



# EAST HAMPTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

East Hampton, Connecticut

## Superintendent's Update

Week of August 21 – *Back-to-School!*



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.

I refuse to accept the view that mankind is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace and brotherhood can never become a reality...

I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word.

~ Martin Luther King, Jr.

### A message to the School Community

In my July Update to families & staff (<http://www.easthamptonps.org/superintendent-updates-2017-18>), I included an article on "How to Design a School That Prioritizes Kindness and Caring." At first, I was disappointed that it would even be necessary to design an environment that should just be natural.

The events of August have convinced me that we must be indeed be purposeful in promoting Kindness and Caring.


I am fully committing the schools of East Hampton as places that will promote kindness and caring - not because we don't already, but because we constantly need to ensure that our students experience kindness and caring as youths if we want them to prosper as kind and caring adults.

Join me in this effort in Making Kindness and Caring Common!



(If any teacher, staff member, of parent would like a JPG file of this logo, email me at [psmith@easthamptonct.org](mailto:psmith@easthamptonct.org).)

## This week in our Schools

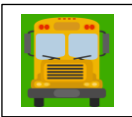
- **Monday, August 21 – Board of Education Meeting in the High School T-Bell, 6:30 PM.** Note new time start of Board meeting. Due to the overwhelming interest in a memorial tribute to Mr. John Fidler, the Board of Education will open up their meeting for public comment to hear ideas. All voices will be heard in creating an appropriate and lasting tribute to Principal John Fidler. The Board of Education is excited to honor one of East Hampton's most influential adults who served our students as teacher, coach, Athletic Director, and Principal.
- **Thursday, August 24 – New Teacher/Staff Orientation in the High School Cafeteria, 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM.** We look forward to welcoming our new teacher and staff members who are replacing outgoing retired staff members or those who have left our schools. Welcoming new teachers and new staff members into the Bellringer tradition is very important. We feel we have great new teachers and new staff joining our ranks this year!
- **Thursday, August 24 – Babysitting for Teachers and Staff Members in Room 702 at East Hampton High School, 8:30 AM – 1:00 PM.** This is an annual opportunity provided by the High School Interact Club for teachers who would like to spend a few hours in their classroom preparing for the first day. Contact Kristen Keska for details: [kkeska@easthamptonct.org](mailto:kkeska@easthamptonct.org).
- **Thursday, August 24 – Freshman Orientation at East Hampton High School, 6:30 PM.**
-  **Friday, August 25 – “Back-to-School” Coffee and Chat with the Superintendent at 94 Main Street, 7:30-9:00 AM.** Parents are welcome to stop in and say, “Hello” as we get ready to begin another year. Teachers who are in their classrooms to set up are welcome to come by for Coffee to begin the day!
- **Friday, August 25 – Ice Cream Social for new Grade 6 and New Middle School Students at the East Hampton Middle School, 11:00 AM-Noon & 1:00-2:00 PM.**

## Coming Soon!

- **Monday, August 28 – East Hampton Public Schools Convocation: Breakfast in the High School Cafeteria 8:00-9:00 AM followed by Convocation in the High School Auditorium 9:00-10:30 AM.** This is our yearly get-together of every teacher and staff member in the district as we kick off another school year.
- **Monday, August 28 – Grade 4 “Welcoming Event” at Center School, 3:30-4:30 PM.** All Grade 4 students are invited to visit Center School, meet their teacher, and visit their classroom before the school year officially begins.
- **Tuesday, August 29 – Kindergarten “Meet and Greet Bus Ride” Morning at Memorial School, 9:00-10:00 AM.** *We look forward to welcoming the Graduating Class of 2030 into Kindergarten!* Incoming kindergartners have an opportunity to meet their teacher and classmates and take a short bus ride while parents/guardians attend an orientation with school administrators, nurse, and office staff. It’s a great opportunity to introduce yourself to our new Principal, Mr. Andrew Gonzalez.
- **Tuesday, August 29 – Classroom “Sneak Peek” of PK-3 Rooms at Memorial School, 3:30-5:00 PM.** Students in Grades PK – 3 and family members are invited to stop in for a self-guided tour of the building and their classroom.
- **Wednesday, August 30 – Our School Year Begins – The First Day of School!**



