



# East Hampton Public Schools

## Superintendent's Update

### Week of May 23, 2016

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.



**Thank you Veterans for your service!**

A hero is someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself.

~ Thomas Campbell



#### In honor of the Veterans of East Hampton:

The East Hampton Public Schools wishes all of our students and families a beautiful Memorial Day Weekend in remembrance of veterans who sacrificed to protect our country, living veterans who fought for our country, and our active service men and women who continue to make our country proud.

### Calendar

#### **Please Note: The Tuesday, May 24 Budget Referendum has been postponed.**


At the May 16 Board of Finance meeting, the Board of Finance prepared and presented a **2nd Proposed Budget** for consideration by the Town Council.

In this budget, some of the Board of Education funding and Town funding has been restored based on the finalized state budget.

The current status for the Board of Education is an increase of **\$302,500** or a **1.05%** increase from last year's budget.

The current Town and School Budget represents a **1.66 mill** increase.

**The next step is Town Council approval of the 1.05% increase to the Board.**  
**Please attend the Tuesday, May 24 Town Council Meeting**  
**at the Middle School Library, 6:30 PM to show support for this budget.**

- Monday, May 23 – Board of Education Policy Subcommittee meeting in the High School Library, 5:00 PM.
- Monday, May 23 – Center School Band and Choir Spring Concert in the High School Auditorium, 6:30 PM.
- Monday, May 23 – Board of Education Meeting in the East Hampton High School Library, 7:00 PM.
- ~~Tuesday, May 24 – Budget Referendum at East Hampton Middle School, 6:00 AM 8:00 PM. **POSTPONED.**~~
- Tuesday, May 24 – First annual Senior Project Expo at East Hampton High School, 5:00 – 7:00 PM. Come and see the work the Senior Class has done on their Capstone projects. Approximately 70 seniors have participated in this pilot program.
- Tuesday, May 24 – Town Council Meeting at the **Middle School Library, 6:30 PM.** At this meeting, the Town Council votes on the 1.05% increase (\$302,500) to the Board of Education Budget. Also at this meeting, the Town Council will set the date of the Town Meeting and the Budget Referendum. *Note change of location.*
- Thursday, May 26 – East Hampton High School Music Department Spring Concert in the High School Auditorium, 7:00 PM.
-  Friday, May 27 – Coffee with the Superintendent of Schools at the Central Office, 7:30 – 9:30 AM. Start the Memorial Day weekend off with a coffee!
- Friday, May 27 – Memorial Day Observation Assembly at the East Hampton Middle School, 9:30 AM.
- Friday, May 27 – Nominations due for recognition as an East Hampton Public Schools “Good Apple.” Nominations are due to the building Principals. Please nominate one of our outstanding teachers or staff members. All employees are eligible!



- **Friday, May 27 – East Hampton High School Senior Picnic.**
- **Friday, May 27 – Last Day to order EHHS PTO Lawn Signs.** You don't have to have a graduating Senior to show your support for the Class of 2016. By purchasing a Class of 2016, you support all of the EHHS students with your \$15 donation for the sign. For more information e-mail Denise at [drusso216@comcast.net](mailto:drusso216@comcast.net).
- **Monday, May 30 – Memorial Day, No School.**



**Monday, May 30 – East Hampton Memorial Day Parade and Remembrance Ceremonies.** The parade assembles at the high school at 8:30 AM and steps off at 9:00 AM. Look for our middle school and high school marching bands!

- **Tuesday, May 31 – Music Booster Meeting at East Hampton High School Music Room, 6:00 PM.** Due to final exams at the High School the following week, the meeting time has been changed.



**Wednesday, June 1 – Superintendent's Advisory Council at the Central Office, 9:00-10:15 AM.** On the first Wednesday of each month, the Superintendent holds a more formal "coffee and chat" meeting for parents and community members. *Don't miss this meeting – it's the last one of the year!*

- **Wednesday, June 1 – Top 10 Graduating Seniors Recognition at the East Hampton Library, 5:00 PM.**
- **Wednesday, June 1 – Incoming Grade 6 (Current Grade 5) Parent Orientation at the Middle School, 6:30 PM.**
- **Wednesday, June 1 – Incoming Grade 4 (Current Grade 3) Instrument sign-ups at the Center School, 6:30 PM.**
- **Wednesday, June 1 – Project Graduation Meeting in the High School Library, 6:30 PM.**
- **Wednesday, June 1 – Middle School PTO Meeting in the Middle School Commons, 7:00 PM.**



**Thursday, June 2 – Celebration of the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the East Hampton Center School, 2:00 PM.** Please join us at 94 Main Street as we assemble the current Grade 5 students at the original Center School, now the Central Office for the school district. We will recreate a photo that was taken of the school with the children and schoolmasters standing out front. Come and enjoy this brief historical celebration.

