



# Shaping Futures Together

October  
2023

## From the Principal's Desk

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Dear Families,

Welcome to October! The first month of school has flown by so quickly – thanks in part to our fabulous staff and dedicated families - it seems as if our students and staff never left. We are happy to welcome a few new staff, students and families and at this point, everyone has settled back into the school routine. It was nice to see those of you who were able to join us for our Open House in September. If you were unable to attend and have any questions about routines, grading or curriculum, please reach out to your child's teacher/s.

We have hit the ground running and we will soon be sending home our first progress reports. On October 13, students in kindergarten through grade 8 will bring home their mid-term progress report. This progress report will give parents/guardians information about how their child/children are progressing toward standards in academic areas and special area subjects. It is early in the year and at many grade levels, teachers are just beginning to introduce work toward mastery of the standards. If standards are left blank on the progress report or trimester report card, it is because that particular standard has not been introduced yet, or that teachers do not have sufficient information at this time to address that standard. Progress toward meeting behavioral expectations for students in grades five through eight will be submitted by homeroom teachers, but all teachers who see middle school students will provide input. After you review your child's progress report, please sign and return the envelope and you may contact your child's homeroom teacher if you have questions regarding attendance, grades, or progress.

If your child receives specialized instruction or support with one of our resource room teachers or intervention services through our MTSS/RTI process, an update on progress toward their goals will be included with progress notes at the end of the first trimester in early December. Again, please reach out to homeroom teachers if you have specific questions relating to any of these reports.

During the month of October, all students in grades 2-8 will be taking the NWEA standardized assessment that will indicate progress in the areas of Reading, Language Arts, Math and Science. This is an adaptive, computerized assessment

that will be taken over the course of multiple sessions based on grade level. These results will be used to inform and individualize instruction and support for students. Results of student progress will be reviewed with families during our parent-teacher conferences (December 8 and 11) and will be sent home in our end of trimester reports on December 7. Teachers will reach out prior to that with any areas of particular concern.

While it is still early in the school year – we need to **make a change in our practice regarding food and treats brought to school** by students, families and staff for special celebrations. Many of our students have special dietary restrictions due to allergies and/or other medical concerns. In the interest of everyone’s health and safety, we must no longer allow food treats of any kind brought into school with the intent of being shared with students. There are many ways to celebrate and recognize special milestones for children other than with food. We urge you to consider these options and to save the food treats for outside of school. Going forward, any food brought in to share will be sent back home again. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in this matter.

At Eastford Elementary School, we subscribe to a **notification/alert system** that will enable us to automatically notify families more efficiently than our current email system in the event that we are faced with a last-minute emergency, bus driver shortage, or inclement weather where we may need to unexpectedly close or delay school. If you have not received an alert message from us yet this school year, please reach out so that we can be sure we have your correct contact information in our data system. An alert message was sent out in early September regarding the excessive heat and our subsequent need for a few early closings.

Although we hope that we do not have any weather-related closings or delays for quite some time, I want to inform you that we will typically call **two-hour delays** on inclement weather mornings. If there is a morning delay, school will begin at 10:45 a.m. Students can begin arriving at 10:25 a.m. Half day **preschool students** will **NOT** attend if there is a two-hour delayed opening. When there is a two-hour delayed opening, the morning child-care program **will** also operate on a two-hour delay. They will open at 9:00 a.m.

When the weather is inclement, notification of NO SCHOOL or late opening is communicated to you via our automatic notification system. It is also announced over WINY radio (Putnam), Channel 30 (NBC Connecticut) and Channel 3 (WFSB). If you visit the websites of the television stations, you can sign up to have them notify you by email or text message when a school is closing early or opening late. Tune your radio or television to one of these for any NO SCHOOL and delayed opening announcements. This information will also be communicated with you via the alert notification system mentioned above.

Please mark your calendars regarding two **“No School” days this month.** **October 6** is a professional development day for staff, and **October 9** is the Columbus Day/Indigenous Peoples’ Day holiday. The Before and After School

Program (BASP) will **not** be in session on either of these two days. In November, there will be “No School” on **November 10** for Veterans Day and school will be closed November 22-24 for the Thanksgiving Holiday.

**A reminder to people who utilize the school playground or access the nature trail when school is not in session:** If you, or someone you know, bring a dog onto school property, please be considerate and clean up after it. Students use the playground and the nature trail and we would like to keep the area as sanitary as possible.

**Fire Prevention:** October is fire prevention month and as is typical, the Eastford Independent Fire Company will visit to bring awareness regarding fire safety. We are planning a program where all students will participate in a fire drill that the Independent Fire Company attends, and students in PK-grade 3 will have the opportunity to view the fire trucks, fire equipment and gear worn and used by the firefighters.

We are fortunate to have a number of active parent organizations at EES. We like to add new members to each group every year so that these groups truly represent all of our students. Please consider joining a group if you are not already a member!

#### Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

The PTO is a vital link between the school community and the parents it serves. Thus, parents are urged to join and take an active part in the PTO. The PTO raises money to provide Eastford Elementary School with cultural programs, assemblies and other specific needs as they occur. The group also runs book fairs and supports student activities on a regular basis. All parents are invited to all meetings and are encouraged to contact Eastford Elementary School for more information or to get answers to questions regarding the PTO. The PTO meetings will be held virtually on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. Please contact the school to get the Zoom login information. Please feel free to email PTO co-presidents, Mary DeGostin and Aliesha Lowell Lynch at [pto@eastfordct.org](mailto:pto@eastfordct.org) if you have any questions. Prior to the PTO meetings in October, January and April, there is a PAC (principal advisory committee) meeting. This is open 30 minutes prior to any scheduled PTO meeting and is designed to give parents the opportunity to bring questions or concerns regarding the school, school programs, procedures, or school events to the table for discussion. Again, all are welcome to attend. This meeting will use the PTO meeting Zoom link and will open at 5:30 p.m.

#### Middle School Fund-Raising Committee

Parents of middle school students typically meet to raise funds for the eighth grade trip to Washington, D.C. Their major, yearly event has been the Goods and Services Auction. This school year, we will hold the annual **Goods and Services Auction on Saturday, Nov. 11**. Proceeds from the Auction are **SHARED** among all middle school grades to start building a balance so that the trip can be fully funded for students. Based on class sizes, we sometimes need to combine grades to attend the trip. The fundraising efforts ensure that each grade will be prepared when it is time

for their trip. For this to be successful, we **need the support of many volunteers – especially from our middle school grades!** The committee has already been meeting this year and we really need more hands involved to assist in obtaining donations from local area businesses. The next auction planning committee meeting will be held via Zoom on Oct. 11 at 5:00 p.m. Please reach out if you can attend and support YOUR child's trip to Washington, D.C.

### Sports Boosters

Parents of middle school students formed this group a number of years ago to support the interscholastic sports program. The sports boosters raise money to purchase items that are not covered in the Eastford Board of Education budget. Parents interested in reviving this committee are encouraged to reach out to me for more details.

### Readiness Council

The Readiness Council consists of town and school officials, parents of children who are younger than kindergarten age and community members. The Readiness Council monitors the Readiness grant and makes recommendations regarding the Eastford Readiness program. At the beginning of each scheduled meeting, there is an opportunity for public input. Any parents who are interested in joining the Council are welcome to do so. These meetings are held virtually on the first Tuesday of each month. The next meeting of the Readiness Council is scheduled for **October 3 at 5:30 p.m.** Please contact the school for information on how to join this virtual meeting.

