



SOARING TO EXCELLENCE  
**EASTCHESTER**  
UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

# Education and Technology Report

Board of Education Work Session

Tuesday, January 20, 2026



# Curriculum & Instruction

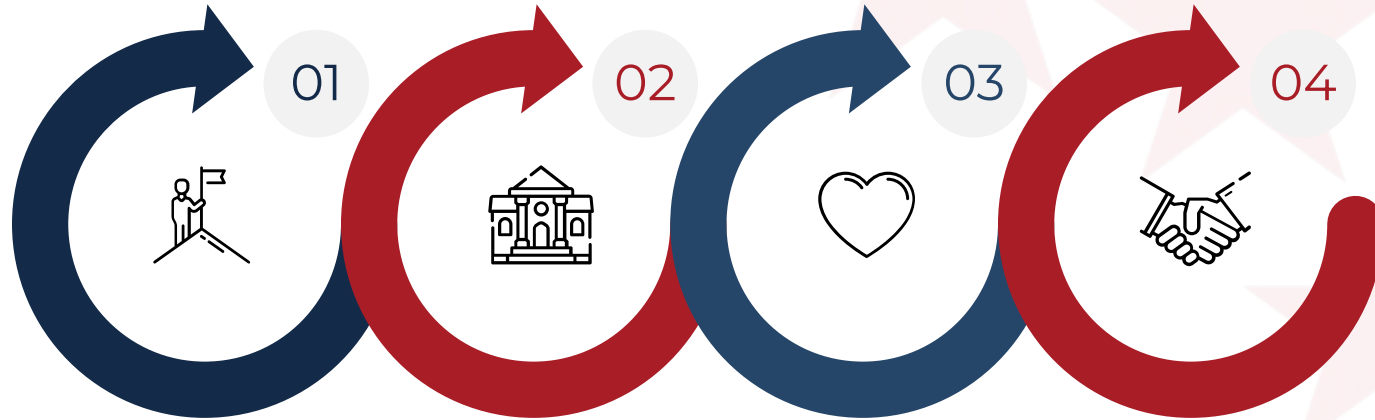
## 2025-2026



Four campuses, four pillars,  
*one vision...*

**Vision**

## Elevate Eastchester



### EXPERIENCE

Examining **State of the Art Instruction** in the classroom at all levels

### SPACE

Examining **State of the Art Learning Environments** at all levels

### WELLNESS

Enhancing **State of the Art Health and Wellness Partnerships** in the Community

### COMMUNITY

Embracing the **Civic Roles** Schools & Students can cultivate in our community

# K-12 Experience...

## Destination Imagination

- Grades 3-5 Enrichment
  - A global challenge-based learning program where students work in teams to solve STEAM + humanities challenges.
  - Students select a challenge (Innovation, Engineering, Fine Arts, Scientific, Service Learning, or Improv) and build a solution over months.
- Next Steps:
  - Summer Institute 2026
  - Destination Eastchester 2026-2027



# High School Experience

## EHS Experience

- Portrait of a Graduate
  - Seals of Biliteracy and Civic Readiness
  - Grading Changes and Regents Exams
- 2025 AP School Honor Roll Recognition
  - Expansion of Course Offerings
  - Ongoing Success

## New High School Schedule

- Rotating Block Drop
  - Longer Periods
  - Lunch
  - Office Hours
  - Advisory



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# Wellness and Community

- **Advisory**
  - 9th Grade: Transition to High School
  - 10th Grade: Executive Functioning
  - 11th Grade: Healthy Relationships
  - 12th Grade: Transition Beyond High School
- **Speakers**
  - Marc Brackett (*Dealing with Feeling*)
  - Tom Kersting (*Disconnected*)
  - Matt Bocchi (*Sway*)
  - Gian Paul Gonzalez (Founder of Hope+Future)
  - Alumni Panel



# College Trends 2020 - 2025

- **Increased number of applications** per student (Eastchester averages 8.9 apps per student - slightly above public school average 7, but below private of 12-14)
  - Yield rates drop for many schools
  - Waitlists have grown
- **Public Flagships** become semi-selective Tier (“Michigan / Georgia / Texas / Florida / UNC / UVA effect”)
  - **FASFA + Merit Aid** is driving Southern and Midwestern Migration
- **Test optional is becoming “Test Preferential”** which will soon be “Test Preferred”
  - **Major Matters:** High demand growth: CS, Nursing, Finance, Engineering, Education (declining: English, History, Philosophy, Classics)
  - **The Personalization Arms Race Matters**

# Landscape for Eastchester

1. New York has high acceptance rates, but low yield (Students using NY schools as safeties)
  - a. SUNY Remains a strong anchor (**Binghamton, Albany**, Stony Brook, Oneonta, Cortland)
2. **Southeastern Pipeline** (South Carolina, Clemson, Florida State, Tampa, USF, Alabama)
  - a. Drivers: high merit, school culture, climate, offerings
3. Northeastern is top choice of “semi-elite brand”
4. Fewer attendance at “Small Northeast Private” with the exception of:
  - a. Catholic / Jesuit Influence (Fairfield, Sacred Heart, Iona, St. John’s)
5. Increase in Early Rounds: Reinforce the value of ED / EA Strategy
6. Personalization Matters: Essays, Recs, Fit, & Narrative
  - a. **2010s: “Do Everything”**
  - b. **2020s: “Demonstrate Passion”**
  - c. **Today: “Demonstrate Purpose+Impact”**

# College and Career Readiness

## EHS Guidance Department Updates

- 10th Grade BOCES Trip (2nd Year)
- Letter of Recommendation Workshop
- 11th Grade College Essays (ELA Regents in January)
  - College Essay Summer Bootcamp
- College Fair
- Financial Aid Night
- Compass Test Prep Talk
- Athletic Recruitment Evening
- College Kickstart



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# College Kickstart

## Rollout & Implementation

- College Kickstart will be introduced beginning spring of junior year
- CK is designed to be used alongside Naviance, not as a replacement
- Naviance may be used as early as 8th grade for career exploration & early planning, while CK supports the active college application phase.