*We are looking forward to welcoming everyone back to school next week!*



# August/September 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
<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>(August)</b>	<b>Board of Education Meeting - EHHS</b> T-Bell, 6:30 PM			INTERACT CLUB Babysitting for Teachers & Staff 8:30 AM – 1:30 PM Room 702 at EHHS  New Teacher & Staff Orientation High School - 9:00 AM  Freshman Orientation High School 6:30 PM	 <b>Back-to-School Coffee &amp; Chat</b> 94 Main St. 7:30-9:00 AM   <b>Ice Cream Social for Grade 6 &amp; New Students</b> Middle School 11:00 AM-12:00 Noon 1:00-2:00 PM	
<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>1 - September</b>	<b>2</b>
	Back-to-School CONVOCATION for Teachers & Staff High School 8:00 AM & Professional Development  "Welcoming Event" Grade 4 Students Center School 3:30-4:30 PM	Professional Development for Teachers & Staff <b>Kindergarten Meet &amp; Great Bus Ride</b> 9:00-10:00 AM "Classroom Sneak Peek" Pre K - 3 Students Memorial School 3:30-5:00 PM	<div style="background-color: yellow; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <b>First Day of School 2017-18</b>  </div>		 <b>Coffee &amp; Chat With the Superintendent</b> 94 Main St. 7:30-9:00 AM	
<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
	<div style="background-color: pink; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <b>Labor Day</b>            No School         </div>	<b>Board of Education Meeting - EHHS</b> T-Bell, 6:30 PM Tuesday – due to Holiday <b>Teacher of the Year Night!</b>		<div style="background-color: yellow; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <b>High School WELCOME BACK OPEN HOUSE</b>            6:30 PM         </div>	 <b>International Literacy Day</b>  <b>RIBBON CUTTING CELEBRATION</b> East Hampton High School Tours 3:30-4:45 PM Program 5:00 PM	
<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>
	<div style="background-color: lightblue; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <b>East Hampton HS Senior Parent Night</b>            High School Auditorium            6:30 PM         </div>	<div style="background-color: yellow; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <b>Middle School WELCOME BACK OPEN HOUSE</b>            6:30 PM         </div>	 <b>Character Day</b> <i>Let it Ripple!</i> <a href="http://www.letitripple.org">www.letitripple.org</a> <hr style="border: 1px solid red;"/> <b>Middle School PTO</b> Middle School Library 6:00 PM	<div style="background-color: yellow; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <b>Center School WELCOME BACK OPEN HOUSE</b>            6:30 PM         </div>	 <b>Coffee &amp; Chat With the Superintendent</b> 94 Main St. 7:30-9:00 AM  <div style="background-color: lightorange; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <b>United States Constitution Day</b> </div>	<div style="border: 1px solid blue; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <i>Save the date!</i>  <b>High School Crew Regatta at the Lake</b>  <b>250th Celebration Event</b>  </div>
<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>
	<b>Board of Education Meeting - EHHS</b> T-Bell, 6:30 PM <div style="background-color: yellow; padding: 2px;"> <b>Friends of Education Night!</b> </div>	<div style="background-color: yellow; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <b>Memorial PK, K, 1 WELCOME BACK OPEN HOUSE</b>            6:30 PM         </div>		 Superintendent's Advisory Council 94 Main St. 9:00 AM  <div style="background-color: yellow; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <b>Memorial 2, 3 WELCOME BACK OPEN HOUSE</b>            6:30 PM         </div>	<div style="background-color: lightorange; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <b>First Day of Autumn</b>    <b>Memorial School PTO Jog-a-thon</b>   <div style="background-color: yellow; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> <b>Middle School Pantherfest!</b>            3:00-9:00 PM         </div> </div>	

## Notes



### ■ ***The coffee starts even before schools starts!***

Coffee with the Superintendent of Schools begins prior to the first day of school on **Friday morning, August 25 from 7:30-9:00 AM**. Start your morning with a cup whether you are a teacher setting up your classroom or a parent on the way to work. You can just say “hello” and grab the coffee to go! Or, sit for a few minutes and chat! *(No taxpayer dollars used for coffee, cream, sugar, stirrers, or cups!)*

### ■ ***It's not hard to find out what's going on in the classrooms!***

Take full advantage of our Back-to-School Open Houses! With new Principals at the Memorial School and Center School, a new Middle School Assistant Principal, and an Interim Principal at the High School, these events offer the opportunity to meet them as well!

**Take full advantage of our Open House opportunities to get to know our teachers and administrators.**

- Thursday, September 7 – [High School](#) Open House, 6:30 PM.
- Tuesday, September 12 – [Middle School](#) Open House, 6:30 PM.
- Thursday, September 14 – [Center School](#) Open House, 6:30 PM.
- 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.

### ■ ***Superintendent's Advisory Council – 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month***



Please consider taking time and joining the Superintendent for “**Coffee and Chat**” at the monthly Superintendent’s Advisory Council meetings at 94 Main Street. The meetings will be held the third Thursday of each month from 9:00 AM - 10:15 AM and are open to all parents and community members. Come as often as you can! The meetings are a bit more formal than the Friday morning coffees as there is a scheduled topic for each month. The agenda will be sent out each month in advance, but there will always be time for additional questions and answers.

