

EDGEMONT WELCOMES 2025-2026 SCHOOL YEAR



Welcome Back from Dr. Hamilton

Another summer has come to a close, and with Labor Day just around the corner, it's time to turn the page to an exciting new school year. Like many of you, I felt this summer was especially condensed. Between a late June ending and an earlier September start, the days truly flew by. I hope you and your families made every minute count, whether traveling, recharging, or simply enjoying the long, warm evenings together.

For me, summer included cherished time with my family, special moments with my grandsons, Jack (3) and Lewis (1), and one of my favorite pastimes, reading! As joyful as those moments were, what excites me most is coming back together with you, our students, and our dedicated staff to begin another year of learning and growth. The board and I have been working to identify our priorities for the 2025-2026 school year. These priorities include deepening our commitment to "All Means All" and identifying district goals for 2025-2026 to ensure that our work is both focused and purposeful.

At the center of these goals are priorities that emphasize student-centered engagement, and the strengthening of parent/community partnerships. Please anticipate hearing more about these priorities in the coming weeks.

Edgemont remains ranked among the top school districts in the state and the nation. You are an integral part of our continued success, and I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your passion, care, and dedication to our district.

As we embark on the 2025-2026 school year, let's stay grounded in our shared belief that every child deserves to be seen, heard, and valued, and that together, we can build the kind of learning community that reflects the very best of Edgemont. Here's to a year filled with purpose, progress, and the power of collective impact. I look forward to seeing you in September.

Yours for the sake of all children,
Ken
Kenneth R. Hamilton, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Capital & Bond Projects Underway

Although our classrooms were quiet, our schools were alive with activity. The pounding of drills, the hum of trucks, and the shuffle of furniture filled the air as we made meaningful progress on a wide range of capital projects. These upgrades aren't just cosmetic. They reflect our ongoing commitment to creating modern, safe, inspiring learning environments, and forging ahead with bond work.

At Edgemont Jr./Sr. High School

- Phase I of the parking lot paving project is underway, with sidewalks and curbing scheduled for completion before the start of school.
- The Fitness Center is being fully renovated, thanks to a generous donation from the E Club.
- Construction has begun on a multi-year cafeteria renovation and expansion funded by the 2024 Bond, with completion expected in fall 2026.
- Auditorium renovations, supported by a generous gift from the Edgemont School Foundation, are nearing completion.
- Office and conference spaces have been upgraded, a new playground was installed near Blanford Field, and the old paddle tennis courts have been removed to make better use of space.



New Tennis Courts at Greenville

Greenville and Seely



At Greenville

- The tennis courts have been renovated and reopened.
- The cafeteria is undergoing a full renovation, also funded by the 2024 Bond, which will include air conditioning and a warming kitchen for expanded food service beginning in 2026–2027.
- New windows were installed in the library, and two playgrounds were replaced with brand-new structures.

At Seely Place

- The front playground was replaced, and a new Ga Ga Pit was added to enhance recess and recreation.

Read More on our website

Mark your Calendars

Important Dates to Remember:

First day of school --

- Tuesday, September 2, 2025

Homecoming--

- Thursday, September 25, 2025 –
Saturday September 27, 2025

Back to School Night--

- Edgemont Jr./Sr. High School –
Wednesday, September 10, 2025
(6:30-8:30)
- Greenville- Wednesday, September
17, 2025 (6:00-8:30)
- Seely- Thursday, September 18, 2025
(6:00-8:30)

Beyond the School Year PPS Summer Achievements

Pupil Personnel Services (PPS) department had a productive summer, marked by meaningful developments in programming, staffing, systems transitions, and student support:

- The Extended School Year (ESY) program was successfully held at EHS, providing critical summer services to eligible students.



Air Conditioning



Our architects and facilities team continue to design the next phases of the bond, which will bring district-wide air conditioning, new STEAM classrooms, enhanced safety features, and further building and field renovations.

These improvements reflect the district's continued focus on maintaining high-quality facilities that support both academic and extracurricular excellence. Our buildings must match the level of excellence that Edgemont is known for.

Some projects will continue into the school year and while that means occasional noise or dust, wherever possible work will be scheduled outside the school day to minimize disruptions.

Draft – Board of Education Announces 2025–2026 District Goals

2025-26 District Goals Goals that focus the work of our schools on student learning, staff development and community engagement	
Communication & Community Partnership	Build trust and strengthen relationships through transparent, inclusive, respectful and consistent two-way communication with and between families, staff, and community stakeholders, recognizing that strong school-community partnerships support student success.
Excellence in Teaching & Learning	Support innovation and instructional excellence by addressing the district's evolving needs around high-quality teaching & learning and professional development & growth that lead to improved learning outcomes for all students.
Strategic Goal Alignment & Governance	Establish and communicate annual district and Superintendent goals aligned to long-term visionary goals along with checkpoints of data-driven progress towards these goals throughout the year. Use these goals to structure leadership practices and Board oversight.
Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Innovation	Advance a dynamic and future-ready instructional program that reflects high expectations, innovation, and student-centered design.
Operational Excellence	Pursue operational excellence while complying with evolving mandates related to cybersecurity, public health, and school safety in order to optimize the student and staff experience.