- **Thursday, June 2 – East Hampton Middle School Spring Sports Awards, 6:00 PM.**
- **Thursday, June 2 – Center School "Everything Night" - Art Celebration / Chair Auction / Open Mic / PTO Ice Cream Social, 6:00-7:30 PM.** There's something for everyone at this event! Through support of the East Hampton Lions Club, you can bid on a student designed and painted chair. There's a 6:00 PM viewing of the 23 chairs and the auction begins at 6:30 PM. All proceeds support the East Hampton Elementary Art Program. Also, bring your talent and be part of the open mic night!
- **Friday, June 3 – IT Appreciation Day.** We'll take time to thank our small, but powerful team of people who keep our technology up and running!
- **Friday, June 3 – Grade 8 Trip to High Meadow.**
- **Friday, June 3 – Center School Spelling Bees: Grade 4 at 9:30 AM & Grade 5 at 1:00 PM.**
- **Friday, June 3 – High School Awards Ceremony in the High School Auditorium, 9:30 AM.**
- **Friday, June 3 – Hartford Yard Goats Baseball sponsored by Elementary PTO.** The event is back on! Be part of opening weekend in Hartford as the Hartford Yard Goats take on the Portland Sea Dogs. Spend the night at the ballpark with friends and family from Center and Memorial School. Ticket order deadline is Friday, May 20. *In the case that the park is not open by this date, you will receive undated vouchers for any remaining home game.*
- **Monday, June 6 – Kindergarten Fun Day at the Memorial School.**
- **Monday, June 6 – Grade 4 Field Day at the Center School.**

- **Monday, June 6 – Grade 6 Field Day at the Middle School.**
- **Tuesday, June 7 – Grade 1 Fun Day at the Memorial School.**
- **Tuesday, June 7 – Grade 7 Field Day at the Middle School.**
- **Wednesday, June 8 – Grade 2 Fun Day at the Memorial School.**
- **Wednesday, June 8 – Grade 5 Field Day at the Center School.**
- **Wednesday, June 8 – Middle School PTO Meeting in the Middle School Library, 7:00 PM.**
- **Thursday, June 9 – Grade 3 Fun Day at the Memorial School.**
- **Friday, June 10 – Nominations due for recognition as an East Hampton Friend of Education.** Nominations are due to the building Principals by the last day of school. Please nominate one of our outstanding volunteers, parents, local government official, community leaders, or legislators.
- **Friday, June 10 – Nominations due for recognition as The Rookie Employee of the Year.** Nominations are due to Rosemarie Smith in the Central Office at 94 Main Street by the last day of school. Please nominate one of our outstanding new teachers of staff members who are currently in their first three years of employment in the East Hampton Schools.
- **Friday, June 10 – Middle School Awards Ceremonies: Grade 8 at 8:30 AM, Grade 7 at 9:30 AM, Grade 6 at 10:30 AM.**
- **Friday, June 10 – Last Day of School of School for East Hampton [High School](#), [Middle School](#), [Memorial School](#).** The last day of school is a half day of school. **Note:** The Center School will also have a half day on Friday, June 10.
- **Friday, June 10 – PTO Movie Night at Center School.**
- **Friday, June 10 – “East Hampton’s Got Talent” sponsored by the Podium Players at the Middle School, 7:00 PM.** Come and be part of the fun.  
The audience votes for their favorite acts!



- **Sunday, June 12 – East Hampton Graduation Exercises for the Class of 2016 at the Memorial School Front Lawn, 6:00 PM.** It's hard to believe that we are sending another group of Bellringers off to college already!