### Car Rider Line – Morning Drop Of

**Thank you for your patience and cooperation with our car rider line. The process has been going smoother than expected thanks to YOU!**

**At both the morning drop off and afternoon pick up times, the parking lot maintains a one-way traffic flow pattern. All vehicles should enter the main entrance on Westford Road near the school sign. All vehicles should exit up the hill by the town office building.** Students should not arrive at school prior to 8:25 a.m. unless they are participating in the Before School childcare program. Families that drop their children off in the morning, please make sure that you are not passing vehicles that are in front of you. Please stay in line in the car rider drop-off line and pull as far forward as possible before letting your children out of your vehicle, and then wait to leave until the vehicle in front of you has begun to exit the drop off area. This ensures that students have been received by the staff members on duty and that the driving area is clear. We can operate **two lines** for drop off in the morning and pick up in the afternoon. Thank you for your cooperation with this process in the interest of safety.

### Afternoon Pick-up Reminder

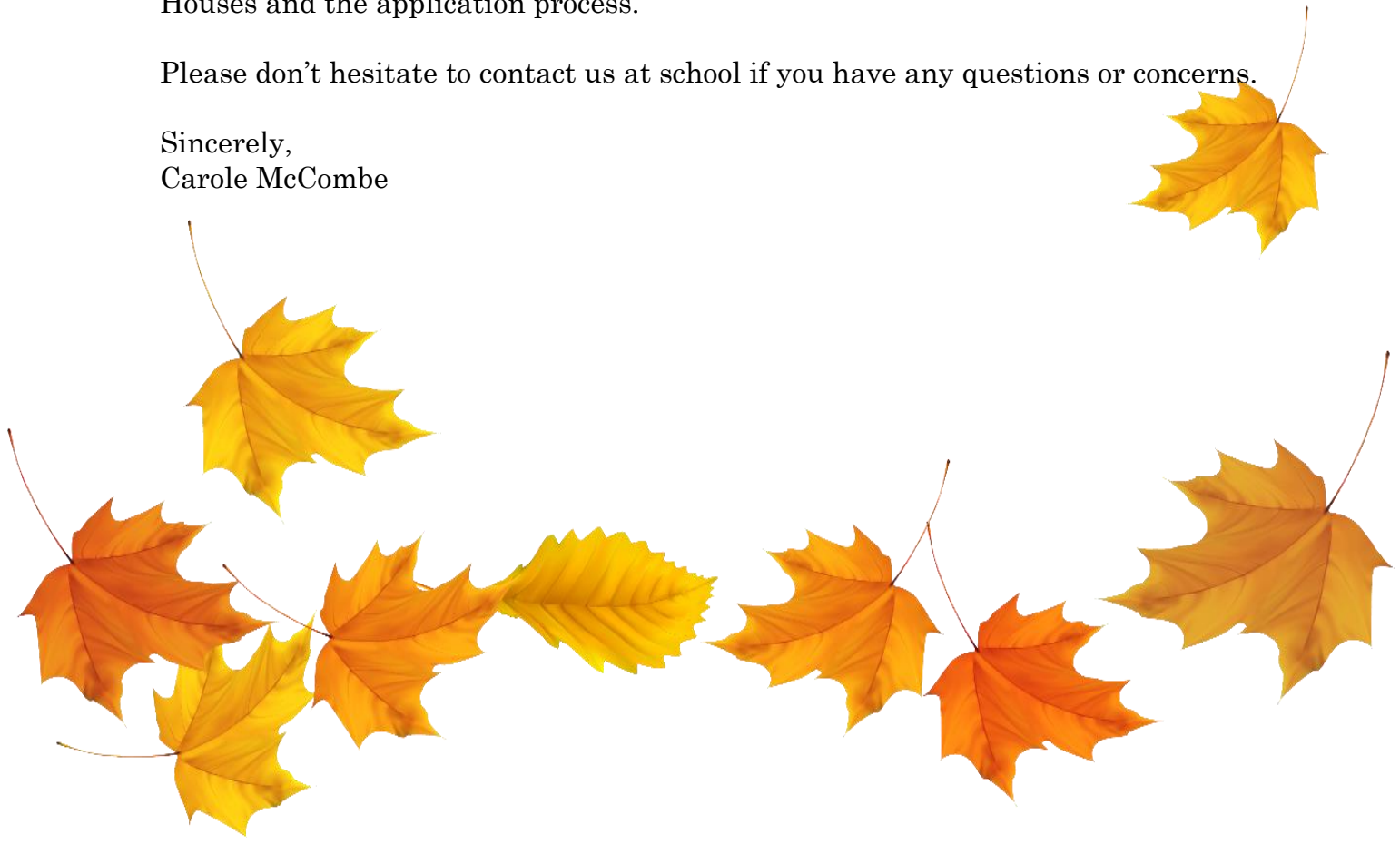
Our afternoon pick-up process has been extremely efficient! Please be sure to have your green or purple “family” sign in your car front window as you approach. This expedites staff in getting your children ready for you. We dismiss the Green group of students first. These are typically our youngest students and their siblings. If

you have a Green “family” sign, please plan to arrive for pick up close to 3:20. If you are in the Purple group you should plan to arrive for pick up about 3:30. It is important to remember that students who live within walking distance of the school are walking along the side of the driveway near the Town Office Building and along the side of Westford Road. Drivers should be extremely cautious during pick up time for everyone’s safety! Please do not block the path of the buses that are loading students at the front of the building. To stay on schedule, they need to pull out to begin their route once the bus is loaded. Thanks for your cooperation with this!

**Attention Parents of Eighth Grade Students:** Eighth grade students have multiple high school choices. Woodstock Academy is our designated high school, but transportation is also provided to, Killingly VoAg, Arts at the Capitol Theater (ACT), Quinebaug Middle College (QMC), and Ellis Tech. Other area schools may also be a possibility, but NO transportation is provided. If you plan to attend a public school that we do not have a contract with or one that we do not provide transportation to, you will need to request permission in writing from our Superintendent, Dr. Donna Leake no later than February 1. Typically, these schools offer Open House events for interested students and families. Some of these may be in-person and some may be held virtually. We will keep students and families informed as soon as we receive information from the high schools. Please contact Ms. Murana, school counselor, with questions regarding high school choices, Open Houses and the application process.

Please don’t hesitate to contact us at school if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,  
Carole McCombe



## *Happy Fall from your Eastford PTO!*



We are delighted to sponsor a number of fundraisers and events this year to support the students and staff of EES.



Beginning this month, we will host the annual sign contest for grades 1-8 where students can design a new sign that welcomes our community to EES. The theme this year is **PERSEVERANCE**. Official rules will be sent out this month, and submissions will be due October 27, 2023. Voting will occur on election day, November 7.



Spirit Wear is Back! This year we are offering an expanded selection of bulldog and EES themed gear for students and families to show their school spirit. A small percentage of each item purchased will go back to the PTO to help us support school events! Please see the attached flyer/order form for more information and pricing. Flyers are also available in the school office.



Our next PTO meeting date is October 10, 2023 at 6 p.m. If you are on our mailing list, you will get an agenda with the zoom link. If you would like to be added, please email [pto@eastfordct.org](mailto:pto@eastfordct.org). We hope to see you there!