**If you are looking for accurate information directly from the Superintendent of Schools, this is the meeting for you!**

	<b>Superintendent's Advisory Council Dates</b>	
Thursday	September 21	9:00 AM
Thursday	October 19	9:00 AM
Thursday	November 16	9:00 AM
Thursday	December 21	9:00 AM
Thursday	January 18	9:00 AM
Thursday	February 15	9:00 AM
Thursday	March 15	9:00 AM
Thursday	April 12 (2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday)	9:00 AM
Thursday	May 17	9:00 AM

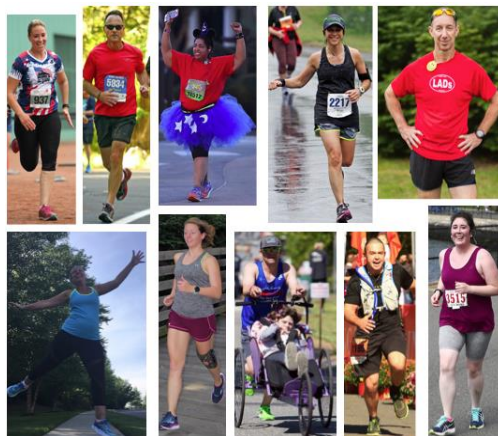
■ **Thank you for those who joined the Superintendent on the Summer Fitness Challenge Runs!**

Thank you to the loyal teachers, staff members, parents, and students who joined in for the 8:00 AM runs on the East Hampton High School track during the month of July! We work to make sure that our students understand the importance of fitness and wellness – and there was certainly good modeling of that by **the** adults who participated – Thank you!

As your Superintendent, I am especially grateful to all who came out on the cooler mornings, the rainy morning, and the hot mornings! As a result of this summer’s fitness challenge, the Hartford Marathon Foundation asked me to be one of the 10 members of the Aiello Inspiration Team for this year’s Hartford Marathon on Saturday, October 14. I am honored to represent East Hampton as part of the team!



**AIELLO Inspiration Team 2017**



<http://hartfordmarathon.blogspot.com/2017/08/congrats-to-2017-aiello-inspiration-team.html>



■ **Finish off the Summer with one more fitness event!**

The YMCA in Middletown is hosting a youth triathlon event on **Sunday, August 27** for athletes of any experience entering grades 3 - 12. The proceeds of the event benefit My Time, a Middlesex YMCA scholarship program serving families who have been impacted by cancer. Details at: <https://www.midymca.org/my-time>.

The athletes will complete an open water swim, a multi-terrain closed bike course, and a run on the grounds of Camp Ingersoll in Portland. There is a 9:30 AM check-in and the heats begin at 10:30 AM. Parents or guardian must register at the Middlesex YMCA. (\$10 per athlete, \$20 per family)

■ **REMINDER: Bring your license to visit our schools in order to visit/volunteer please.**

**STOP**

**PLEASE NOTE:  
All Visitors Must Sign In**

Sign In

**The East Hampton Public Schools  
requires a photo ID**  
(Driver's License or State/Federal Issued photo ID)  
in order to visit the school during school hours.

Background checks are done using RAPTOR Visitor Management Software System.

All visitors, volunteers, parents attending school field trips,  
and contractors must present a photo ID  
and wear a VISITOR badge during the visit.

Thank you for your cooperation as we maintain the  
safest environment for the children of East Hampton.

Beginning the first day of school, all of our Main Offices (Memorial, Center, Middle School, and High School) will lock doors upon the start of the school day and continue to use the **RAPTOR automated visitor management software**. This system allows our school offices to confirm that visitors (parents, guests, repair persons) are who they say they are by requiring driver’s license or other government-issued identification. This automated software instantly checks names against all registered sex offender lists in the United States or alerts related to court orders or child custody.

**If you visited last year, your license is still on file with our computer system and you do not need to show your license. The program automatically does background checks each time you enter.**

**Please note: If you are changing schools you will need to show your license the first time in the new school as the program does not connect between the schools.**



■ ***Everyone is welcome to attend the Ribbon Cutting of East Hampton High School!***

Please plan to be part of the Ribbon Cutting Celebration at East Hampton High School organized by East Hampton High School, the Building Committee, and the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Committee. Come and enjoy tours of the new High School from 3:30-4:45 PM and stay for the opening of the Time Capsule, and the official “Ribbon Cutting” of the school at 5:00 PM.



## Thoughts

### **John Fidler (1957-2017)**



If someone was to write a book, *The Art of Being John Fidler*, it would be well over one thousand pages featuring details on how to be kind, how to coach, how to lead, how to work hard, how to enjoy family, and how to enjoy life. But somehow for John himself, his own “book” by which he lived, was as simple as a message written on a napkin. He mastered the art of putting people at ease, pulling the best out of them, comforting them, and loving them without effort. It was natural and sincere.