- **Monday, June 13 – Last Day of School of School for East Hampton [Center School](#).**
- **Monday, June 13 – Board of Education Policy Subcommittee meeting in the High School Library, 5:00 PM.**
- **Monday, June 13 – Board of Education Meeting in the East Hampton High School Library, 7:00 PM.**



**Tuesday, June 14 – Flag Day.**

- **Wednesday, June 15 – The 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Bellringer Golf Tournament sponsored by the East Hampton Sports Boosters at the Glastonbury Hills Country Club.** All proceeds from the event are used to support the athletic programs at East Hampton High School. Sponsors, golfers, and volunteers are needed! Contact the booster club for more information at [ehhsboosters@easthamptonct.org](mailto:ehhsboosters@easthamptonct.org) or call Mark Vickery at 860-308-4202.
- **Sunday, June 19 – Father’s Day.**
- **Monday, June 20 – First Day of Summer.**
- **Monday, June 27 – Board of Education Meeting in the East Hampton High School Library, 7:00 PM.**

**Get your event on this Calendar; it's sent every Monday morning to all East Hampton Public Schools teachers, staff, parents, and families!**  
If you would like a school/community event listed please forward dates and information to Paul Smith: [psmith@easthamptonct.org](mailto:psmith@easthamptonct.org).

**Next week's Update features “Back-to-School” dates to get them on your calendar in advance.**

Any organization is welcome to send dates and information to Paul Smith for inclusion in the Update:  
[psmith@easthamptonct.org](mailto:psmith@easthamptonct.org)

## Notes

Are you attending?

☒ **YES, I WILL BE THERE**

☐ **NO**

### ■ **Budget Update 2016-17**

## **Tuesday, May 24 – 6:30 PM Town Council Meeting at the Middle School** **Approval of 2016/17 Town and School Budget for Referendum**

At the Town Council meeting on **Tuesday, May 24 at 6:30 PM**, the council will review the latest budget proposal from the Board of Finance. As a result of the state budget having less drastic cuts than proposed by the Governor, the school budget figures that are being proposed include a 1.05% increase compared to a 0.65% increase initially approved by the Town Council. **Please attend this meeting and show your support.**

**Board of Finance approved Budget: Increase of \$302,500 to the Board of Education - 1.05% increase from last year**

[Click here for the article in Middletown Press](#)

### ■ ***The following are due soon...***



#### • ***Good Apple Award Nominations***

To recognize the outstanding contributions of our employees - the teachers, bus drivers, office staff, custodians, paraprofessionals, food service workers, administrators, and all others who contribute daily to the education of East Hampton children, the **Good Apple Award** was established and continues as a proud tradition of our district. ALL employees of the East Hampton Public Schools are eligible to receive a Good Apple Award.

Nomination forms are available on the school's website ([click here](#)). Submit to a building principal by Friday, May 27.



#### • ***Friends of Education Nomination***

Help us recognize a deserving school volunteer, parent, community leader, local government official, or legislator for the annual **East Hampton Friends of Education Award**. The program is designed to recognize and honor people who have made outstanding contributions to public education benefitting the students of East Hampton.

Nomination forms are available on the school's website ([click here](#)). Submit to a building principal by Friday, June 10.



#### • ***Rookie Employee of the Year Nominations***

Participate in the recognition of the newest members of the East Hampton Public Schools family of teachers/staff members by nominating one of our "rookie" employees – anyone who is currently in their first three years of working for our school district.

Nomination forms are available on the school's website ([click here](#)). Submit to Rosemarie Smith in the Central Office at 94 Main Street by Friday, June 10.



# Class of 2016

## **The TOP TEN Students of the Class of 2016 Announced!**

**Congratulations to the Top Ten students of the East Hampton High School Class of 2016!** The students were recognized Wednesday evening, May 18 at the annual Senior Awards and Scholarship Presentations. The Top Ten will also be recognized at a reception at the **East Hampton Library on June 1 at 5:00 PM.** At the reception, the students will be presented with a gift by the East Hampton Board of Education. The Top Ten student are also invited to bring and introduce an adult (teacher, coach, mentor) who has had the greatest impact on their education.



## **Class of 2016 Top Ten Students**

Pictured from left to right:  
Kate Taylor-Valedictorian,  
Nicole Burns-Salutatorian,  
Carolyn Jedziniak,  
Austin Kelly,  
Kathleen Randall,  
Carli D'Antonio,  
Jordan Thomas,  
Alyssa Mercaldi,  
Sydney Georgiades,  
and Sarah Waterhouse.



## **Population growth – a great animation**

Use this in the classroom or at home. A contribution from Kim Marshall in The Marshall Memo, the link is a six-minute video from WorldPopulationHistory.org in *The Washington Post* on where and how human population growth happened throughout history: <http://wapo.st/1Tfp1QZ>.