# EASTFORD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SPIRIT WEAR PTO FUNDRAISER

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Checks should be made out to  
Eastford Elementary PTO

Orders must be received by  
October 27, 2023

Money is due at the time the  
order is placed

PLEASE ONLY FILL ONE FORM PER  
FAMILY AND SEND IN WITH THE  
OLDER STUDENT

ADULT Bulldog T-SHIRTS (S,M,L, XL) (XXL +\$2.00,  
XXXL +\$3.00)-\$ 15.00

ADULT Pawprint T-SHIRTS (S,M,L, XL) (XXL +\$2.00,  
XXXL +\$3.00)-\$ 15.00

ADULT Eastford Elementary T-SHIRTS (S,M,L,XL)  
(XXL +\$2.00, XXXL +\$3.00)-\$15.00

ADULT Navy Polo Unisex (S,M,L,XL) (XXL +\$2.00,  
XXXL +\$3.00)-\$30.00

ADULT HOODIES (S,M,L,XL) (XXL +\$2.00, XXXL  
+\$3.00)- \$30.00

ADULT SWEATS (S,M,L,XL) (XXL +\$2.00, XXXL  
+\$3.00)-\$25.00

YOUTH Bulldog T-SHIRTS (S,M,L)-\$ 13.00

YOUTH Pawprint T-SHIRTS (S,M,L)-\$ 13.00

YOUTH Eastford Elementary T-SHIRTS (S,M,L)-  
\$13.00

YOUTH HOODIES (S,M,L)-\$30.00

YOUTH SWEATS (S,M,L)-\$23.00

8x2 Eastford Elementary Car Magnet \$5.00

5x5.5 Bulldog Car Magnet \$5.00

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>	<u>SIZE</u>	<u>STYLE/DESIGN</u>	<u>COLOR</u>	<u>PRICE EACH</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>





**TOTAL AMOUNT DUE \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (For all items)**

**PAID VIA: CHECK # \_\_\_\_\_ OR Cash \_\_\_\_\_**

**Thank you for supporting the EES PTO! With this fundraiser,  
it helps fund our children's assemblies, events and activities!**

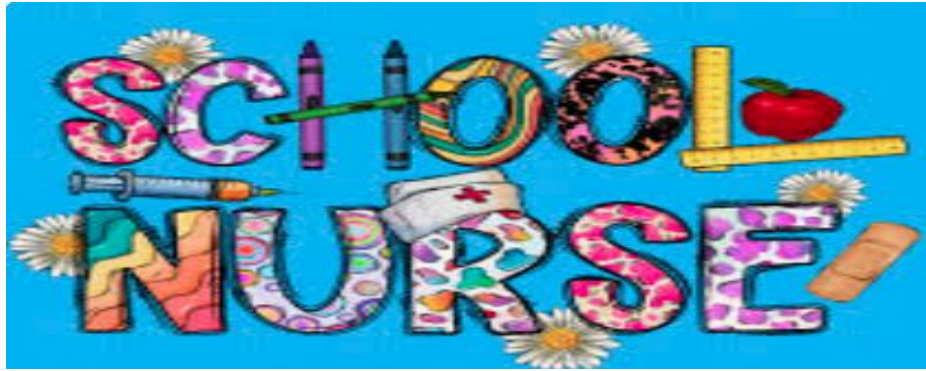


	<p><b>Bulldog Cotton Tee shirt- adult and youth</b>  <b>Light Blue, Gray, Navy Blue</b></p>
	<p><b>Paw Print Cotton Tee shirt- adult and youth</b>  <b>Light Blue, Gray, Navy Blue</b></p>
	<p><b>Eastford Elementary Cotton Tee shirt - adult and youth</b>  <b>Light Blue, Gray, Navy Blue</b></p>
	<p><b>Eastford Elementary Cotton Hoodie- adult and youth</b>  <b>Light Blue, Gray, Navy Blue</b></p>

	<p><b>Adult Polyester Polo Shirt - Navy</b></p>
	<p><b>Adult and Youth Paw Print Fleece Sweatpants</b></p>
 	<p><b>CAR MAGNETS</b></p> <p><b>*New This Year!</b></p>

# Health Office News – Mrs. Roto, R.N., B.S.N.

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Hello everyone. Hopefully everyone has had time to adjust and settle into their school routines. So many changes in the first month of school takes adjusting for not just the student, but their families too! Developing solid routines can be difficult. Just when you have something worked out, it changes like the weather.

I'll begin by reminding families to make sure their students are dressed appropriately for the weather. Dressing your student in layers is best since our temperatures can fluctuate from 40-70+ degrees in a matter of hours. By the end of the month, we will see temperatures around freezing, so coats may be in the equation as well. Also plan appropriate footwear for their day and consider recess and PE activities. I may have an extra sweatshirt when students need one to borrow, but I don't have shoes here for students. Students go outside for recess whenever possible, so have them dressed for playing on the playground equipment.

My next reminder is food. Please be mindful of the amount of food that your student will need for the day. Most classes have a scheduled snack in the morning in addition to their lunch. Students who are well nourished and not thinking about food are better able to focus and concentrate during class time. Having enough food to sustain energy levels throughout the day will also reduce the chances of developing stomach aches or headaches that I see later in the day.

We have guidelines for keeping your student home from school outlined in the Student-Parent Handbook. Please take the time to review those. If there is any question of whether your student should stay home, trust your judgment. You know your student best and once your student is in school, my charge is to keep them in school unless they show signs of obvious illness for dismissal.

Giving your child the option to come to the nurse to decide if they should be in school should not be a plan. By that time, that student has already had contact with a number of other students.

Of course, a situation may arise where they show signs of illness after they arrive- but they all should be evaluated prior to being sent in. If you would like to reach out to me prior to sending them in, you may reach me by email. I try to check emails prior to coming into school daily.

I'm here to support families in keeping their student(s) safe and successful in their learning. Some of the advice may seem simple, but it's the simple daily routines that make a student's day run smoothly such as::

- packing a water bottle
- having adequate snacks and lunch.
- being mindful of bedtime schedules
- dressng for the weather, P.E. and recess

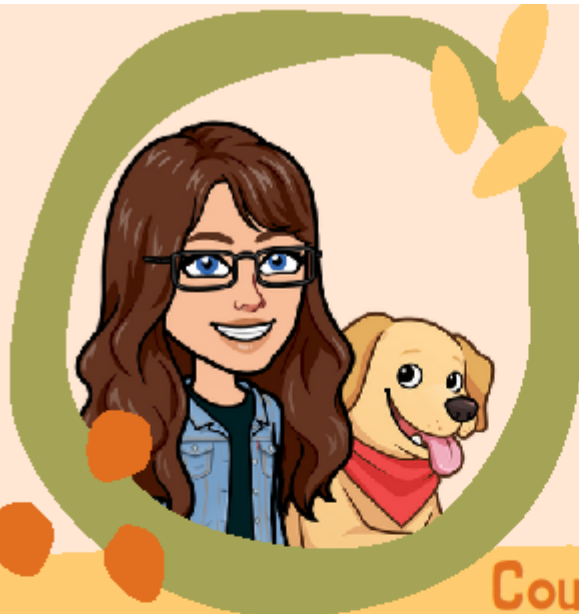
Aside from the day to day running of the office, I function to facilitate the health and safety of students and staff. The State of Connecticut has standards by which the school needs to follow as guided by the Connecticut Departments of Education and Health. These two agencies work together to enforce good practice standards for the public health of the community.