John was a “chameleon” as a Principal. He could walk down the hall and see a student and be a mentor with a compliment. A little further down the hall, he would change and be a father to an upset student. In the same hallway, he was a consoler to a faculty member, giving them a quick word of encouragement with lasting effect. And, two steps later he could inspire a group of students with a smile and few words on a performance in which he had seen them. In a distance of 40 feet, John literally changed lives for the better. It was genuine, effortless, and meaningful.

After 27 years, it never got old for him. Every day, John loved being Principal of East Hampton High School. John loved his teachers. John loved his students. And everyone who ever came in contact with John, loved him back.

Anybody that met John once was a friend for life. Everyone felt a personal connection to John - regardless of how long he knew you. As soon as you met John, you were part of his list of friends for whom he would do anything. As people came together for the memorial tribute to John on the stairs of the school and during the calling hours at the school, it was a common story among the crowd that everyone felt that John was a true friend to them. That's the John Fidler that all of us loved – and all of us tried to emulate.

John's leadership style was, in a way – “devious,” when you reflect on it. John didn't want to lead people. He wanted to better people – and he always did. He didn't lead teachers and staff members. He simply modeled what it was to show respect, care, kindness, and appreciation. People didn't follow John. They wanted to be like John. He inspired growth in the school and always deflected credit to the people he empowered with his mentorship. He never took credit for anything that happened in the school.

With a little smile on his face he always bragged about his teachers whether they were initiating interdisciplinary projects in the T-Bell, working on the NEASC Accreditation report, piloting the impressive Senior Capstone Projects, or promoting Special Olympics, Relay for Life, and Manis for a Cure (*Side note: imagine 6-foot 5-inches of John Fidler with painted pink fingernails*).

His love and admiration of our students is now and will be legendary. The stories of him (of which he would never tell) have come out this week of him driving to pick students up in the morning, delivering pizzas to them, and making every student feel connected to the school community. He had *passion* for those for whom sports and school was their priority, but he had *genuine compassion* for those who struggled and who might have not have graduated if John had not been a strong looming presence. Yes, John towered over many of us – if not all of us. But, in person, you never felt short next to John. He had a knack of making you feel like you were always speaking face-to-face with him.

John's love for his family was obvious and John's love for his students and teachers was obvious. But, John also loved everything that was East Hampton High School. Even the building was special to him – even in the midst of the heaviest parts of the renovation – because John saw what it would be and got everyone to believe in the finished product. Just like students who were going through difficulties, John saw what they could be and got every student to believe in themselves and the finished product they would be.

In a long life, if you change one person's life for the better, you have done the most important thing anyone can do. John Fidler changed lives every day. There were students who would not have graduated without his efforts. There were staff members who would not have blossomed because without his efforts. Every encounter he had with another person in school and out of school mattered.

John was a remarkable teacher, a remarkable coach, a remarkable principal, and a remarkable human being. John Fidler leaves behind a legacy of being admired for all the right reasons. The admiration for him was as a role model, as a family man, and as a great leader. As people continue to reflect on John's life and leadership, not only do they say it was a life well lived, it has been so common for people to say, “I want to be more like John Fidler.”

We are all grateful that we benefited from John's dedication to school and town.



The loss of High School Principal, John Fidler has been a shock to us all; however, in a few short weeks we must be prepared to open our schools and be prepared for another year of teaching and learning.

With that said, Mrs. Nancy Briere has graciously agreed to act as Interim Principal of the High School through December 31. Nancy has served the district most recently as Interim Director of Curriculum following her years as Middle School Principal. Nancy's knowledge of the district, knowledge of the children, and knowledge of the high school programming and staff make her the perfect Interim during this difficult time. More important is the love she has for East Hampton and our school district as she takes on this new role in her continued "retirement."

In addition, to the team of Nancy and Michael Dalton – Assistant Principal, our current High School Director of Guidance, Kaitlin Sullivan will act as Dean of Students to offer additional support in the office. We have hired an additional Guidance Counselor for this school year.

And, a very special **THANK YOU** to the entire community of East Hampton.

On behalf of the teachers and staff of the East Hampton Public Schools, thank you to the Town of East Hampton. As we said goodbye to High School Principal, John Fidler, our school community was able to pull together to pay appropriate tribute and offer tremendous support to John's wife, sons, sisters, and parents. All of this was made possible by an outpouring of support and assistance by our town agencies, service organizations, and community members who were on site and standing by to honor John and his family.

We all take solace in knowing that East Hampton can come together in any crisis to offer support, assistance, and love.

We are certainly East Hampton STRONG!

Paul K. Smith  
Superintendent of Schools



We are eagerly looking forward to welcoming everyone back!



Paul Smith

