:30-7:430 PM.** Forget the mall, come to the Memorial School where vendors will have their products on display. There is also a Student Holiday Shop run by the PTO for students to shop for their family members. Memorial School and Center School students can shop for gifts in a special “store” set up by the PTO. This event is a great opportunity for students to experience the joy of students purchasing and giving their own gifts. All gifts are \$5.00 or less.
- **Wednesday, December 6 – Elementary PTO Meeting at the Memorial School, 6:00 PM.**
- **Wednesday, December 6 – Project Graduation Meeting in the High School Library, 6:00 PM.**
- **Thursday, December 7 – Visit to East Hampton Public Schools by Teachers and Principals from the Guandong Province of China.** Please make our guests feel welcome in your classrooms! We are honored that the East Hampton Public Schools were invited by the State Department of Education to host this group.



**During the morning hours, our guests will visit classrooms at Memorial and then will travel to the High School to meet and work with our students.**

10:30 AM	Chinese delegation goes to Memorial School for greeting by Grade 3 and Classroom Visits
11:15 AM	Group departs for East Hampton High School
11:30 AM	Group reports to High School T-Bell (Lecture Room)
	Performance by East Hampton High School “Voices” (A cappella ensemble)
	Lesson on Chinese Art to East Hampton High School Students by visiting teacher
	Lesson on Chinese History to East Hampton High School Students by visiting teacher
12:15 PM	Presentation on Curriculum and Teacher Evaluation in East Hampton Public Schools by Mary Clark, Director of Curriculum

- **Thursday, December 7 – Middle School Variety Show in the Middle School Commons, 6:30 PM.** Come and enjoy the students showcase their talents! Enjoy a snack to benefit the East Hampton Middle School PTO!



**Friday, December 8 – Coffee with the Superintendent of Schools at 94 Main Street, 7:30 – 9:00 AM.** Start your weekend with a quick (free!) cup of coffee. Stop in between 7:30-9:00 AM. Stay for some conversation or grab the coffee and get on with your day!

- **Friday, December 8 – PJ Day to support of patients at Connecticut Children’s Medical Center (CCMC).** Students in all four schools are invited to wear their PJ’s to school in honor of kids at Connecticut Children’s Medical Center. Students will be asked for **optional donation of \$1 or more**. For more information and to locate the Memorial School online to make a gift visit: <http://give.connecticutchildrens.org/pjday>. Checks can be made to **Connecticut Children’s Medical Center Foundation**. All proceeds benefit The Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders at Connecticut Children’s Medical Center

- **Friday, December 8 – Elementary PTO Bingo Night at Memorial School, 6:30-8:30 PM.**




## December Calendar

**Get your event on this calendar!**

Send additional events and dates to  
[psmith@easthamptonct.org](mailto:psmith@easthamptonct.org).

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
 Podium Players 2:00 PM High School	  <b>Board of Education Meeting - EHHS</b> <b>T-Bell, 6:30 PM</b> <b>Life Changer of the Year</b>	  <b>Elementary PTO Holiday Shopping Night</b> <b>Memorial School</b> <b>4:30-7:30 PM</b> <b>Vendor Fair &amp; Student Holiday Shop</b>	<b>Elementary PTO Center School</b> <b>6:00 PM</b>  <b>Project Graduation High School Library</b> <b>6:00 PM</b>	<b>Visit to East Hampton Public Schools by 20 Chinese Principals from the Guangdong Province</b>    <b>Middle School Variety Show</b> <b>Middle School Student Commons</b> <b>6:30 PM</b>	 <b>Coffee &amp; Chat With the Superintendent</b> <b>94 Main St.</b> <b>7:30-9:00 AM</b>   <b>ALL SCHOOLS!</b> <b>PJ Fundraiser for CCMC</b>  <b>Elementary PTO BINGO NIGHT</b> <b>Memorial School</b> <b>6:30-8:00 PM</b>	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	  Learning Walks-Memorial	<b>Center School Grade 5 Band &amp; Chorus Assembly</b> <b>2:00 PM</b> <b>(at Center School)</b>	<b>Middle School PTO Middle School Library</b> <b>6:00 PM</b>  <b>Center School Grade 5 Band &amp; Chorus Concert</b> <b>6:30 PM</b> <b>(at High School)</b>	  <i>Snow date:</i> <i>Center School Concert</i>	<b>National Cupcake Day</b>  	 East Hampton Schools supporting our local VFW efforts!
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	<b>Board of Education Meeting - EHHS</b> <b>T-Bell, 6:30 PM</b> <b>VFW recognizes Wreath Across America students</b>		  Learning Walks - Center  <b>High School Tri-M Music Honor Society Concert</b> <b>6:30 PM</b>	 <b>Superintendent's Advisory Council</b> <b>94 Main St.</b> <b>9:00-10:15 AM</b>  <b>First Day of Winter</b>   <b>East Hampton Public Schools Holiday Reception</b> <b>High School Cafeteria</b> <b>2:30 - 5:00 PM</b>	 <b>Coffee &amp; Chat With the Superintendent</b> <b>94 Main St.</b> <b>7:30-9:00 AM</b>  <b>Early Release Winter Break</b> <b>Enjoy the Holidays!</b>	<b>Enjoy the Winter Holidays and Vacation!</b>  

