

Eastchester Eagle

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE EASTCHESTER UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Eastchester High School Computer Program Expands



Eastchester High School students learn advanced computer skills with instructor Erin Glindmyer.

Eastchester High School Math and Computer Science teacher Erin Glindmyer walked from computer to computer, assisting her ninth-grade students as they tackled a new problem. "It looks like you have an extra quote here," said Glindmyer. "You can take out all the extra spaces."

The freshman are enrolled in the Introduction to Computer Science Class where they are learning the basics of coding. After completing the half-year course, the only option the students had was enrolling in AP Computer Science, but that is changing.

In the fall of 2019, EHS is planning to add an AP Computer Science Principles course which builds on the foundation of the entry-level course and reinforces computer skills. Students can earn college credit from both advanced courses.

"Having more options will attract more students," said Glindmyer. "In the past, the idea of taking a coding course appealed almost exclusively to students who excelled in math or had their sights on a technological career. Coding, however, requires much more than that; it takes creativity, imagination and logic to solve a complicated problem. Now, our course offerings better reflect the true essence of the skills needed not just to code, but to code well."

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Dear Eastchester Parents and Community Members,

We begin this new season with excitement and anticipation. Our spring sports season has begun, our concerts and performances are just around the corner and our academic programs continue to challenge and invigorate our students.

Looking back over the past months, the Board of Education would like to thank everyone who participated in our recent Special Transportation Vote.

On March 12, Eastchester voters approved Proposition #1 by a vote of 657 (yes) to 155 (no). As a result, new mileage guidelines will be implemented for the 2019-2020 school year. The following students will be eligible for busing: those in grades K and 1 who reside more than a quarter of a mile (0.25) to/from the school they legally attend; those in grades 2 through 5 who reside more than four-tenths (0.4) of a mile to/from the school they legally attend; and those in grades 6 through 12 who reside more than eight-tenths (0.8) of a mile to/from the school they legally attend. Thank you for coming out to vote.

The search for a new Superintendent of Schools has entered into the final stages with the Board currently interviewing qualified candidates selected with the assistance of our search team, School Leadership, LLC. The Board expects to make a final decision before the end of April.

Please save the date! The District's annual Budget Vote and Trustee election will take place on Tuesday, May 21. More information will be available in the coming weeks.

We thank you for your continued support of the Eastchester School District and wish you and your families an enjoyable spring.

Sincerely,

Mary Messner Martin
President, Board of Education

Eastchester High School Computer Program Expands

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Senior Michael Zeolla said he would have considered taking that class if the opportunity had existed when he was an underclassman.

"It will help students with the transition into AP Computer Science. I find the course fun but challenging," said Zeolla.

During a recent AP Computer Science class, students were creating a program that could be used to create a game. Students had to design their code so that the computer randomly selected players and distributed tokens.

"Breaking down games that are relatively simple to explain can be tougher to code than students might expect. It is common practice in this class to have to slow down your own thought process enough to realize where your own assumptions lie. Something as simple as distributing tokens sounds like you have to add one to each of the other players – but be careful! Forgetting to subtract from your own hand will spin you into a never-ending game," said Glindmyer.

Math Department Chairperson Larry Ellis retired from IBM and said education now comprises The Three R's: Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic, plus coding.

"Students should learn the skill of coding even if they are not going to code because they will be interacting with coders in every large corporation. These classes provide marketable skills in today's economy."

"I use computers for everything and I know how they work and how people use them," explained senior Ralph Medici who is



Junior Nicole Liao and senior Ralph Medici work on a coding project in their AP Computer Science class.

considering a career in finance. "It is satisfying when you get a problem to work."

Junior Nicole Liao took her introductory course as a freshman. "I was always interested in computers and I didn't know what they were all about. I enjoy working with other people and talking with them to solve the problems."

The Power of a Story

Kindergarten students and first-graders from Waverly sat down on the floor and listened eagerly to Eastchester High School students as they read them a story as part of World Read Aloud Day.

"A story can build community," said EHS Library Media Specialist Nancy Brown. "The younger students see how the older students love to read and they discover the excitement that a book can bring."

Approximately 20 high school students visited the children on March 1, read a story and shared advice about navigating schoolwork. Some of the older students reconnected with their former teachers.

"It is sentimental going back and seeing everything. It is a joyful experience," explained sophomore Daniel Orlando.

Sophomore Lauren DeLeon said, "This gives the students a sense of encouragement, a goal. They will say, I can be that."

