



EAST HAMPTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

East Hampton, Connecticut

Superintendent's Update

Week of December 18, 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.

Joy comes to us in ordinary moments.

We risk missing out when we get too busy chasing down the extraordinary.

~ Brene Brown



The demands on teachers never decrease. They increase every year. Amidst the paperwork, uploading, record keeping, and evaluation planning, our students still need teachers who offer inspiration and support, coaching and mentoring, patience and understanding, as well as compassion and empathy. May this year's holiday season offer a brief respite from the day-to-day grind and usher in a chance for renewal marked by a period of simplicity with your family and friends. – Paul



This week in our Schools

- **Monday, December 18 – East Hampton Board of Education Meeting in the High School T-Bell, 5:30 PM.** We have much to share at this meeting, our last of 2018! First we will honor the magnificent work of our K-5 students who made sure that the members of the East Hampton VFW knew how important the Wreaths Across America is to all of us. Winners of the poster contest and essay contest will be thanked by the Board of Education and the member of the VFW. Poster winners are Kindergarten-Taylor Karabetsos, Grade 1-Matthew Balamucki, Grade 2-Juliana Ware, Grade 3-Nora Hyte. And, essay winners are Grade 4-Chelsea Ryan, Grade 5-Gabriella Wiesner. In addition, the Administration will present the Profile of the Graduate to the Board. This groundbreaking work of the East Hampton Schools is already being recognized by Ken Kay, a national leader in education, who has singled out our document for recognition. Ken is the Chief Executive Officer of EdLeader21, a professional learning community for education leaders committed to 21st century education. Ken co-founded the Partnership for 21st Century Skills in 2002 and served as its President for eight years. Come to the meeting to learn why this project is getting recognized by leaders in the field.
- **Wednesday, December 20 – High School Tri-M Music Honor Society Recital / Concert at the High School, 6:30 PM.** Enjoy the music of the Tri-M members and give yourself a little break from the craziness of the season!
- **Thursday, December 21 – First Day of Winter.**



Thursday, December 21 – Superintendent's Advisory Council at 94 Main Street, 9:00 AM. All parents and community members are welcome to attend any and all meetings. The December 21 meeting will feature the following: (1) a description of the Profile of the Graduate, (2) an update on all budget requests for 2018-19, and (3) a midyear review of the school district's goals. If the agenda doesn't necessarily interest you, just come for the coffee!

- **Thursday, December 21 – East Hampton Public Schools Holiday Party for all teachers and staff members in the East Hampton High School Cafeteria, 2:30-5:00 PM.** Please come and celebrate the season with your colleagues from all four schools. Prizes for the tackiest Holiday Sweater and the Grade/Team/Department with the most Holiday Spirit!








Friday, December 22 – Coffee and Christmas Cookies with the Superintendent of Schools at 94 Main Street, 7:30 – 9:00 AM. It's a half day for our students, so get a quick cup of coffee before they come home! Start the holidays with a quick (free!) cup of coffee. Stay for some conversation or grab the coffee and get on with the holidays!

- **Friday, December 22 – Early Dismissal for East Hampton Public Schools.** Enjoy the Winter Holidays!




December Calendar

Get your event on this calendar!
Send additional events and dates to
psmith@easthamptonct.org.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	<p>Board of Education Meeting - EHHS T-Bell, 6:30 PM</p> <p>VFW recognizes Wreath Across America students</p>		<p> Learning Walks – Center</p> <p>High School Tri-M Music Honor Society Concert 6:30 PM</p>	<p> Superintendent's Advisory Council 94 Main St. 9:00-10:15 AM</p> <p>First Day of Winter </p> <p>East Hampton Public Schools Holiday Reception High School Cafeteria 2:30 – 5:00 PM</p>	<p> Coffee & Chat With the Superintendent 94 Main St. 7:30-9:00 AM</p> <p>Early Release Winter Break Enjoy the Holidays!</p>	<p>Enjoy the Winter Holidays and Vacation!</p> 