Protocols for Illnesses and other health or medical related information is posted for you on the school website under 'Health Office/Nurse'.

As always, feel free to reach out to me by phone or email if you have anything you need to discuss.

Cassie Roto R.N., B.S.N.





# Ms. Murana

## School Counselor

October Newsletter

### Counseling Corner

This month, students will be learning about habits of success. Each grade level has a specific set of skills that make them successful, which build upon themselves all the way through the eighth grade. When students learn and practice skills in the ways that make them successful, they are more likely to achieve higher and build lifelong habits!

### Grade 8 Announcements

Open House Dates:

- 10/12: Ellis Tech (5:30PM)
- 10/26: Woodstock Academy (6-7PM)
- 11/9: Killingly Ag (6PM)
- 11/16: ACT (6PM)
- 12/5: QMC (6PM)

Class President & Class Historian elections will take place on October 13th. All candidates must prepare a short blurb about why their classmates should vote for them.

### Handle With Care

If your family is experiencing difficulties at home, I would like to provide additional support here at school. I understand that you are not always able to provide details and that's okay. If your child is coming to school after a difficult night, morning or weekend, please email me and type "Handle with Care" into the subject line. Nothing else will be said or asked. This will let me know that your child may need extra time, patience or help during the day.



# Art News – Ms. Weinland

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*GRADE ONE WATERCOLOR RAINBOWS*

**Welcome Back to the Art Room!!** I am excited to share with you the journey our elementary and middle school students will embark on this year in the world of art. From pinch pots to digital design, I have an array of artistic adventures planned to foster creativity, critical thinking, and a deeper appreciation for the arts.

## **Clay Creations: Pinch Pots, Coil Pots, and Slab Structures**

Students will have the opportunity to get their hands dirty (literally!) as they dive into working with clay. We will start with pinch pots, then move on to coil pots, and slab structures. These hands-on projects will not only allow students to explore their artistic abilities but also develop patience and fine motor skills.

## **Exploring the World of Drawing**

Drawing is a fundamental skill in art, and our students will be honing their skills throughout the year. They will explore various drawing techniques, from sketching to shading, and will have the opportunity to capture the world around them through their art.

## **A Splash of Color with Watercolor**

Watercolor painting is a medium that encourages creativity and exploration. Students will learn how to use watercolors to create vibrant and flowing artworks by experimenting with blending colors, creating gradients so that they bring their ideas to life on paper.

## **Collage: Uniting the Pieces**

Collage art is a wonderful way to blend various elements and materials to create unique compositions. Your children will be challenged to think outside the box as they craft beautiful collages, combining colors, shapes, and textures to tell their own visual stories.

### Digital Design: Embracing Technology

In this digital age, understanding digital design is a valuable skill. Our middle school students will have the opportunity to learn the basics of digital design, exploring software tools to create their own digital masterpieces. This is an excellent chance for them to merge technology and artistry.

### Color Theory and Art Vocabulary

Understanding color theory is essential in the world of art. Students will learn about the color wheel, complementary colors, and how to use colors effectively in their artworks. They will also expand their art vocabulary, enabling them to articulate their thoughts and ideas about art more fluently.

### Appreciating Artists and Art Vocabulary

To broaden their horizons, Eastford School artists will be introduced to some famous and not-so-famous artists and their masterpieces. We will be studying artworks and techniques to inspire our own creations.

I am excited to see our students develop their artistic skills, gain confidence in their abilities, and discover the joy of self-expression through art. The art room will be filled with imagination, creativity, and a sense of accomplishment as we explore these exciting art forms together. This is sure to be a fantastic year filled with creative growth and exploration!



***KINDERGARTEN MADE DOTS TO CELEBRATE INTERNATIONAL DOT DAY!!***

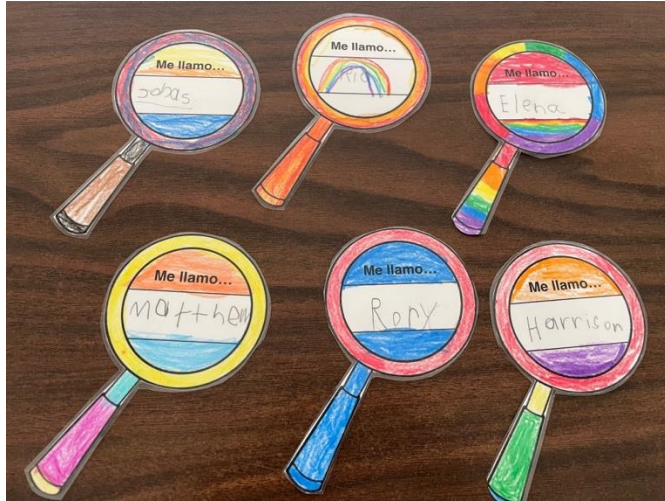


# Noticias de Español – Señora DePercio

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## Grade 1

This year, the first graders have become SUPER detectives! Using their *lupas* (magnifying glasses), students are learning how, to be a super language learner, you must look for clues, listen for clues, and take a guess! First graders are also learning how to answer the question “¿Cómo te llamas?” by introducing themselves with “Me llamo...”!



## Grade 2

We have spent the beginning of our year reviewing our numbers 1-10 and colors! Students practiced their detective skills and figured out that “Yo soy” means “I am” as well as “Tengo \_\_\_ años” means “I am \_\_\_ years old” in order to describe themselves. We will be moving onto greetings and farewells, such as “Buenos días” and “¡Chau!” as well as describing how we feel in our unit about emotions.





### Grade 3

Grade 3 students are participating in an international project with Journey North, where we will be sending symbolic butterflies to children living in monarch sanctuary areas in Mexico. This symbolic migration reflects the real migration of the Monarch butterflies we see here in Connecticut! We will be creating two class butterflies made up of individual, student decorated pieces and send them down to elementary schools in Mexico.

### Grades 5 & 6

Students in Grade 5 have currently been studying their classroom *contraseñas*. These are twelve phrases which I consider to be our classroom “passwords.” To stay in the target language and move through our lessons, students need to know how to say phrases such as *Tengo una pregunta* (I have a question), *Repite por favor* (Repeat, please) and of course, *¿Qué significa?* (What does \_\_\_ mean?). After mastering these phrases, fifth graders will dive into our first unit exploring Puerto Rico!

### Grades 7

Grades 7 is studying South America this year. They will begin with Chile by studying *El Día de Independencia*. Grade 7 has started studying their *interrogativos*, or interrogatives, *Quién, Dónde, Cuándo, Por qué* and *Cómo* while learning all about the similarities and differences between our Independence Day celebrations and Chile’s! Seventh graders will then begin work on recognizing and responding to questions asked by me!

### Grade 8

Grade 8 is stepping up to the challenge this year in Spanish. Already comfortable with their interrogatives, eighth graders are now practicing independently forming questions and responding accurately to questions about Día de los Muertos. They are utilizing their knowledge of present tense -AR verbs and subject pronouns to recognize what question is being asked, to or about whom the question is being asked, and then providing the correctly conjugated verb and associated vocabulary—NOT an easy feat!