## January Calendar

31	1	2	3	4	5	6
	<b>No School</b>  	<b>Welcome Back to School!</b> <b>Classes resume in 2018!</b>	<b>Elementary PTO Memorial School</b> <b>6:00 PM</b>  <b>Project Graduation High School Library</b> <b>6:00 PM</b>			

## Notes



### **A reminder about REMIND – now that our weather is changing!**

If you have already signed up for the REMIND app with the Superintendent of Schools skip this section!

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 **for snow cancellations or delays** 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@easthampto’.

Or, to receive messages via email, send a (blank) email to [easthampto@mail.remind.com](mailto: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.



### **The teenage brain is still developing!**

One of the articles that I have shared in the past speaks to the fact that even as our children approach adulthood, their brain development is behind, not fully developed until very late teens or early 20’s. What often results is poor-decision making when a split-second decision is required. This can lead to risky behavior even though teachers, mentor, coaches, and adults in students’ lives are constantly reminding students what constitutes good decisions. Even with school support, home support, and community support, our teens behave in an unpredictable manner at crucial times in their lives – and the brain may be at fault.

In the article below, there is an additional complication for routine behaviors as well, as our teens have trouble matching the need for effort with an expectation they face. The example used in the article is in relations to final exams and the fact that students don’t correlate the attention required with the level of importance of a this particular task. Once again, the fault of their brains.

**Teenage brains can’t tell what’s important and what isn’t** By Jessica Hamzelou in NewScience.org

Teenagers may know full well how important final exams are – but that won’t stop some putting in minimal effort. This may be because their **brains aren’t developed enough to properly assess how high the stakes are, and adapt their behavior accordingly.**

Adults are generally pretty good at being able to tell when a situation is worthy of extra time or concentration. Research has found that, when potential rewards or losses are higher, for example, adults will perform better on tasks. But this doesn't seem to be the case for adolescents.

Catherine Insel, at Harvard University, and her team asked adolescents between the ages of 13 and 20 to play a game while lying in an fMRI brain scanner. In some rounds of the game, participants could earn 20 cents for a correct response, while an incorrect one would cost them 10 cents. But in rounds with higher stakes, correct responses were worth a dollar, and wrong answers lost the participants 50 cents.

### **Less-developed brains**

The team found that while the older volunteers performed better in the high stakes rounds, the younger ones didn't – their performance didn't change in line with whether the stakes were low or high. And the older the volunteers were, the more improved their performance was. "Interestingly, the ability to adjust performance according to the stakes at play emerged gradually across adolescence," says Insel.

When the team looked at the brain activity of the volunteers, they found that their ability to improve their performance was linked to how developed their brains were. A region called the corticostriatal network seemed to be particularly important. This is known to connect areas involved in reward to those that control behavior, and continues to develop until we are at least 25 years old.

The more developed their corticostriatal network was, the better volunteers were able to boost their performance on high stakes tasks, says Insel.

### **Risky behavior**

The findings explain why some adolescents are so nonchalant when it comes to risky behaviors, says Kathrin Cohen Kadosh, at the University of Surrey, UK. Teenagers are much more likely to drive dangerously, for instance, especially when one of their friends is nearby.