## **Veterans – we're looking to honor you in November!**

Even though it's the season of Memorial Day, we are trying to get a list of **all** East Hampton Veterans and current East Hampton service men and women that are related to students in the East Hampton Public Schools. We are planning well in advance to honor them at East Hampton High School on Thursday, November 10, 2016. [Help us by clicking here so we can get their contact information.](#)



## Thoughts



### Higher level thinking comes with higher level discussions.

Walking into classrooms these days, we look for things to be very different than they were even ten years ago. There was a time that observers would go into a classroom and watch what the teacher was doing and scripting every word that the teacher said. There is now a major shift for observers to go into the classroom and **watch what the students are doing and listen to what the students are saying**. The notion of a passive education is over. The idea is for students to talk, to suggest ideas, and to problem solve. None of that happens when the teacher is talking. It happens when students are active in their learning!

**Rich Classroom Discussion: One Way to Get Rich Learning** by Ronald Gallimore, James Hiebert & Bradley Ermeling in [www.tcrecord.org](http://www.tcrecord.org): Teachers College Record – The Voice of Scholarship in Education.

*“Rich classroom discourse” has long been valorized by education reformers who object to teacher domination of classroom discussions. Is it greater use of RCD key to intellectually inspiring and challenging classrooms? Perhaps instead of focusing on increased use it’s time to ask what specific role for RCD might be realistic and yield learning outcomes educators value? The best chance for progress is to link this question to another one: how to create rich learning opportunities for achieving more advanced competencies. Strategic deployment of RCD for well-defined instructional purposes seems a more realistic vision than advocating greater use without respect for why, when, and for whom. Finding RCD’s proper role requires at least three conditions. Sustained collaboration between teachers and researchers. An ongoing study of curriculum and practice to identify pivotal RLOs in each unit or project and which might benefit from RCD. Supporting teacher development of the professional judgment to skillfully manage complex decisions with each population and generation of students they teach, so they deploy the best instructional choices.*

“Rich classroom discussion” is an important characteristic of 21st century classrooms long envisioned by education reformers and, most recently, by proponents of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). There are sound reasons for this. **In addition to learning the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic, this new century’s classrooms require development of advanced student competencies.** To nurture them, educators, subject matter specialists, policy-makers, and researchers mostly agree on a crucial role for rich classroom discussions.

Rich discussion or discourse usually means students talking in class about their ideas, asking questions of peers, engaging in debates with peers, explaining their reasoning, and sharing some roles traditionally assumed only by teachers. Some teacher evaluation frameworks already assign the highest merit to classrooms in which there is more open discourse devoted to active student exchange of ideas and evidence. That rich classroom discourse (RCD) begets richer student thought and expression is a cardinal assumption.

So far, so good. **It’s never been difficult to sell the idea that classroom discourse ought to be intellectually challenging and engaging.** Starting in the late 19th and early 20th century, teaching critics and researchers repeatedly observed, and objected to, teacher domination of classroom discussions. **In 1912, Romiett Stevens published the first systematic study of U.S. classrooms. Using stenographic records, she determined teachers talked an average of 64 percent of the time regardless of subject or grade level.** Nearly 80 percent of the classroom talk was devoted to asking, answering, or reacting to questions that called for rote memory or superficial comprehension. Throughout the 20th century many leading reformers called for improving and enriching classroom discourse. It remains a clarion call in this new century.

Have circumstances changed since 1912? Perhaps not. There is little evidence that student “talking” opportunities have changed much since the 19th century. The conclusion of an often cited 1969 review (Hoetker & Ahlbrand, 1969) likely still stands in 2014: “ [there is] a remarkable stability of classroom verbal behavior patterns over the last half century. . .” **As recently as 1997, Nystrand and his associates’ (1997) large study of 8th- and 9th-grade English language arts classes revealed that 85% of observed instruction was some combination of lecture, recitation, and seatwork.**

If anything, criticism of classroom discourse practices increased as teaching research expanded, matured, and broadened. Small-scale observational, experimental, and intervention studies confirmed that student thought and expression are expanded temporarily by more RCD opportunities (Applebee, Langer, Nystrand, & Gamoran, 2003).

Researching RCD at scale runs into two problems: first, if the critics are right and RCD occurs infrequently, and the evidence suggests they are, it is difficult to study its effects in randomly selected classrooms. Second, conducting a fair test of an infrequent classroom event means recruiting enough teachers willing to learn how to enact rich discussions for an extended period. The cost and logistics of extended professional development have severely limited RCD research and attempts at large-scale reform of teaching practices. As a result of these dilemmas, large sample research linking RCD to richer student learning remains limited at best, and often contested. This does not mean abandoning the pursuit of more RCD, but after a century of trying perhaps it's time for a new perspective.