# Grade K News – Ms. Garvie

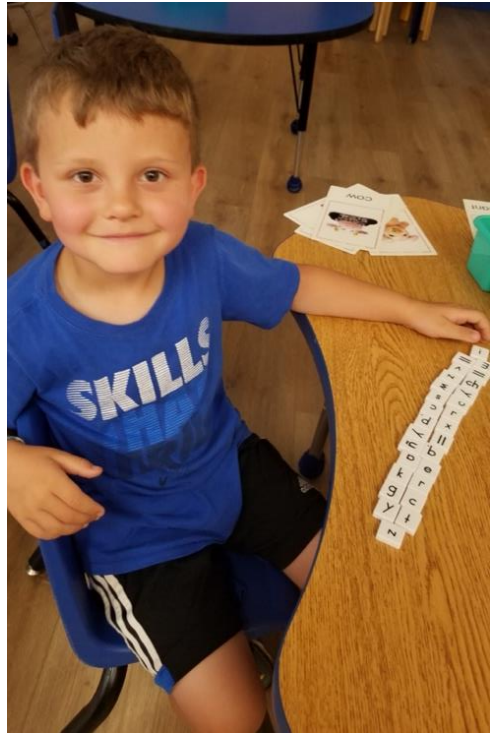
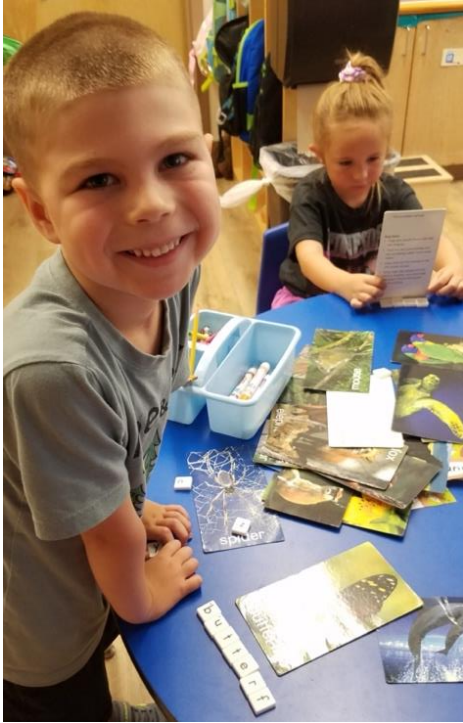
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The start of the school year has been a very busy time in kindergarten. We have been learning the rules and routine of the classroom and how to pay attention at group time using the listening rules song. Children have also been practicing sharing and showing kindness to teachers and peers. Last week we had a live author “talk” with a real author named Peter Reynolds!

Other important and engaging learning opportunities include rhyming and clapping out syllables, and learning a new star name each day to help us recognize our letters. We have also been drawing and writing about our favorite parts of stories. Some of our favorite stories are, Jack and the Beanstalk, Strega Nona, and The Three Billy Goats Gruff. We also count together every day, review shapes, and explore our math manipulatives during math time. For science, we have been learning about animals and their needs.

Please enjoy these pictures of children working hard during the school day!





# Grade 1 News – Mrs. Rhynhart

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Welcome October! The first graders are off to a great start. We have successfully grown green hair (grass!) on our class buddies, and they have kept us company on our windowsill through the month of September! As we move into October, we will study animal superpowers such as camouflage and adaptations that help the animal or species survive. We will learn new “sight” words and discover the silent “e” pattern to help grow our reading superpowers! The first-grade mathematicians will learn to collect data, present it on a table and answer questions about the data from that table. My first-grade authors and illustrators will learn how to include actions, dialogue and emotions in their narrative stories to make them exciting for others to hear. We will enjoy a trip to a corn maze at the end of the month to learn about the role of agriculture and the changes in nature during the autumn season. Looking forward to an exciting month ahead!



# Grade 2 News – Mrs. Crocker-Lincoln

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Grade 2 has been working on reading fluency skills this year. We have been practicing scooping up words and not reading like a robot! We have also been practicing making our voice match what is going on in our stories and making sure our reading pace is just right. This is a lot of hard work!



So, on one recent dark and stormy afternoon, we had a little extra fun and practiced our fluency in a darkened classroom while using our flashlights to guide our reading! What fun we had. We also made video recordings of our reading on Seesaw and shared them with our connected families. I must say, the class looked and sounded terrific!



# Grade 3 News – Mrs. Bisson

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Grade three students have had a great start to our school year! September was full of learning new routines, working together in groups and setting ourselves up for a successful year. In our Second Step Lessons, we learned how our brain learns new skills by creating new pathways in our mind. We get better and better at this new skill the more we practice and third graders certainly had lots of practice learning new routines in a new school year in a new classroom. In addition, we also learned how to work in partners and groups to accomplish a goal. This will be an important skill as we move through grade 3.

Across all subject areas, grade 3 students learned new skills in reading, writing, math and science. Readers & Writers learned how to set themselves up for success by organizing their materials and working in a productive way. In math, we learned how to represent multiplication in many different ways with connecting cubes, equal group drawings, tape diagrams, expressions and equations! We kicked off our first Science unit of the year by studying the traits of fossils and asking, “Where could you find whales in a desert?” We also discovered that habitats change over time and it’s possible that Eastford was once an ocean! The only way to really know is to dig way down deep into the ground and study the fossils found below. Next up, we learn if we could outrun a dinosaur! Stay tuned!



# Grade 4 News – Ms. Dill

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Grade 4 students love Eastford's new Science program! Mystery Science teaches children how to think and understand like scientists through exploration and then communicate about the world around them through writing and discussion. In the first unit, students investigate structures and functions of the human body: how bones and muscles are interconnected, how eyes interact with light and impact vision, and how the brain responds to stimuli in an environment.



Students individually built a robot finger to observe how muscles, tendons, and bones work together to cause joints to bend. Students hypothesized (then tested) how five model fingers might work to pick up and move objects.



Students built a working model of the eye using a magnifying lens to explore how the cornea is related to vision problems. They used collaboration (one of the Portrait of a Learner attributes) to test if another lens (glasses) would fix blurry vision; it worked!

