

EGHS secures \$100k grant to host Algebra I readiness camp



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Algebraic engagement took center stage on Monday, May 6, 2024, as East Greenwich High School hosted the parent and student introduction to "Explorations in Mathematics 2024: A Summer Camp to Foster Success in Algebra I."

East Greenwich Public Schools faculty members Melissa Brightman, math intervention specialist; Holly Eaves, mathematics and computer science educator; and Raquel Casanova, special educator, led interactive stations using games to foster reasoning, problem-solving, and communication and offered a sneak peek of the *Tiny House Challenge*. Patricia Lewis Dulac, mathematics department chair and camp director, provided a virtual introduction to the camp goals and format for those who could not attend the in-person session.

East Greenwich High School secured a \$100,000 grant through the RI Department of Education to develop and conduct an Algebra I readiness camp in tandem with West Warwick High School. *Explorations in Mathematics 2024: A Summer Camp to Foster Success In Algebra I* runs five (5) hours daily from July 15 - 26, 2024, and is designed to:

- Expose members of the Class of 2028 and existing EGHS students to foundational Algebraic concepts through contextualized, real-world applications;
- Promote engagement and instill a sense of confidence in students that they have the aptitude to fulfill the Algebra 1/Geometry/Algebra 2/Advanced Mathematics (AGAA) sequence;
- Ensure students who are currently performing below benchmarks are given an accessible on-ramp to the AGAA graduation and
- Focus on the fundamental prerequisites needed for success in Algebra 1.

This project-based camp centers around the *Tiny House Challenge: Designing Small, Efficient Homes for a Greener Future*. Student-participants will design a small, efficient, accessible home that prioritizes functional use of space over physical size. The goal is to create a dwelling that is cost- and energy-efficient while minimizing environmental impact. This project provides an opportunity to foster creativity, problem-solving, and sustainable design practices. It requires students to apply skills and concepts in context that are essential for success in an Algebra I course.

EGHS Principal Dr. Patricia Page and Cole Middle School Principal Melissa Centracchio commented, “This introductory session successfully brought together students, parents, and educators in a dynamic environment, setting the stage for a summer camp focused on nurturing algebraic skills essential for successful progression within the high-school mathematics curriculum.” Dr. Page also extended her gratitude to East Greenwich Education Foundation Treasurer Alan Malafronte, who secured donations from area businesses when he learned the grant could not cover the cost of lunch for the student participants.

Mathematics Department Chair Patricia Dulac added, “We know that proficiency in Algebra I underpins high school mathematics. The summer camp has been designed to support, engage, and empower students through tasks that foster mastery and build confidence in the skills and concepts needed for success in Algebra I. Basically, the goal of this summer experience is to ensure that our students ‘hit the ground running’ when they begin their study of Algebra I.”

Assistant Superintendent/Director of Teaching and Learning Michael Podraza states, “We are very excited to be a part of this grant and to provide the opportunity to support and enhance student achievement in mathematics. The thoughtfulness and care that these educators have put into designing this summer camp is truly exceptional. I anticipate that students’ learning and engagement, along with their house designs, will be something that we will all be proud of.

ABOUT EAST GREENWICH HIGH SCHOOL, EAST GREENWICH, RI

East Greenwich High School (EGHS) is a comprehensive, public high school serving students in grades 9-12. The school community boasts a variety of accolades, including being designated as a national Unified Champion School in 2023, a 5-Star School against state and federal accountability metrics, and an Exemplary High Performing Blue Ribbon School in 2018 by the

U.S. Department of Education. The school is fully accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) and has been named to the College Board's Advanced Placement (AP) Honor Roll.

The keystone of the school's culture is expressed in the district's mission:

The mission of the East Greenwich Public Schools is to genuinely know, support, and celebrate all students in meeting their full potential. We are committed to meaningful collaboration among faculty, staff, students, families, and the community, recognizing our collective responsibility to continue to deliver a high-quality education system for all.

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