January 2018 Calendar

31	1	2	3	4	5	6
	<p>No School</p> 	<p>Welcome Back to School! Classes resume in 2018!</p>	<p>Elementary PTO Memorial School 6:00 PM</p> <p>Project Graduation High School Library 6:00 PM</p>			
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
		<p> Learning Walks – High School</p>	<p>Middle School PTO Middle School Library 6:00 PM</p>	<p>High School Exams</p>	<p>High School Exams</p> <p> Coffee & Chat With the Superintendent 94 Main St. 7:30-9:00 AM</p>	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	<p>No School</p> <p>Martin Luther King Day</p>	<p>High School Exams</p> <p>Board of Education Meeting - EHHS T-Bell, 6:30 PM</p> <p>2018-19 BUDGET PRESENTATION</p>	<p>High School Exams</p>	<p> Superintendent's Advisory Council 94 Main St. 9:00-10:15 AM</p> <p>Budget Information on Agenda</p>		
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
			<p>Optional Faculty Meetings – Budget Information 2018-19 High School T-Bell 2:45 PM 3:45 PM</p>		<p> Coffee & Chat With the Superintendent 94 Main St. 7:30-9:00 AM</p>	

Notes



■ **Important Information on East Hampton High School Yearbooks!**

It's time for students and parents to preorder their copy of the East Hampton High School Yearbook - and it's also time for parents to purchase their Parent Ads.

- Yearbooks are for sale to any student 9-12 at www.balfour.com
- Parent ads are created and purchases at www.balfour.com (due by February 28)
- Links and tutorial can be found at <http://www.easthamptonps.org/o/EHHS/page/ehhs-2017-18-yearbook>

■ **Think about your thinking!**



Getting our students to self-reflect and “think about thinking” may be one of the most important skills they need in school – and in life. This brief article below has some great links to other articles and research, along with some good classroom pointers. While the article begins with an example involving college students, our youngest learners who can identify how they learn, how they study, and reflect on their abilities have a big advantage according to research.

How Metacognition Boosts Learning By Youki Terada n Edutopia

Students often lack the metacognitive skills they need to succeed, but they can develop these skills by addressing some simple questions.

By **Youki Terada**

Strategies that target students’ metacognition—the ability to think about thinking—can close a gap that some students experience between how prepared they feel for a test and how prepared they actually are. In **a new study**, students in an introductory college statistics class who took a short online survey before each exam asking them to think about how they would prepare for it earned higher grades in the course than their peers—a third of a letter grade higher, on average. This low-cost intervention **helped students gain insight into their study strategies, boosting their metacognitive skills and giving them tools to be more independent learners.**

Patricia Chen, a postdoctoral researcher at Stanford and the lead author of the study, says she often had students coming to her lamenting their poor test scores. “Many students have come to me after their exams trying to understand why they did not do as well as they had expected, despite their hard work,” she **recalls**. She suspected that the issue was that they lacked awareness of how ill-prepared they were—metacognitive awareness—and that led to the unexpectedly low scores. They thought they understood the material better than they actually did.

Nearly two decades ago, Cornell psychologists David Dunning and Justin Kruger conducted a landmark study looking at this perception gap. In a series of experiments, they found that many college students who performed poorly on tests of logic and grammar had overestimated their performance, believing themselves to be above average. This phenomenon, the **Dunning-Kruger Effect**, explains why many students feel confident that they’ll pass a test despite being underprepared. Overconfidence leaves students “with the mistaken impression that they’re doing just fine,” according to Dunning and Kruger.

More recently, a team of psychologists and neuroscientists **published a comprehensive analysis** of 10 learning techniques commonly used by students. **They discovered that one of the most popular techniques—rereading material and highlighting key points—is also one of the least effective because it leads students to develop a false sense of mastery. They review a passage and move on without realizing that they haven’t thoroughly understood and absorbed the material.**

This has serious implications for learning: It's far too easy for students to overestimate their understanding of a topic simply because they're familiar with it. Metacognition helps students recognize the gap between being familiar with a topic and understanding it deeply. But weaker students often don't have this metacognitive recognition—which leads to disappointment and can discourage them from trying harder the next time.

