



Shaping Futures Together

To: Dr. Donna Leake
 From: Carole McCombe
 Date: January 5, 2023
 Subject: January Report to the Board of Education

Field Trips:

- The Washington, D.C. trip will be from May 16 – May 19, 2023. Students in both grade 7 and grade 8 will attend.
- Students in grades PK, 2, 3, and 4 will take monthly walking trips to the Eastford Public Library on separate, designated days.
- Select students in grade 6 will attend and perform in the Band Ensemble portion of the Connecticut Music Educators Association (CMEA) honors festival on March 30, 2023. The festival will be held at the CT Convention Center.

Virtual Field Trips through the Center for Interactive Learning (CILC)

Roper Mountain Science Center	Wagons West	Grade 4	01-30-2023
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Eastford Readiness Program:

The Readiness Program has 16 students with another student expected to enroll in mid January. Ten students are 4-year olds who will move on to kindergarten next year, leaving 7 openings for new students.

Eastford Readiness Council Update:

Meetings are held virtually on the first Tuesday of each month at 5:30 PM. The Council is exploring state and federal grants available for programs that receive School Readiness Funding. They are also updating policies and procedures to be ready for NAEYC re-accreditation in the spring of 2025.

Update on Grants:

After School Grant: December after school offerings included Mystic Seaport and Mystic Aquarium, STEM activities, Board Games, hanging ornaments, art club and academic support for middle school students and for students in grades 2-4.

School Mental Health Workers Grant: This is a new grant through the Connecticut State Department of Education Bureau of Health, Nutrition, and Family Services. The purpose of the grant is to assist Connecticut school districts in hiring and retaining additional School Mental Health Workers (SMHW), which by their definition includes school social workers, school psychologists, school counselors, school nurses, and licensed marriage and family therapists. Districts should be notified by the end of January as to whether or not they were selected to receive funds.

Data on Student Progress:

Mid-term progress reports for the second trimester will go home with students on January 25. We are working with students in grades 5-8 to develop learning portfolios that they will be able to share with parents during our spring conference times. Teachers in grades 3-8 are utilizing the Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs) to monitor student progress toward mastering standards. The IABs are resources from the State Department of Education and they align with the standards and types of questions students will see when they take the Smarter Balanced Assessments in the spring. Students will also take the NWEA assessment in Language Arts, Math and Science in March. These results are also used to monitor student progress toward mastering standards.

The Science of Reading:

We are requesting a waiver from the State of Connecticut to exempt us from the requirements under new legislation regarding the Science of Reading. The waiver will allow us to continue using the materials we currently have to support Language Arts in grades K-3 as long as we can document that our curriculum and resources provide in depth instruction and proper screening and assessment in all the elements required under The Science of Reading legislation. The waiver process requires an audit of our ELA program and assessments in grade K-3, and extensive documentation regarding our curriculum, program resources, assessments and student outcomes over the years. The waiver will be written and submitted by the end of February.

High School Information and Open Houses:

Ms. Murana is providing students and families with information on area high schools and the application process. This information is available on her website, in the Newsletter and on a bulletin board near her office. Most schools have already held an Open House for prospective students and students have had presentations from all but E.O. Smith and ACT. Students are able to shadow high school students at schools that they are considering attending.

At this point, 7 students are considering The Woodstock Academy, 3 students are considering Ellis Tech, and one student is considering Killingly Agriculture Education.

Professional Development:

- I continue to work with EastConn staff on a regular basis to incorporate the Eastford "Portrait of a Learner" (POL) into our existing and developing curriculum documents and continue our work on building a positive learning community with the goal of developing students as "leaders of their own learning". I attend monthly Regional collaborations through EastConn with the State Department, area administrators and curriculum directors. There is additional focus this year on The Science of Reading and new CSDE requirements that will impact reading and language arts curriculum and assessments beginning July 2023.

- EastConn staff will support our math teachers throughout the year as they navigate our new math program, Illustrative Mathematics (IM). ELA teachers will also receive support on integrating Units of Study with our Portrait of a Learner.

Community and other events:

- Ms. Murana will host a monthly grandparents group at the school. Families with grandparents as the primary caregivers are invited to attend for coffee and conversation.
- The Giving Tree collection has wrapped up for this winter. We raised about \$200 that will be used to support school families in need and a portion will also be donated to the Eastford Food Pantry.
- The annual Goods and Services Auction held on December 10 raised about \$11,000 to support our student trip to Washington, D.C. in May.
- The PTO-sponsored “Birds of Prey” assembly that was scheduled for December 16 was postponed due to weather. It will be held on January 31.
- The January after school enrichment calendar has been shared with families. Students have the opportunity to sign up for programs through Mystic Seaport and Mystic Aquarium, as well as STEM programs, crafts, art club and academic support offerings.

Special Thanks to:

- Everyone who donated their time and/or goods and services that contributed to the success of our annual Goods and Services Auction.
- All our volunteers who keep our parent groups up and running. Everyone is busier than ever so we really appreciate their service to our school and our students.