Students read the story of Ruthie and the (Not So) Teeny Tiny Lie, by Laura Rankin, which correlated with Waverly's theme of honesty for March.

Thank you to Nancy Brown and Jean Ahern-Kenny for organizing the event.



Care and Share

Spending time in the emergency room is always stressful but Anne Hutchinson students want to make the experience better for children.

During the month of February, the school collected more than 200 boxes of crayons and coloring books that were donated to White Plains Hospital as part of their Care and Share initiative.

Fifth-grade Student Council members organized the collection. "When kids are very scared, this will help them calm down," said Samia Washwell.

"I understand how hard it is to wait when you don't feel well. You also get bored so I am happy they will have something to do," agreed her classmate Sarah Ndreu.

On Friday, March 2, representatives from White Plains Hospital and The Friends of White Plains Hospital answered questions from the students and accepted the donations.

"We are so excited to be part of this program. We are honored that the school reached out to us for a second year and that the students are giving back," remarked Kathleen Winterroll.

The coloring books and crayons will be at White Plains Hospital and The Family Health Center that is adjacent to the ER.



Kathleen Winterroll, Friends of White Plains Hospital, Leyla Ozkurt, Liana Mingione, Sarah Ndreu, Ava DiBenedetto, Brooke Emmett, White Plains Hospital, teachers Bobbi Iacovelli and Felicia Maldari.

Mathematical Talent Search

Eastchester Middle School student Aegus Kim's mathematical abilities have set him apart from other students.

The seventh-grader has been added to the leaderboard of The USA Mathematical Talent Search for his achievements in a national math competition.

The 13-year old is one of the youngest participants to score high enough to be added to the rankings.

Kim participated in the 30th USAMTS from October to December 2018.

"I'm just glad there is something that can challenge and push me to my limits. I was thrilled when I spotted my name on the leaderboard among the high school students," said Kim. "I enjoy it so much because of that sense of completion that can only be earned through perseverance."

The USAMTS is a free mathematics competition open to all middle and high school students in the nation.

Unlike other math contests, students must submit justifications for each problem they tackle and they are allowed a month to complete their task. The competition consists of three rounds of five problems each. Students may use any materials including books, calculators and computers, but all the work must be original.

Mathematicians grade their work and also provide comments to participants. The goals of USAMTS are to develop problem solving skills, improve technical writing abilities, and allow students to mature mathematically.

Students may become eligible to compete in other competitions which determine their eligibility for the USA Mathematical Olympiad Team.



Seussical Jr.

Eastchester Middle School brought the “Cat in the Hat” and “Horton the Elephant” to life when they presented Seussical Jr. during the weekend of Jan. 11 and 12.

The musical teaches lessons of loyalty, redemption, and self-worth, accomplished through Dr. Seuss’ odd but loveable characters.

“The story of Horton, Gertrude, Jojo and the Who’s helps the children see the value in staying true to yourself,” said Director Alex Fletcher. “I love the theater so much because it grows confidence and teaches children about responsibility and community.”

Seventh-grader William Anderson played the Cat in the Hat and took the role to heart. “It is such a fun and energetic role. I was always singing and moving. I even went up into the balcony! I really enjoy the theater because I can express myself more than in school.”

Joli Flynn portrayed Gertrude McFuzz, the fuzzy yellow bird who falls in love with Horton. “The show makes you think about life and what kids and teens experience. What I like about it is that I can make the character my own,” said Flynn who is in eighth grade.

Special thanks to Musical Director Erin Bonner, Set and Light Director John Gwardyak, Choreographer Kim Giannelli, Costume Designer/Special Make-up Jennifer Batz, and BOCES Cosmetology for hair and make-up design.

Book by: John Aherns and Stephen Flaherty; Music by: Stephen Flaherty; Lyrics by: Lynn Aherns; Conceived by: Lynn Aherns, Stephen Flaherty, Eric Idle; Based on the works of Dr. Seuss; Music Supervised, Adapted and Produced by Bryan Louiselle. Seussical Jr, is presented through special arrangement with Musical Theater International (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI.



Winter Concerts

Our students spread joy during this winter, sharing their musical talents throughout a variety of concerts.

Thank you to all our Musical Directors who guide our students throughout the school year: Erin Bonner, Mark Dodge, Suzanne Greene, Jeremy Messmer, Katherine Ness, Katelyn Odierna, Madeline Rende, Annmarie Smith, Doug Zantay, accompanist Deborah Barto.