Is it a greater use of RCD that is key to intellectually inspiring and challenging classrooms envisioned in this new century? Perhaps instead of focusing on increased use, it's time to ask what specific role for RCD might be realistic and yield the learning outcomes that educators value?

Stepping outside of one's own culture can sometimes prompt re-examination of something as complex as classroom teaching. New perspectives on U.S. instruction were an explicit goal of the 1999 TIMSS Video Study of Mathematics (Hiebert, et al., 2005). This study compared the U.S. with six higher achieving countries in 8th-grade teaching practices. Assessment of the countries' relative mathematics achievement included some of the more advanced competencies toward which reformers are working and the CCSS aspires to improve.

So, what role did RCD play in the higher achieving countries? Not much. Although every country uses a distinct cultural pattern of teaching, in none of them was RCD a frequent practice (Hiebert, et al., 2003). Not only were RCD practices not characteristic of high achieving countries, surprisingly, the U.S. lessons had the most student talk opportunities.

What distinguished higher achieving countries from the U.S. was the nature of learning opportunities provided to students. With varying degrees of frequency, all higher achieving countries slowed down instruction at some point in some lessons to ensure that students had rich opportunities to learn—time to grapple with the key mathematics ideas and connect them. During those instances, there were sometimes short episodes of RCD, but its infrequency was more striking than the occurrences. Rich learning opportunities (RLOs) seemed to be the critical and significant distinction between the U.S. and higher achieving countries—not frequency of RCD.

But the story doesn't end there. Along with varying teacher-centered instructional approaches, RCD was used sometimes as a vehicle to create and sustain RLOs, by some teachers, in some higher achieving countries. This puts RCD, as well as the aspirations of past and present U.S. reforms, in a new perspective. Perhaps RCD is not the critical indicator that good instruction is occurring. Rather, it is one of many means to an essential end—creating and sustaining RLOs that nurture the advanced competencies and more ambitious achievements U.S. reformers seek.

John Dewey, the leading icon of progressive American education, never featured RCD in his pedagogical theories. To the contrary, he argued teachers need not avoid "telling" students information. He only warned, and this is a significant "only," that students are unlikely to hear things they are unprepared to hear (Dewey, 1929). How do teachers prepare students to hear? That's a fruitful question for new thinking and research about the role of RCD in effective instruction. The best chance for progress is to link this question to another one: how to create rich learning opportunities for achieving more advanced competencies. Strategic deployment of RCD for well-defined instructional purposes seems a more realistic vision than advocating for its greater use without respect for why, when, and for whom. A different vision is the easy part. The hard part is building a knowledge base that identifies effective ways to convert the vision into effective teaching practices.

RCD will almost certainly play a role in this new knowledge base, but it is likely not the only practice that creates learning opportunities and prepares students to hear. Finding its proper role requires at least three conditions: (a) a sustained collaboration between teachers and researchers, (b) an ongoing study of curriculum and practice to identify pivotal RLOs in each unit or project that might benefit from RCD, and (c) supporting teachers' abilities to skillfully manage complex decisions so that they deploy the best instructional choices.

The pathway to improvement lies not in the increased use of a single compelling instructional method, but in building of a full repertoire of effective methods, and a nuanced understanding of how and when each will propel a teacher's students toward ambitious learning goals.



## References

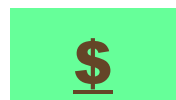
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Have a great week!  
Paul Smith



The Superintendent of Schools sends out text message using **Remind**. If you would like reminders about East Hampton Public Schools events or immediate updates on school cancellations in the winter directly from the Superintendent of Schools [click here](#) and simply enter your mobile phone number.



Please click the dollar sign to get information about the 2016-17 Budget from Paul K. Smith, Superintendent of Schools. Any parent or community member is welcome to schedule a personal appointment with the Superintendent if you have budget questions. You are also encouraged to stop in for coffee at one of the regularly scheduled, **Coffee with the Superintendent** meetings.



Please click on the calendar for the 2016-17 school calendar. Next year's school calendar is now available to parents. The 2016-17 school year will begin after Labor Day in order to accommodate the high school construction project. Please review the calendar and plan your vacation time accordingly.



Are you following the East Hampton Public Schools on Facebook? You should follow us to get simple reminders and updates on all the great things going on in our schools. Click on the Facebook icon and "like" us!



Come and have coffee with the Superintendent of Schools some morning or evening. It's a great chance to learn what's going on – especially if you want accurate information right from the source. The Update has a list of coffee dates – and you can always find them on the school's website.