Research shows that even children as young as 3 benefit from metacognitive activities, which help them reflect on their own learning and develop higher-order thinking. To promote students' metacognition, middle and high school teachers can implement the following strategies. Elementary teachers can model or modify these strategies with their students to provide more scaffolding.

Metacognitive Strategies to Use During Class

The key to metacognition is to encourage students to manage their own learning instead of passively absorbing material. Donna Wilson and Marcus Conyers use the phrase "**drive your brain**" as a metaphor to explain to students how they can become more aware of their learning. In addition, promoting a **growth mindset** helps students understand that learning isn't fixed: Through dedication and hard work, they can learn to be more resilient and overcome many challenges that may otherwise feel impossible. Simply being aware that there's a difference between a fixed and a growth mindset is one of the most effective metacognitive strategies that students can benefit from.

During class, encourage students to ask questions. Keep in mind that struggling students may not know what questions to ask, or may feel too embarrassed to ask any. Don't assume that every student understands the material just because no one asks a question. Use low-stakes formative assessment strategies like **exit tickets**, pop quizzes, or the classic "**One-Minute Paper**" to identify gaps in knowledge and guide future lessons (Heitink et al., **2016**; Marzano, **2012**; Sundberg, **2010**).

During class, students should ask themselves:

- What are the main ideas of today's lesson?
- Was anything confusing or difficult?
- If something isn't making sense, what question should I ask the teacher?
- Am I taking proper notes?
- What can I do if I get stuck on a problem?

Metacognitive Strategies to Use When Preparing for Tests

To close the gap between what your students know and what will be on a test, encourage them to quiz themselves instead of just rereading and highlighting a text. This not only boosts long-term retention but also bridges the gap between familiarity with a topic and deep understanding of it (Adesope et al., **2017**; Smith et al., **2013**).

Before a test, students should ask themselves:

- What will be on the test?
- What areas do I struggle with or feel confused about?
- How much time should I set aside to prepare for an upcoming test?
- Do I have the necessary materials (books, school supplies, a computer and online access, etc.) and a quiet place to study, with no distractions?
- What strategies will I use to study? Is it enough to simply read and review the material, or will I take practice tests, study with a friend, or write note cards?
- What grade would I get if I were to take the test right now?

Metacognitive Strategies to Use to Review After a Test

Don't let students receive a graded test and file it away without using it as a tool for further learning. Try using **exam wrappers**, short handouts that students complete after a test is handed back. These worksheets encourage students to review their test performance and improve their study strategies throughout the school year (Gezer-Templeton et al., **2017**).

After a test, students should ask themselves:

- What questions did I get wrong, and why did I get them wrong?

- Were there any surprises during the test?
- Was I well-prepared for the test?
- What could I have done differently?
- Am I receiving useful, specific feedback from my teacher to help me progress?

Thoughts



New Year's Resolutions for Educators

Choose one of the resolutions below and make 2018 your best year of teaching! This list is a repeat from last year with a few adjustments, but if you just try one that is new to you, our schools will soar in 2018!

1. Be committed to high achievement for *every* student in your classes.
2. Use a variety of approaches and resources to meet the needs of *every* student in your classes.
3. Engage each student in higher-order thinking and connect your curriculum to his or her life in and out of school.
4. Mentor a student who needs a positive adult connection.
5. Take charge of your own professional development and continuously work to improve and reflect upon your practices.
6. Collaborate with at least one other colleague and share your ideas about teaching and learning.
7. Increase your communication with students and parents.
8. Take a risk and try something in the classroom that you have always dreamed of trying such as Genius Hour, a capstone-style personalized learning project, or a “breakout” experience in the classroom.
9. Allow technology to have a major impact on your teaching and on student learning in at least one unit of study.
10. Take the time to support students in their other endeavors at school.



Have a great vacation!
 Reflect on all this good in our profession.
 Then reflect on one area that you could help to improve.



Paul K. Smith



26 Miles of Hope