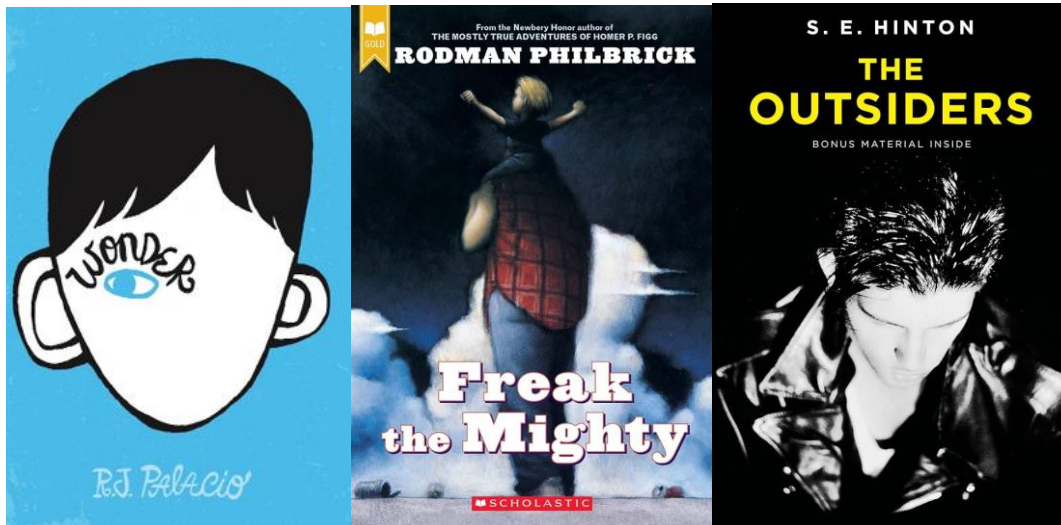
# ELA – Mr. Salsich

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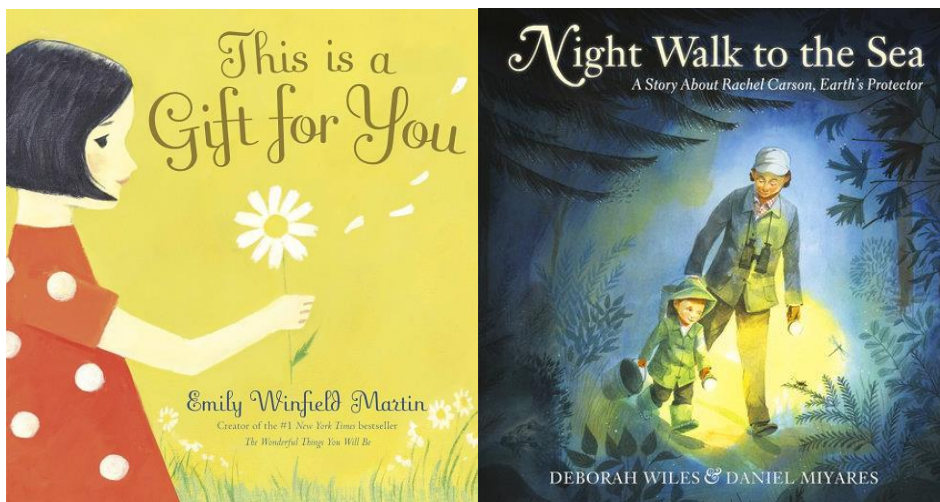
Hello!

In all grades, we have started the year with a lot of “challenges”. Ask your student about them. Why do we do them? How do they connect to what we do in ELA class?

Each class is reading a class book that we read along with the Audible narration. I have found that, no matter the grade level, this is a powerful way to engage everyone. We pause during the reading to share annotations, notes or thoughts, and this provides the context for excellent class discussions.



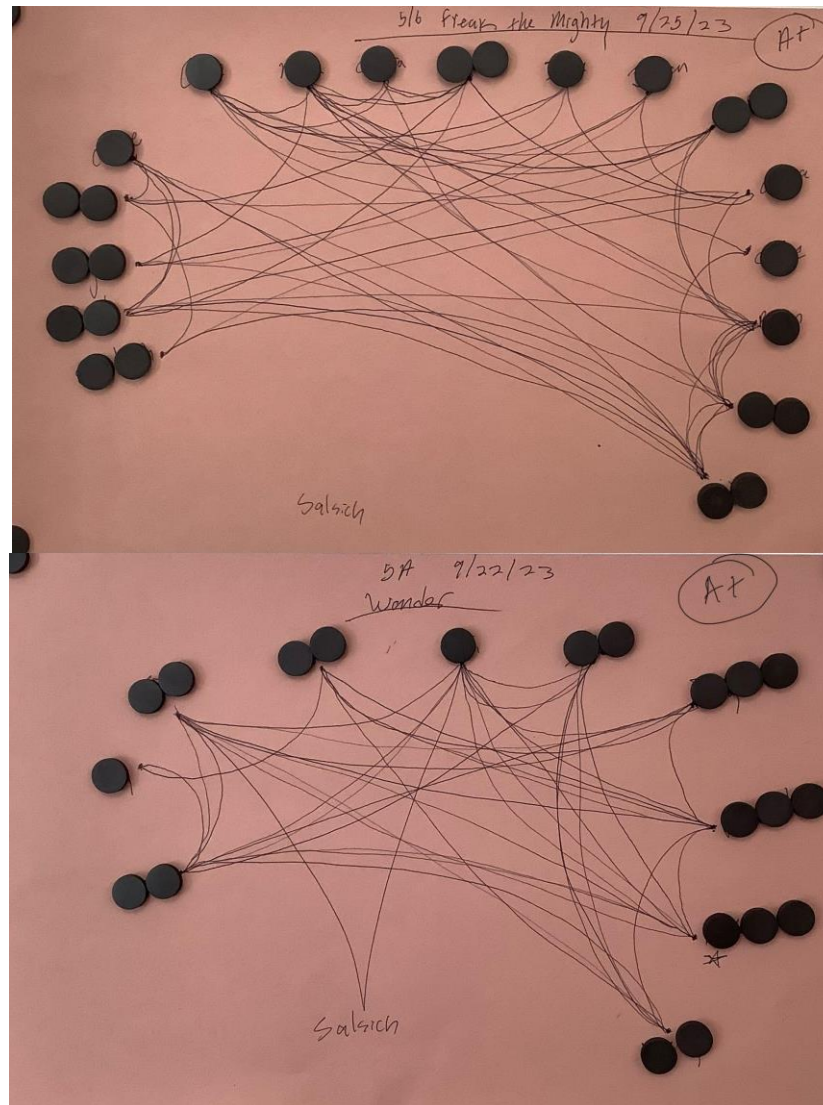
This year, we will be collaborating with our book buddy classes. I am still setting up one class, but that should begin shortly. For the first book buddy meet up, the middle school students are bringing a picture book as a gift for their buddy. They have written a personal inscription in the book and will read it with them. All of the classes are eager to begin. The books that we are bringing are pictured below. We purchased the books through a non-profit organization for around 40 cents each!





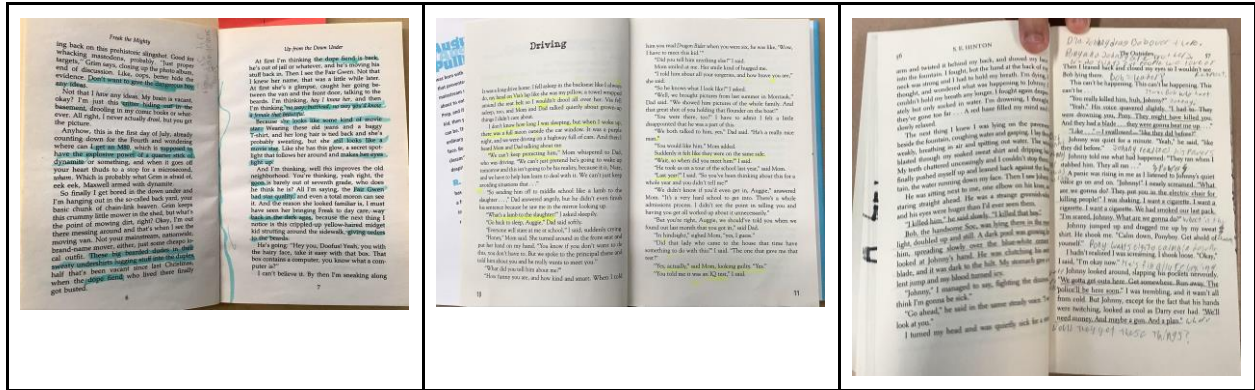
While we read our whole class novels together, we annotate in the books. Each student has their own book and they are required to highlight, underline or circle as they go. This is a skill that takes time, but it engages them in thinking about what they are reading.