Stefano Palminteri, at the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Paris, France, thinks schools should reconsider the way they test performance in adolescents. "This study suggests it's not a good idea to evaluate school performance in a single final exam," he says. A better idea would be to use a variety of smaller tests, conducted throughout the year.

It's not all bad news for teens, adds Palminteri. "We could look at this the other way around," he says. "Adolescents put the same amount of effort into tasks that aren't 'important', and start to prefer hobbies to school."

"It could be a good thing, allowing teenagers to learn complex social skills, for example," he says.

## Thoughts



### **World Languages are essential for our children as global citizens.**

Our students have the opportunity more than any generation before them to explore the world. The world is accessible to our children like never before. Those who can speak at least one language beyond English have open doors of opportunity opened for them in careers in our country or in other countries.

Research shows that elementary school is the right time to introduce world languages to students.

In East Hampton, we do not offer World Language until the Middle School.

Parents and students have both voiced an interest and need for access to world language in the elementary school. In fact, our local communities offer world language in their elementary schools.

Will you support the addition of World Language at least in Grades 3-5 in this year's budget?

## **Personal Benefits of Foreign Language Study.** H. Jarold Weatherford, ERIC Digest.

For a long time Americans tended to think that knowing English was sufficient for all their needs. As a result, Americans developed an image as the people who cannot say even the most rudimentary phrase in any other language. Fortunately, however, many business, political, and educational leaders are belatedly realizing that the whole world does not speak English, and that even many of those who have learned English as a second language prefer to converse, to do business, and to negotiate in their native tongue.

Not long ago learning a foreign language was considered to be merely a part of a liberal education or an intellectual exercise through the study of grammar and literature. It was automatically assumed that anyone studying foreign language as a major field was going to be either a teacher, an interpreter, or a translator and had no other career options. There is still a need for people in those professions. There is also a growing need for individuals who possess advanced skills in foreign languages and are trained in various technical areas. This is a result of increased activity in international business, the inflow of large amounts of foreign capital to the United States, increased internationalization, and an expanded awareness of the need to conduct not only business but also diplomatic relations in the language of the host country.

**A second language is now becoming a vital part of the basic preparation for an increasing number of careers.** Even in those cases where the knowledge of a second language does not help graduates obtain a first job, many report that their foreign language skills often enhance their mobility and improve their chances for promotion.

In addition to any technical skills that foreign language students choose to develop, they also have further tangible advantages in the job market. In a recent study that sought to ascertain which college courses had been most valuable for people who were employed in the business world, graduates pointed not only to career-oriented courses such as business management, but also to people-oriented subjects like psychology, and to classes that had helped them to develop communication skills. Foreign language students, whose courses focus heavily on this aspect of learning, often possess outstanding communication skills, both written and oral. Furthermore, recent trends in the job marketplace indicate a revived recognition of the value of liberal arts training in general in an employee's career preparation.

### **WHAT ABOUT FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND TRAVEL ABROAD?**

It is a very common and growing desire of Americans, perhaps especially among young people, to travel abroad. Only a generation or two ago people rarely ventured beyond their home states, but now, as the planet shrinks at an unprecedented pace, large numbers of people travel to other North and South American countries, to Europe, and even to Asia and Africa with increasing frequency for both work and pleasure.

Certainly it is possible to travel in foreign lands without knowing the language. In fact, as much as our generation travels, for many it would be impossible to learn the language spoken in every country that they might visit. Nevertheless, the traveler who knows the language of the country not only has an easier time solving everyday problems associated with travel, but also has a more pleasant experience and greater understanding both of the people of the foreign country and of their culture. Therefore, every language Americans master will enhance their enjoyment and reduce their frustration and isolation as they travel around the world.

### **HOW CAN FOREIGN LANGUAGE STUDY HELP IMPROVE CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING AND MUTUAL COMMUNICATIONS?**

As the globe has shrunk, international business opportunities have multiplied and travel has grown apace. Mutual understanding and meaningful communication between nations, which have always been difficult to achieve, have now gained increased urgency. As a result, significant numbers of people in the United States have begun to call for better international understanding, and many of them have been urging more foreign language study as an important means to attaining this goal. Such exhortations are eminently well-founded, because the study of another language provides the most effective tool for penetrating the barrier of a single language and a single culture. Furthermore, experience with another culture enables people to achieve a significantly more profound understanding of their own.