Share your thoughts at boe@edgemont.org



Records Digitization Project Underway

Records digitization refers to the process of converting physical or paper-based records (such as files, documents, photos, or audio tapes) into digital formats so they can be stored, accessed, managed, and shared electronically.

Why It's Important?

- Efficiency: digital records are easier to search and share than physical files.
- Security: digital systems allow for encryption, access controls, and backups.
- Preservation: protects records from physical deterioration (fire, mold, fading, etc.).
- Compliance: helps organizations meet legal and regulatory requirements for record-keeping.
- Space-saving: reduces the need for physical storage rooms.

We launched a massive, multi-year records digitization effort that will greatly improve accessibility and organization of the district's permanent records, personnel files, and student information, while freeing up much needed space in the EHS E Building.

Special Notice to Parents: New Regulation and Policy on Distraction Free Schools

We would like to make you aware of a new policy adopted by the Board of Education that sets clear expectations for student use of internet-enabled devices during the school day. This policy is a result of a new mandate from the New York State Education Department (Education Law §2803) and will go into effect immediately.

While this policy represents a formal step forward, it is *not a major change* from our current practices. Rather, it reinforces our existing expectations and ensures consistency across all grade levels.

What does this mean for students?

- Personal internet-enabled devices such as smartphones, smartwatches, and tablets may not be used during the school day, including class time, lunch, recess, study halls, and passing periods, unless a specific exception applies.
- District-issued devices (such as Chromebooks) or approved personal wireless devices (for grades 9–12 only) may be used for educational purposes as directed by a teacher.
- Exceptions are permitted for health-related needs, translation services, or other case-by-case circumstances (please see the full policy for details on pages 7-8).
- Elementary students (K-6) must keep devices silenced and stored in backpacks, lockers or cubbies.
- Middle and high school students (7-12) are expected to follow the same storage expectations, with limited instructional use permitted in grades 9–12 under teacher direction. If you need to reach your student in an emergency during school hours, please reach out to the main office at 914-472-1500 Press 0.

This policy reflects our shared commitment to student academic growth and social/emotional well-being. By reducing screen time and minimizing distractions, we hope to promote more meaningful face-to-face interactions, stronger classroom engagement, and healthier habits for all students.

We invite you to read the full Board-adopted policy (see pages 7-8) and to reach out to your child's principal if you have any questions.

We will continue to communicate with students and families to ensure everyone understands the new expectations and has opportunities to ask questions. As always, we thank you for your continued partnership as we work together to create a positive and focused learning environment for all students..

Teaching and Learning over the Summer



While construction crews were busy outside, our teachers and administrators were equally hard at work inside. The Office of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment has been engaged in a wide range of initiatives aimed at strengthening academic programs, promoting equity, and enhancing student engagement. Across grade levels and content areas, teams updated, aligned, and redesigned coursework to better meet the evolving needs of students and the expectations of state and local standards.

Highlights include:

- In STEAM, Project Lead the Way coursework for grades 7–8 was revised to reflect student needs, and AP Computer Science A was redesigned in anticipation of the College Board’s 2025–2026 updates. Math work included the creation of “thinking classrooms” for Honors Algebra 2 and the development of point-based rubrics for K–6 mathematics. We also continued our STEAM vertical articulation project and moved forward on developing an integrated STEAM and SEL (Social Emotional Learning) curriculum.
- In the Humanities, English electives were redesigned to feature more engaging and creative literature. Additional student-led book clubs were created to deepen analysis and student voice. Our elementary social studies teams aligned the curriculum to new standards, integrated project-based learning, and improved pacing. There was a strong focus on inclusivity and literacy integration across all content areas, including the development of a curriculum centered on community-based learning for some of our differently-abled students. Read-aloud were also recorded to support student literacy.
- To support diverse learners, the ENL (English as a New Language) curriculum was aligned and modified, and work continued on the alignment of our world languages program. Restorative practices were strengthened through updated norms, circles, and feedback systems. Our elementary health curriculum was reviewed and updated for relevance.
- Cross-grade curricular alignment continues to demonstrate the district’s commitment to whole-child education and to building meaningful, developmentally appropriate learning experiences for all students.