A Weekend of Dance

Eastchester High School students felt the music as they danced on stage during the Jazz Co. Weekend of Dance. Meghan McCloskey found it difficult to find the exact words to describe the excitement. "Waiting backstage is stressful and when the lights are off, it is intense. But when you are on stage, you let it all out."

This year there was something extra-special as Jazz Co. celebrated its 35th Anniversary during the weekend of Feb 1 – Feb 3.

"Jazz Co.'s Weekend of Dance" was the ultimate celebration of the art of dance," said Artistic Director, Melissa Lieto-Cuomo. "The dancers stunned crowds with their talent and put on the best show in all of Jazz Co.'s 35 years of performances!"

Both male and female students rehearse for 10 weeks to perfect their routines for the 26 dances that range from Broadway favorites to popular songs.

Professional choreographer and former Jazz Co. dancer Rob Coglitore worked with the students during rehearsals. "It is great to see how many kids love to dance where I grew up," said Coglitore who graduated in 2008. "The experience awakened in me something that I didn't realize existed. I am grateful for all the support I received from the teachers while I was here."

While watching the finale, a medley of Gloria Estefan songs, with its 125 dancers, it was hard to believe that Jazz Co. only had approximately 15 members when the group started in 1984. Founder Charlou Woodrow wanted students who were not enrolled in sports to have the opportunity to dance. Jazz Co. now exists in the elementary schools, middle school and high school.

On each of the five-year anniversaries, alumni are invited for a gathering during the show weekend. This year, more than 40 alumni from the classes of 1992 through 2018 joined in the last section of the finale.



Photo by Allie Rank



Music & Friendship

Eastchester students brought smiles to the faces of senior citizens on Feb. 13, with an afternoon of friendship, food and music.

Fifth-graders from the Anne Hutchinson and Greenvale orchestras performed at The Valentine's Day Senior Nutrition Party held at Mulino's at Lake Isle.

"The children make you feel so good," said Suzy and Carmine Gagliardi, who have been married for 60 years. "The music is relaxing and it brings back memories."

The seniors enjoyed a lunch served on Valentine's Day placemats that were made by students.

Orchestra Director Suzanne Greene brought the students together 26 years ago for the first Valentine's Day Party and said she hasn't changed a note.

"The seniors see their rosy cheeks and their sparkling eyes and it is contagious," said Greene.

Musically, this venue provides a comforting way for students to perform solos for the first time.

The concert featured classical pieces and contemporary hits. Waverly Music Instructor Katherine Ness accompanied the orchestra on piano.

The crowd sang to a perfect Valentine's Day tune, "I Love You for Sentimental Reasons," played by School Superintendent Dr. Walter Moran.

Fifth-grader Kimberly Husbands was excited to be a part of the day. "It is a great experience. We can meet all the senior citizens whom we don't know and play songs, and they can sing."

Everyone joined in the sing-along to "Love Me Tender" and "Let Me Call You Sweetheart" – a fitting finale for the day.

Before they returned to class, orchestra members presented the seniors with Valentine's made by the Anne Hutchinson Student Council.



Middle School Kindness Week

"No act is too small when it comes to kindness." "Be respectful." "You are one in a minion!"

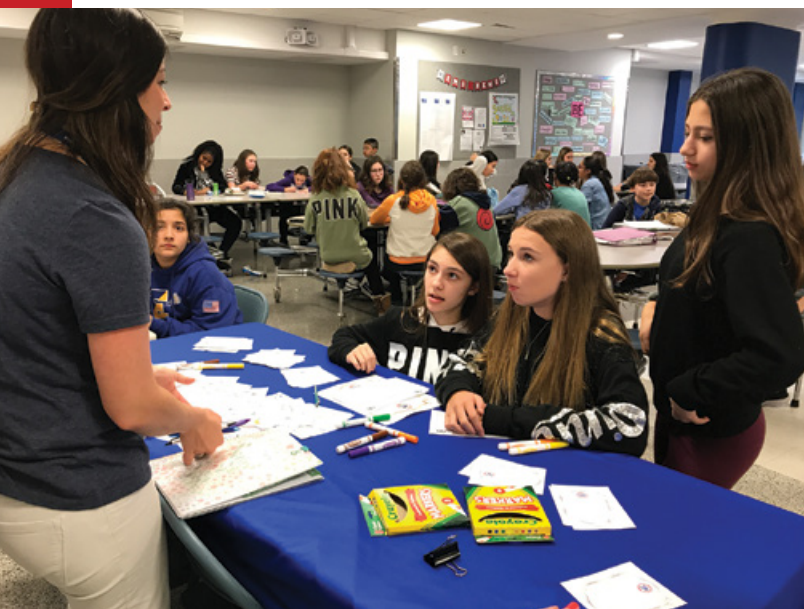
Eastchester Middle School students wrote these encouraging words on paper during lunch periods the week of Jan. 20 as part of the school's Kindness Week. Hundreds of notes will form the Wall of Positivity that will be created on the second floor.