Knowledge of a foreign language is not guaranteed to create empathy with and understanding for the native speakers of the language. However, the development of these qualities in individuals with a desire to understand and empathize is greatly facilitated by language study. Furthermore, foreign language study tends to help dissolve misconceptions and often helps to create feelings of sympathy for native speakers of the language, especially if the study is begun early and pursued for a long period of time.

## DOES FOREIGN LANGUAGE STUDY HELP TO DEVELOP MENTAL ABILITY OR IMPROVE GRADES?

There was a time in the United States when learning a foreign language was regarded primarily as a mental discipline for developing intellectual capacity. Even though it is now clear that language learning has numerous applications of both a practical and a humanistic nature, researchers as well as language educators still recognize that spin-off benefits accrue from foreign language study for other academic areas. For example, as Eugene Saviano stated, "The person who has never comprehended, spoken, read or written a language other than his mother tongue has little or no perspective on his own language,...he has never penetrated the rich areas of learning and experience lying beyond monolingual communication."

Novelist John Updike attributes the deterioration of writing skills in America to two generations growing up without Latin: "In some curious way, the study of this dead and intricate language enabled writers to write a beautiful, clear idiomatic English." It may be that these benefits are not to be gained only from Latin. As Vermont Royster said, "What is involved is a process in which the study of a different language gives a person an understanding of the nature of language itself, a sense of structure that is difficult to acquire from studying one's own familiar language. Any new language forces us to think why...we need to do what we do to express ourselves clearly."

For many decades researchers have attempted to reinforce with empirical evidence the intuitive sense of the value of foreign language study in improving the cognitive functioning of the brain, and many research projects have lent credence to these ideas, particularly that foreign language study enhances a student's achievements in English. For example, one researcher found that students who had taken a foreign language in high school had a significantly higher grade point average in all high school subjects as well as in freshman English courses in college. In addition, data from the Admission Testing Program of the College Board show a definite positive correlation between Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores and the study of foreign languages. In one recent test group, for example, students who had taken no foreign language in high school achieved a mean score of 366 on the verbal portion of the SAT, and 409 on the math portion. Students who had taken only one year of a foreign language had slightly higher scores (378 and 416), whereas students with two years of foreign language showed more dramatic increases (417 and 463). Each additional year of language study brought a further rise in scores, with students who had studied a language for five years or more achieving an average of 504 on the verbal and 535 on the math portion of the exam.

The College Board also calculated correlations between length of study of certain subjects, including English, math, biological sciences, physical sciences, and social studies, and SAT scores, and found that in almost all cases the longer a student studied one of these subjects, the higher were the scores. However, the verbal scores of students who had taken four or five years of a foreign language were higher than verbal scores of students who had studied any other subject for an equal length of time. Similar results have been obtained by other researchers who have examined foreign language study and SAT scores.

A number of studies in bilingual education also seem to lead to the conclusion that foreign language study can aid and even accelerate the cognitive development of the brain. Bilingual subjects in various tests have outperformed similar monolingual subjects on verbal and nonverbal tests of intelligence. This discovery has led some researchers to speculate that bilinguals may have a language ability that enables them to achieve greater mental flexibility. Along with the certainty that people who know more than one language and culture can communicate more effectively with people of other countries and cultures, it is indeed possible that through learning another language and culture, people become more effective problem-solvers, closer to achieving solutions to pressing social problems because of an increased awareness of a wider set of options.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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## Students gain more foreign-language learning in schools by Claudia M. Caruana, USA TODAY 2017

When twins Ryan and Michael D’Introno entered kindergarten two years ago, they often came home from school singing songs in Spanish, part of a language immersion program their school in Bedford Hills, N.Y., decided to try. All students, many of whom were native Spanish speakers, received instruction in both English and Spanish a few days a week.

The boys’ mother, Gina D’Introno, says her sons “were excited to learn Spanish.”

