



Shaping Futures Together

To: Dr. Donna Leake
 From: Carole McCombe
 Date: March 5, 2024
 Subject: March Report to the Board of Education

Field Trips:

- Students in grades PK, K, 2, 3, and 4 will take monthly walking trips to the Eastford Public Library on separate designated days.
- Students in grades 3-5 will attend the Azul String Quartet thematic presentation at the Loos Center for Cultural Arts at The Woodstock Academy on March 28. The Azul String Quartet is made up of faculty members at the Hartt Community Division in West Hartford.
- Students in grades 5 and 6 will visit The Amistad in Mystic on April 1 for an interactive day of learning.
- Grade 5 will travel to the New Britain Museum of Art on May 28 for their third Faces of Culture trip.

Virtual Field Trips (CILC):

Longwood Gardens	Desert Plant Adaptations	Grade 4	04/12/2024
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BookBreak:

Through a pilot subscription, teachers and students in grades K-5 have been able to meet virtually with published bestselling authors to discuss new books, the mechanics of writing, book illustrating, and many topics that are of interest to students. Since September, our teachers have accessed over 25 different author programs. Each program is approximately 15 minutes long. BookBreak believes “that students engaging with inspiring authors can ignite enthusiasm for reading, spark a passion for writing, and help the literacy of even the most reluctant readers.” Teachers and students are enjoying this opportunity.

Eastford Readiness Program:

The Readiness Program is full with 17 Readiness students and one non-readiness part-time student. We are currently providing walk-in special education services to two students, with one more being evaluated in the upcoming month.

Eastford Readiness Council Update:

Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month at 5:30 PM via Zoom. The Council continues to work on aligning policies with updated NAEYC Standards and to prepare for our 5-year NAEYC reaccreditation – due in April 2024. The Council is also learning more about the change in the Kindergarten entry age and the impact it will have on our Readiness Program. The Council is discussing the feasibility of meeting the needs of Eastford resident preschoolers. The annual Readiness Needs Assessment was mailed to 44 families on January 23.

Data on Student Progress:

Second-trimester report cards will be sent home with students on March 15. Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled for March 27 and March 28. We will hold traditional conferences in grades PK-4 and student-led conferences in grades 5-8. Students in grades 2-8 will take the NWEA assessment in Language Arts, Math, and Science in March. These results are used to monitor student progress toward mastering standards. Beginning at the end of April and continuing through May, students in grades 3-8 will take the Smarter Balanced Assessments (SBAC) and students in grades 5 and 8 will also take the Next Generation Science Assessment (NGSS). These assessments are nationally normed, are used to calculate student growth and achievement, and are used for district accountability and to inform instruction. Results are available to teachers within 24 hours and family reports will be available early next school year.

High School Information and Open Houses:

Mrs. Schleicher (Ms. Murana) is providing students and families with information on area high schools, the application process, and how to schedule a time to shadow an upperclassman at one of our high schools. This information is available on her website, in the Newsletter and on a bulletin board near her office.

Grade 8 has 11 students. Four students applied to Ellis Tech. Two have been accepted and two have been placed on the waiting list. Only one student who was accepted plans to attend Ellis Tech. With this information, we anticipate the following attendance numbers.

The Woodstock Academy: 10 (previously 7)

Ellis Tech: 1 (previously 4)

Professional Development:

- Beginning in February, a team of teachers and administrators will participate in a series of monthly reading workshops required by the State Department of Education about the Science of Reading and the fundamentals of a well-rounded ELA program.
- Mrs. Kopplin and I attend monthly meetings to support our development of a portfolio that documents how we meet the NAEYC standards for our NAEYC reaccreditation. I attend an additional monthly NAEYC meeting for Readiness Program Administrators as well.
- ELA teachers continue to work with EastConn staff to support us in selecting a state-approved program for teaching ELA in grades K-3 and to support us in continuing to develop curricular documents around reading and writing.

- Beginning in March, two staff members and I will attend a series of three trainings at EastConn around developing our new Educator Growth and Support Plan. New plans are due to the State by July 1, 2024.

Community, other events, and recognition:

- Students in grade 5 will be participating in a year-long, inter-district opportunity through a grant provided by EastConn. The project is called Faces of Culture. Each participating district will focus on a culture from around the world. Our fifth graders will meet via Zoom calls, field trips, and in-class visits with fifth graders from other districts to learn about and explore the people and cultures that are different than those here in Eastford. Their last of three trips will be to The New Britain Museum of Art on May 28.
- The March calendar of after-school academic and enrichment activities was published in the March Newsletter on March 1. More offerings will continue to be added over time. These are all funded through the After School Grant.
- The week of March 4-8 students and teachers will celebrate Read Across America week. Students in grades 6-8 will have a visit by local Judge, Erik Lohr on Tuesday, March 5. He will read to them and discuss the process of becoming a judge.
- Student Council is sponsoring a dance for grades 5-8 on March 15 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.
- During Health classes, students in grades 5-8 will be learning the basics of CPR and First Aid through lessons taught by Mrs. Jeannine Spink. Grade 8 students will receive CPR/First Aid certification.
- Grade 5 students are participating in the D.A.R.E. program through CT State Police. Students will meet with the D.A.R.E. officer once per week through April.
- Through the efforts of the Student Council Fundraiser, EES students have raised about \$100 in loose change and gift cards, over a case of paper towels, a case of trash bags, a stack of newspaper and bedding, 20 handmade (by the kids) pull toys, 6 coats or sweaters, 4 big jugs of laundry soap or bleach and a huge box of treats, leashes, and waste bags. PawSafe Animal Rescue was the recipient of these items.
- **Special Recognition** to grade 4 students (and teachers Ms. Dill and Mrs. Bibeault) for completing their “Storytellers” unit of study on the Revolutionary War. The unit combines research, writing skills, creativity, and imagination with digital lessons on using the platform Book Creator. Each student produced a book to share their learning. The books can be viewed and listened to on the school website homepage.