

# ***EAST GREENWICH PUBLIC SCHOOLS***

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Photographs available upon request

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## **East Greenwich Public Schools Empower Young People to Start With Hello and Build a Connected and Inclusive Community**

***February 2, 2018 East Greenwich, RI***, - East Greenwich Public Schools, in partnership with Sandy Hook Promise, a national, nonprofit organization led by several family members whose loved ones were killed in the tragic mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School, is taking part in Start With Hello Week, February 5 – 9, 2018. The East Greenwich School Committee adopted a [resolution](#) in support of Start With Hello Week at its January 23rd meeting.

Start with Hello teaches students the skills they need to reach out to and include those who may be dealing with chronic social isolation and create a culture of inclusion and connectedness within their school or youth organization.

Social isolation is the overwhelming feeling of being left out, lonely, or treated like you are invisible. It is a growing epidemic in the United States and within our schools. Excessive feelings of isolation can be associated with violent and suicidal behavior. In fact, one study reports that chronic loneliness increases our risk of an early death by 14%. Furthermore, young people who are isolated can become victims of bullying, violence and/or depression. As a result, many further pull away from society, struggle with learning and social development and/or choose to hurt themselves or others.

Start With Hello Week raises awareness and educates students and the community through Start With Hello trainings, advertising, activities, public proclamations, media events, student contests and school awards. Start With Hello Week brings attention to the growing epidemic of social isolation in our schools and communities and empowers young people to create a culture of inclusion and connectedness within their school or youth organization.

The East Greenwich Public Schools are joining hundreds of other schools from across the United States in participating in Start With Hello Week, February 5 - 9, 2018. A variety of daily activities are planned in the form of a Start With Hello spirit week culminating in [No One Eats Alone Day](#). Below are examples of activities that will be held in each of our schools:

**Frenchtown:** Hello name tag day, Banner Day (student-signed banner hung in cafeteria), Green Day (wearing green and eating green snacks), Buddy Up Day (partner reading among grade levels), Fun For All Friday.

**Meadowbrook:** Name tags, "A Blizzard of Kindness" (students write acts of kindness on snowballs and decorate the school), Hello banner and wear green day, no one eats or plays alone.

**Hanaford:** All Town Meetings to discuss Start With Hello, morning announcements, making new friends during recess and wellness time, sit with someone different at lunch, wear green.

**Eldredge:** Start With Hello classroom discussions, name tag day, student greeters, banner signing, wear green and whole school photo with banner.

**Cole:** Cole Interact Club takes the lead. Student and teacher morning greeters, posters/selfies with #StartWithHello, staff sign the "Hello pledge," Start With Hello presentation, kindness messages and pledges, poster contest, wear green, no one eats alone.

**East Greenwich High School:** Student Council and Best Buddies take the lead. Rock to be sprayed green in support of Start With Hello, "A smile for everyone" Day, post-its posted with student messages (hundreds collected), posters/selfies #StartWithHello, wear green, no one eats alone.

The East Greenwich Public Schools and Sandy Hook Promise invite the community to learn more about Start With Hello by visiting [www.sandyhookpromise.org/bringStartWithHello](http://www.sandyhookpromise.org/bringStartWithHello). This website includes program resources for classrooms, schools, communities and homes.

Sandy Hook Promise Sandy Hook Promise (SHP) is a national, nonprofit organization based in Newtown, Connecticut. SHP is led by several family members whose loved ones were killed in the tragic mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School on December 14, 2012 that claimed the lives of 20 first-graders and 6 educators. SHP is focused on preventing gun violence (and other forms of violence and victimization) BEFORE it happens by educating and mobilizing youth and adults on mental health and wellness programs that identify, intervene and help at-risk individuals. SHP is a moderate, above-the-politics organization that supports sensible non-policy and policy solutions that protect children and prevent gun violence. The intent is to honor all victims of gun violence by turning the tragedy into a moment of transformation. For more information, visit [www.sandyhookpromise.org](http://www.sandyhookpromise.org).

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