We have a spider web discussion roughly every two weeks. It is a complex teaching strategy that requires a lot of pre-teaching and team building. Simply put, it requires me to sit out and simply diagram who is speaking. The kids run the entire discussion. The diagram illustrates what a well-balanced discussion should look like. Each class did amazingly well! Below are examples from the fifth and sixth grade classes. We always debrief after each discussion and set goals for the next one. I blocked out the kids' names for the newsletter to avoid any comparisons or competition.



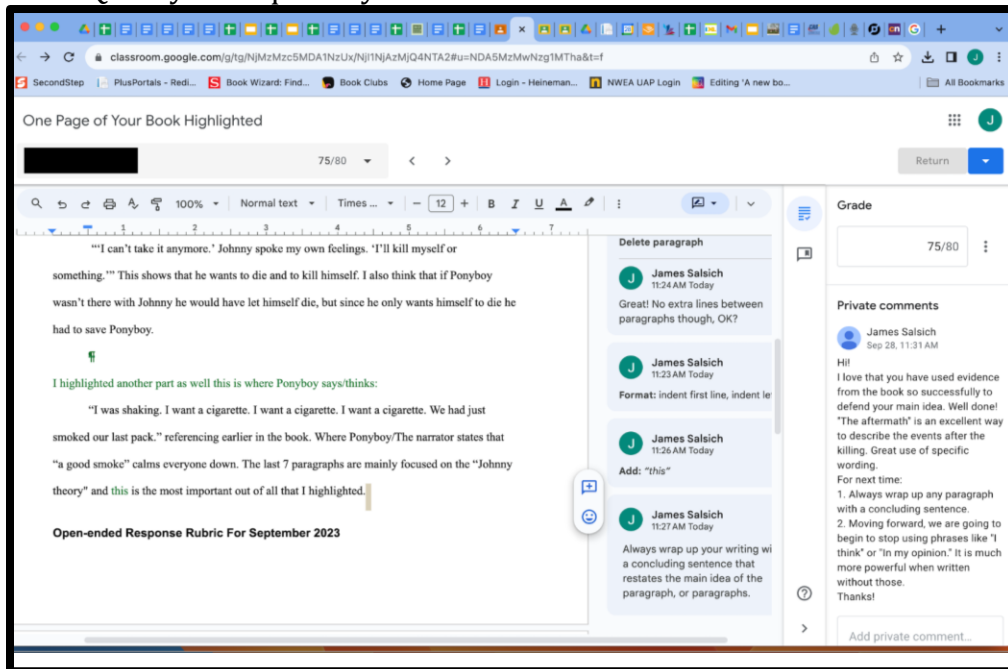
These are some examples of the students' annotated books. They take it very seriously, and they must use their book during our spider web discussions. It is really heartwarming for

me to watch them and to observe what they think is important. I look through the books weekly and make notes based on what I observe.



Finally, I use Google Classroom for most assignments. The fifth graders are picking it up quickly (thanks Mrs. Dill!). A few things to note - I always give detailed feedback for improvement, they must always make revisions and resubmit at least once, and I always give them at least one writing goal for the next assignment. That goal will be on their rubric for that assignment. It works well.

You will likely see fewer assignments because I ask them for their absolute best work each time, so that I can accurately assess their abilities and set an appropriate goal. I say it all the time "Quality over quantity."



Thanks for sharing your wonderful kids with me every day!

Best wishes,  
James Salsich

# Science News – Mrs. Mead

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The middle school science classes are off to a great start with an investigation involving pendulum actions. Students designed and built one, and then set out to determine which feature most affected how it behaved. In case you are curious, it was the length of the string and not the size of the mass at the end that affected the speed! We practiced the scientific process throughout.

Next, grade 5 students moved on to a Mystery Science astronomy unit entitled Spaceship Earth. Students in grades 6 - 8 have begun KnowAtom physical science units called Gravity and Motion in grade 6, Discovering Matter in grade 7, and combining both ideas together in grade 8: Matter and Movement.



As fall approaches, we are noticing changes in the gardens outside the classroom. Here, a finch turns upside down on a sunflower in order to make a meal on the seeds that have formed there. A plant's life cycle, the food chain, the changing seasons; there's both beauty and knowledge to be found in nature! Just look around!

# Social Studies News – Mr. Kernan

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In Social Studies this year, we will look at the when, where, how, and why of events in history and their significance. Answering these questions will lead us to make certain conclusions about these events and their outcomes. The question of why, is the reason we debate the importance of an event. When looking at any event that took place in history, the question of why comes to the forefront. Students, scholars, and even those who took part may disagree on specific conclusions.

Grade 5 students are exploring the attempts to settle by Europeans in the very beginning of what would become the Americas. We are also taking a deep dive into the people who were already living here at that time. Our work looks at the Native peoples of the Americas and how they lived prior to 1492 and the time between European settlements and the birth of modern cultures throughout the western hemisphere. We will spend time looking at this through the lens of an American. We will work to appreciate the lives of the many people who came to represent the cultures of a blending world.

Grades 6 and 7 students are studying the Age of Absolutism and Enlightenment. Our essential question for this work is, “What is the best form of government”? This exploration allows us to study some events that preceded this time period, such as the impact of the Silk Road and global trade that followed. We will also examine the courage of so many intellectuals that challenged the rule of monarchs that cultivated a culture to think of government reform based on their absolutism.

Grade 8 students are learning about the work our founding fathers completed to write the United States Constitution. Our work offers students the opportunity to try and understand why certain decisions were made, why certain rights were added to the Constitution and why some may have been left out. The work our grade 8 students are completing will culminate with how we understand the Constitution today. Students have been preparing a poster to capture their evolving understanding of our Constitution.



# Director of Pupil Service -Mr. Kernan

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Dear Parents/Guardians,

It is with genuine excitement that I begin the next chapter of my career here at Eastford Elementary School (EES) as Director of Pupil Services. I have worked closely with our former directors, Mary Jo Chretien and Mary Polchaninoff, and EES staff to ensure a smooth transition for all families and students. I have been an educator at EES since 2009. I have served as a special education teacher, grade six regular education teacher, and middle school history teacher. Most recently, I served as the Assistant to the Principal. My current role as Director of Pupil Services at EES includes oversight of special education programs for students aged three through 22. As Director of Pupil Services, I will attend Planning and Placement Team meetings for all students in our district.

As you may know, the State of Connecticut implemented a new data /recording system, called CT-SEDS, for students receiving special education and Section 504 support services. We have used this program since July 2022. I have included links here with useful information for families.

[CT-SEDS PARENT PORTAL QUICK START GUIDE](#)

[Side-by-Side Comparison of the Current Connecticut IEP and the New IEP](#)

We will continue to accommodate family preference for Zoom and/or in-person participation. I want you to know that I am a full-time employee at EES. When you are on campus, you may very well see me. Feel free to reach out with any questions or other concerns.

You can reach me at [ckernan@eastfordct.org](mailto:ckernan@eastfordct.org) for teaching needs, [pupilservices@eastfordct.org](mailto:pupilservices@eastfordct.org) for Director of Pupil Service needs, or by phone at (860) 974-1130.

Sincerely,  
Charles Kernan, M. Ed  
Director of Pupil Services

# Library & Media Center – Mrs. Bibeault

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Greetings from the EES Media Center! I am thrilled to be back in the library this year. I'm particularly excited to collaborate with our exceptional staff and students, enhancing their learning through the integration of technology at EES!