D’Introno also believes the Spanish-speaking students were pleased to see their classmates learning their language.

Similar immersion programs focusing on Spanish and other languages such as French, German and Chinese are increasing in the United States, as are more traditional programs in second-language learning in elementary schools. In fact, 25 percent of all U.S. public and private elementary schools offered foreign language instruction in 2010, according to the [Center for Applied Linguistics](#). The Washington, D.C.-based organization tracks language study in the U.S. Many of the programs are immersion programs where children are taught in English for part of the day, and in another language at other times. French immersion programs have been popular in Canadian schools for many years, and in the U.S., many school districts offer them to encourage language learning.

But as much as educators and many parents applaud a strong approach and increasing interest in foreign-language learning, it is not available in every school district. And the U.S. is still far behind many European countries, where young children are required to begin learning a foreign language before the age of 9. In several countries, students are required to learn a second foreign language soon after that, says Nancy Rhodes, senior foreign language education consultant for the Center for Applied Linguistics.

According to the most current U.S. Department of Education statistics regarding second-language learning, Spanish overall was the most in-demand language in 2009, with French coming in second, Rhodes says. “There also continues to be interest in learning Chinese and Arabic,” she adds.

### Why we need other languages

Theresa Bruns, director of professional development at [Middlebury Interactive Languages](#) in Middlebury, Vt., says children have an advantage when learning a second language because their brains are still developing, which gives them the capacity to more easily acquire the language.

Another possible advantage of having more than one language under one’s belt: A study published in 2014 in the *Annals of Neurology* by researchers at the University of Edinburgh indicates that knowing another language might slow the onset of dementia later in life.

In addition to the intellectual and potential health benefits that learning a second language might offer, globalization provides another motive to speak another language as more Americans decide to travel, study or work overseas.

“There are now definitely more jobs globally that require language and cross-cultural skills,” says Rhodes. “U.S. universities are realizing that they need to prepare globally competent graduates and are starting to offer more tailored language classes in preparation for needs in the workforce. They are also internationalizing their curricula to help their graduates adapt to the global marketplace.”

In recent years, Bruns says, “We have seen growth in (the number of) school districts where administrators, teachers and parents recognize the long-term benefits of second-language acquisition and employ creative strategies to provide students with high-quality world language instruction.”

Such strategies can include integrating digital tools — including games, videos and animation — into classroom lessons. It’s not easy, Bruns says: “Reality tells us that with increased standardized testing and time being spent in the classroom focusing on test preparation, there is not time to add in one more subject to the day.”

Other major roadblocks are funding programs and finding faculty that can teach more complex foreign languages to younger children.

“Shrinking budgets often means that schools just don’t have the funds to hire language teachers,” Bruns notes. But some elementary schools are turning to digital courses that can provide flexibility with how and when the instruction will occur

during the school day. “Digital learning is driving this growth because it can provide access to qualified online Chinese teachers, which can be very difficult for many districts to find,” Bruns says.

### Parents and community matter

It can be difficult to advocate for language learning in lower grades because a second language is not required by schools in most states. But experts say it is important for parents to urge school boards, administrators and even local politicians to include language learning in their children’s schools for reasons that range from preserving native languages to serving a specific community. In New York City, for example, the first bilingual program in Urdu will begin this fall in Brooklyn, in part to address the needs and interests of local speakers of Urdu, which is the official language of Pakistan and is also spoken in many parts of India.

There are some parents who want their children to learn another language even earlier than in elementary school.

Emily Abdallah, a middle school teacher at an independent school in New York City, decided that her 3-year-old daughter, Aria, would benefit by attending the Maryel International School, a private school also in New York City, where Spanish is spoken almost exclusively. Abdallah plans to enroll her younger daughter, now 2, at Maryel next year.

“I want my children to be able to access their culture — to truly do so they need to speak the language,” she says. “Although my parents are both Spanish speakers, they taught us English and didn’t speak Spanish. At the time, the goal was assimilation and the avoidance of having an accent. Now that I know that notion was incorrect, I want to do everything I can to have my kids have the chance to experience being bilingual.”

East Hampton children deserve every opportunity that students in neighboring towns enjoy!



Paul K. Smith



26 Miles of Hope