The Board of Education recognizes that students may have personal electronic devices that can perform different functions. Such devices include “internet-enabled devices” defined as: any smartphone, tablet, smartwatch or other device capable of connecting to the internet and enabling the user to access content on the internet, including social media applications., These devices can create significant distraction to the school environment, negatively impact student mental health, contribute to disciplinary infractions, and reduce student engagement. Additionally, in an emergency, the use of personal electronic devices can distract students from following the directions of staff or emergency responders, contribute to the spread of misinformation, create congestion in the emergency response system, and interfere with the district’s emergency response protocols.

As required by Education Law §2803, this policy prohibits student use of internet-enabled devices during the school day (including all classes, homeroom periods, lunch, recess, study halls, and passing time) on school grounds, unless under an exception, as set forth below. But does not include any such device (such as Chromebooks) supplied by the district or the BYOD “personal wireless devices” used for educational purposes.

Exceptions for Specific Purposes

Use of internet-enabled devices must be permitted where included in a student’s Individualized Education Program, Section 504 plan, or where required by law. Additionally, the district permits the use of internet-enabled devices in the event of an emergency, and under the following limited circumstances:

Where necessary to manage a student’s healthcare (e.g., diabetes, asthma, medication, etc.);
For translation services; and/or

On a case-by-case basis, upon review and determination by a school psychologist, school social worker, or school counselor, for a student caregiver who is routinely responsible for the care and wellbeing of a family member.

Parents may request an exception for their children to use internet-enabled devices during the school day as listed above. Requests must be made to the Building Principal, and for healthcare exceptions, must include documentation from an appropriate healthcare professional.

Students in grades 9-12 only, shall be permitted to utilize their own approved “personal wireless devices” (tablets, Chromebook and/or laptops) during the school day on school grounds for specific education purposes. For specific class requirements, a teacher will provide advance notice to the class to bring an internet-enabled device to the classroom for a specific instructional purpose. Use shall be in accordance with Policy 4526.1, Student Acceptable Use of Technology. Once the class period has concluded, the device shall be returned to the student’s locker for the remainder of the school day. All other internet-enabled devices are prohibited in accordance with this policy.

Under any of these exceptions, devices may only be used for the purposes outlined in the exception, and the device must be silenced and put away when not in use, to the extent compatible with the reason for the exception.

Device Access and Storage

- At the elementary school level, student devices must be silenced and stored in student lockers. Any device that is not stored will be confiscated and must be picked up by a parent or guardian. Elementary school students are not permitted to bring a “personal wireless device” noted above,
- At the middle and high school level, other than the “personal wireless device” noted above, student devices must be silenced and stored in student lockers.

Generally, the district is not responsible for stolen, lost or damaged personal electronic devices brought to school.

Enforcement, Consequences and Reporting

Enforcement of this policy is chiefly the responsibility of building administrative staff; however, all designated employees are expected to assist in enforcement. Students will be reminded of this policy regularly and consistently, especially at the start of the school year and after returning from breaks.

For students in grades 7-12 out of compliance with this policy, the device will be held in the school office until the end of the school day. The first time this happens, the student may retrieve the device, and the parent will be notified. For subsequent instances, the parent must retrieve the device. Further instances will result in the device being held in the school office daily for longer periods of time. The district will exercise reasonable care to maintain the security of devices that are held by the district, but cannot guarantee the devices will be secure. For students with exceptions under this policy, the district will examine alternative ways to achieve the purpose of the exception, including different storage or access provisions.

Administrators will also discuss the aims of this policy with students and their parents, the benefits of a distraction-free environment, the reasons the student had difficulty following this policy, and how the district can help the student contribute to a distraction-free environment.

The district may not impose suspension from school if the sole grounds for the suspension is that the student accessed an internet-enabled device as prohibited by this policy. However, the district may utilize interventions under the district’s Code of Conduct, including detention, in-school suspension, and exclusion from extracurricular activities. The district may also utilize assignments on the detrimental impact of social media on mental health, smartphones in school, or other relevant topics.

Beginning September 1, 2026 and annually thereafter, the district will publish an annual report on its website detailing the enforcement of this policy over the past year, including non-identifiable demographic information of students who have faced disciplinary action for non-compliance with this policy, and an analysis of any demographic disparities in enforcement of this policy. If a statistically significant disparate enforcement impact is identified, the report will include a plan to mitigate such disparate enforcement.

Communication with Parents/Persons in Parental Relation

During the school day, to minimize distractions, parents (which, for purposes of this policy, includes persons in parental relation) may contact their children via the following methods: calling the school office, or utilizing the district-provided email address. The district will notify parents in writing of the communication protocol at the beginning of each school year and upon enrollment.

Policy Distribution and Translation

As required by law, the district will post this policy in a clearly visible and accessible location on its website. The district will also include this information, or a plain language summary, in student/family handbooks.