## **Library Check-Out Guidelines:**

- PK - Grade 1: Borrow one book at a time. Return books every week on designated library days: PK – Wednesdays, Grade K – Thursdays, and Grade 1 – Fridays.
- Grades 2 - 4: Borrow up to two books concurrently. Return books weekly on library days, unless a renewal is requested. Grade 2 – Thursdays, Grade 3 & 4 – Fridays.
- Grades 5-8: Check out two books at a time, unless more are required for class projects. Books are loaned for a two-week period and can be extended if necessary.

Please remember, library books are school property and should be handled with care. In accordance with school policy, any lost or damaged books must be reimbursed or replaced with a new copy.

Explore the EES library page at <https://www.eastfordct.org/library/>. You can help your child check if a specific book is available using our online catalog. For any assistance, reach out to Mrs. Bibeault at [library@eastfordct.org](mailto:library@eastfordct.org).

## **Governor's Summer Reading Challenge Update:**

If your child participated in the Governor's Summer Reading Challenge, kindly have him/her submit their reading journal by Friday, October 6, 2023. Participating students will be part of a special award activity with Mrs. Bibeault.

## **Library Volunteers:**

Volunteers play an essential role! I'd greatly appreciate having volunteers in the school library. Currently, I'm looking for assistance in grades PK-3, helping students locate books and reading to them while others check out their selections. Additionally, I'd welcome volunteers interested in tasks like shelving, covering, and stamping books. Any help in these areas would be highly valued. The days and times when student assistance is needed are Wednesdays from 10:15 to 11:30 and Thursdays from 1:45 to 3:15. The scheduling of library tasks can be arranged to accommodate the availability of volunteers. Your support is truly valued!

## **Donations:**

Empty VHS cassette plastic holders – hoping for 70  
Styrofoam trays (ground beef/meat trays – hoping for 50)



### **Technology:**

I am excited to remind you about an integral part of our curriculum: Digital Citizenship lessons. In today's digital age, it's essential for our students to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to navigate the online world with confidence and integrity. These lessons will cover topics such as online etiquette, privacy, cyberbullying prevention, and critical thinking skills, ensuring that our students are well-prepared to make informed decisions in the digital realm.

This initiative spans across grades K-8 and is a testament to our dedication to promoting responsible and secure online behavior. These lessons are thoughtfully designed to cater to the specific developmental stages of each grade, ensuring that the content is not only engaging but also age appropriate. The goal is to prepare students with crucial skills for navigating the digital world responsibly and safely.

From foundational lessons on online etiquette and safety in the early grades to more advanced topics like media literacy and digital footprint management in the upper grades, the goal is to provide EES students with a well-rounded understanding of digital citizenship. Lessons from commonsense.org, a trusted resource in digital literacy education, will be used to facilitate this learning.

A collaborative approach between school and home is key to reinforcing these crucial lessons. I encourage you to engage with your children about what they are learning in these sessions and to continue the conversation at home. Together, we can empower our students to make informed and responsible decisions in the digital world.

# Health & Physical Education – Mr. Cody

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## **P.E:**

- **Grades K-2:** The students are continuing to learn how to move with a purpose through play. In this unit they are working on listening skills, team building, and coordination through guided discovery. Students have been using tag games, hula hoops, and cotton balls to advance various skills. Small group games, and chase/flee games will continue into October.

- **Grades 3-8:** The students will continue to work on collaboration and teamwork through recreational games and sport activities. Currently we are in the middle of football basics, and yoga. Students have been reviewing rules of football and proper throwing techniques. When we are not throwing the football, classes have been enjoying yoga for stretching, strength, and relaxation.

## **Middle School Health:**

**Grades 5 – 8:** Students have been delving into the fascinating world of mental and emotional health. Through a variety of activities, discussions, and education resources, they have been identifying the ways in which their choices and behaviors can significantly influence their mental and emotional well-being.

As we approach October, Students will apply these skills with reasonable decision making and goal setting. Students will learn the art of making informed and balanced decisions. We will explore potential consequences of our choices and identify strategies for making responsible decisions. Students will be encouraged to set realistic goals for themselves, whether related to their physical, mental, or social health. Through goal setting students will learn how to envision a healthier and happier future.







*The research found 8- to 12-year-olds spend an average of five and a half hours a day on screens and consuming media. That rate climbs to over eight and a half hours a day for teens.*

*[The Common Sense Census: Media Use by Tweens and Teens, 2021 Read Report](#)*

## INTERNET SAFETY TRAINING FOR PARENTS, TEACHERS, & CHILD WORKERS

LEARN HOW TO KEEP CHILDREN SAFE  
WHILE ON THE INTERNET, CELL PHONE, AND PLAYING VIDEO GAMES

THERE  
IS NO  
COST!

**Tuesday, September 26<sup>th</sup>, 6pm to 7:30pm via Zoom**  
[Register for September 26th Press Ctrl and Click Here](#)

Or

**Wednesday, November 8<sup>th</sup>, 6pm to 7:30pm via Zoom**  
[Register for November 8th Press Ctrl and Click Here](#)

Provided by:  
U.S. Attorneys' Office,  
District of Connecticut  
and  
Connecticut  
Department of Children  
& Families

# Windham-Tolland 4-H Camp



# Candy Needed

**WT4-H Camp needs your candy. Our teens will be hosting the Fall Extravaganza Fundraiser, which includes trick or treating. Proceeds from the event go towards repairing our dam. Please consider donating a bag of candy and helping us keep our pond!**

**Collection Location  
Winy Radio  
October 14 10-2pm**





# SCARECROW FEST OCTOBER 2023

"Scarecrow Fest" the entire month of October.

Decorate your very own scarecrow and bring it to the lawn of the town hall in the center of town for display.

**REGISTRATION DUE OCTOBER 16<sup>TH</sup>, 2023.**

Fill out the form on the town recreation website:

<https://www.eastfordct.org/domain/1154>

Please note all entries will have photos taken of scarecrows. If you choose to keep your scarecrow on your own lawn, registered addresses will be published on a public map for viewing.

Judging: 10-21-2023 and 10-22-2023

Judges: Rec Commission Members

SPONSORED BY: THE EASTFORD RECREATION COMMISSION,  
ALL LIABILITY IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PARTICIPANT OR VOLUNTEER OF THE EVENT.



# WINDHAM-TOLLAND 4-H CAMP

326 TAFT POND RD POMFRET, CT 06259

860-974-1122

**OCTOBER 21 FROM 1:30- 3:30 PM**



## EXTRAVAGANZA

TRY OUR TRICK OR TREAT TRAIL!

~~\$5 PER TRICK-OR-TREATER~~ AGES 2 AND UP

-SMORES AND HOT CHOCOLATE

-PHOTO BOOTH

-DONUT EATING CONTEST

-GAMES

FOOD ITEMS AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE



**DRESS UP IN COSTUMES!**

**ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT THE DAM REPAIR PROJECT**



# EASTFORD TRUNK-OR-TREAT

OCTOBER 31, 2023 // 6:30-7:30PM  
EASTFORD TOWN HALL PARKING LOT

Residents are invited to safely participate celebrating Halloween  
via our annual Trunk-or-Treat event!

Please register your name on the town website by October 27th if you would like  
to decorate a trunk and pass out candy. Trunk set up at 6:00pm.  
ALL participants must be accompanied by an adult, regardless of age.

SPONSORED BY: THE EASTFORD RECREATION COMMISSION.  
ALL LIABILITY IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PARTICIPANT OR VOLUNTEER OF THE EVENT.