Eighth-grader Sofia Giamei drew a Kindness Cowboy – a yellow smiley face wearing a cowboy hat. "It will make people smile," Giamei said.

Students kicked off Kindness Week by decorating their classroom doors. Another popular activity was Secret Admirer, where students wrote anonymous notes, sharing words they may not be comfortable saying face-to-face to fellow students.

"Someone could be insecure and seeing the note they will feel better," said seventh-grader Antonella Bruno.

"The students are reaching out to people who they might not normally reach out to and who they admire. We hope this generous spirit and examples of kindness follow them throughout the whole year," said Guidance Counselor Kristin Spillane.



Greenvale DARE Graduation

"DARE is the light in the darkness that gives hope to kids and their parents."

That is the message that fifth-grader Jack Mohring wanted to spread at his DARE Culmination Ceremony on March 1.



For 11 weeks, Eastchester Police Officer Stephen DiLegge explained the dangers of drug, alcohol and tobacco use to Greenvale fifth-graders. He also equipped them with the skills and tools to live healthier lives. DARE - the Drug Abuse Resistance Education Program - has grown to include bullying and peer pressure.

"It is very important that law enforcement is involved with the community and creates positive interactions," said Officer DiLegge, who attended Greenvale as a child. "We provide the students with facts and health information, so they can make safe choices."

As part of the ceremony, students received certificates and read essays they wrote explaining the positive influences DARE had in their lives. "DARE teaches kids to avoid areas where bad things happen," said James DeMaio.

Students also have discovered how to be helpers – not bystanders – when they witness bullying.

The DARE Program is supported by Greenvale Principal Darrel Stinchcomb, Eastchester Town Supervisor Anthony Colavita, The Community Fund, Eastchester Police Chief Timothy Bonci, the fifth-grade teachers, and the Eastchester District Administration.



Waverly's Good Deed Day

Waverly students drew pictures of ships and sailors as they learned more about the word courage.

During February, they designed and wrote cards to sailors aboard The U.S.S. John C. Stennis for their Good Deed of the month.

The letters include such phrases as "Thank you for keeping us safe," "Thank you for being brave."

First grade teacher Joyce Garrett said, "It is important for the students to understand that not everyone can be home with their families and that it the reason why we feel so safe."

During the holiday season, students made cards for soldiers serving overseas and a parent suggested the children become involved in this project.

Alex Samaniego said, "I feel good they are getting something and they will be happy."

Her classmate Tommy Hyland agreed, "I am happy that I gave them a letter because they are keeping us out of danger."



Congratulations to the Eastchester Varsity Wrestling Team after winning its first-ever league title in school history in January. Thank you to coach Greg Domestico.

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Taking the Plunge

The Eastchester High School Boys Varsity Swim Team wrapped up its inaugural season competing against teams throughout Section One.

"I longed for a swim team. I wanted a group of friends to swim with at school. It is really special to be part of this team and work for a goal," said junior Alex Rosado, who led the Eagles to their first team victory, beating Port Chester 55 – 39 on January 22nd.

The team practiced three-to-four times a week at Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville and trained intensively for strength and conditioning at EHS.

"The team builds confidence. Being a part of my swim team in high school had a huge impact on me and I wanted to give students the same experience," said Coach Tim Leddy.

The team grew from 20 members who signed up in the fall to 24, and ended up placing ninth in the Conference Championships. Rosado, who was the only member to qualify for the Section Championships, placed 14th in the 100 Backstroke and 18th in the 100 Freestyle.

Senior James Poletti, who was new to competitive swimming became a vital asset to the team, helping the Medley Relay to a top 20 finish in Sections. Poletti said he always loved swimming but the competitive aspect was new to him. "It is very challenging and I never expected I would have to push myself so hard," said Poletti.

As the team prepares for next season, they will look to improve their team standings and individual times.

"This is not a sport where you can show up and expect to perform. The boys know what they need to do during the off-season for us to be successful in the future," said Leddy.