## Simplifies College List Planning

- Ensures balanced lists (Reach, Target, Likely)
- Helps leverage early admissions
- Reduces stress with data-driven insights

## Powerful Data & Insights

- Tracks list quality, early admission trends, merit aid
- List Score (A-F) evaluates student's choices

## Smart Features for Students & Counselors

- MixFixers: Generates lists based on student profile
- Early Strategy: Recommends best admission plans
- Financial Aid Insights: Scholarship deadlines & merit aid
- Custom Reports: Shareable PDFs for students & parents

## Action Plan

### Early Admission



Great news: Clemson and Fordham offer early admission options that make sense for you. There are also 4 opportunities further down the list at Penn State - University Park, Maryland, Georgia and Northeastern that can help bolster your admission odds. All told, we can improve your odds at these 6 schools by an average of 108%.



Apply to all of the schools on your list in a single wave. Though we found early admission opportunities for you at Clemson, Fordham, Penn State - University Park, Maryland, Georgia and Northeastern, they don't help you avoid unnecessary work/cost due to timing and list order.

### List Check



FIX YOUR MIX

- Add 2 Likelies
- Shed Unlikelies

OVERLY  
AGGRESSIVE

Your list of 6 schools earns an overall grade of C- based on your mix of schools.



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For more information on TEDx, visit

**[www.ted.com/tedx](http://www.ted.com/tedx)**

# Community

- **Al@lona**
  - Cohort of K-12 Teachers
  - Summer Institute
- **Sarah Lawrence College Partnership**
  - Child Development Graduate Program and of the Child Development Institute
- **TEDx Eastchester**
  - 4 Student Speakers (3 EHS; 1 EMS)
  - 2 EHS Alumni Speakers
  - 1 EHS Faculty Member
  - 1 Eastchester Administrator



# Technology Updates



# AI in Eastchester

## All hands on deck!

- MagicSchool: AI For Educators
  - Staff and students!
- Professional Development/SCD Kickoff
  - John Spencer



# Infinite Campus

## New Student Information System

- Improved accuracy and efficiency.
- Enhanced family and student experience.
  - Parent Portal
  - Student Portal
- Stronger compliance and data security.
- Increased security - student swiping.



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# MacBooks at EHS

## Three-Year Plan

- Budgeting for rollout for all students 9-12.
- Great devices to serve our high schoolers.
- Focus student attention in classrooms.
- Alleviate classroom tech management issues.

# New Security System

## Complete Conversion to Avigilon

- More stable environment.
- Easier camera access.
- Lockdown system improvements.
- Tested and operational!

# MS/HS Tech Center

## Student/Staff Support Desk

- Open all hours when school is in session.
- On demand help for staff and students.
- Chromebook/MacBook swap.

# High School Makerspace

## Highlights of the STEM Epicenter!

- 3D Printing Lab
- Lasercutting/Etching
- CNC Routing
- Robotics



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# Classroom Technology

## New Technology in ALL Classrooms

- Interactive Whiteboards
- Laptops for Mobility
- Docking Stations

# Step 1

## Task Force Formation and Inclusion

- **Objective**
  - Assemble a diverse group of stakeholders.
- **Tasks**
  - Invite teachers, administrators, other staff, and students to join the task force.
  - Coordinate logistics of the operations of the task force, establishing the expectations with a clear timeline.
  - Ensure representation from various grade levels and subject areas.
- **Outcome**
  - Establish a well-rounded task force with diverse perspectives.

# AI Task Force Mission Statement

## Mission

*The mission of our task force is to understand emerging and existing A.I. technologies to ascertain its impact on teaching, learning, and administrative processes within our schools. We aim to create a future-ready educational environment that prepares students for the challenges of the next generation.*



# Step 2

## Educational Workshops and Training

- **Objective**
  - Build AI literacy among task force members.
- **Tasks**
  - Organize workshops on AI fundamentals, ethics, and applications.
  - Provide hands-on training with AI tools.
- **Outcome**
  - Task force members equipped with foundational AI knowledge.

# Step 3

## Needs Assessment and Research

- **Objective**
  - Understand the current state of AI presence in our district and others.
- **Tasks**
  - Survey the district stakeholders to identify existing AI tools or practices.
  - Research best practices from other districts and educational institutions.
- **Outcome**
  - A comprehensive understanding of our starting point.

# Step 4

## Impact Assessment

- **Objective**
  - Evaluate the potential impact of AI on teaching, learning, and administration.
- **Tasks**
  - Identify key areas (e.g., personalized learning, administrative efficiency) for AI exploration.
  - Analyze how AI can enhance or transform existing processes.
- **Outcome**
  - A clear understanding of AI's potential benefits and challenges.

# Step 5

## Ethical Guidelines and Position

- **Objective**
  - Develop guidelines for responsible AI use.
- **Tasks**
  - Draft an EUFSD position statement addressing appropriate use of AI in the schools.
  - Present this statement to the Superintendent of Schools.
- **Outcome**
  - A framework for ethical AI usage in the EUFSD.

# Step 6

## Community Involvement

- **Objective**
  - Invite conversation about the position statement that the AI Task Force has presented.
- **Tasks**
  - Organize an event, or series of events, to openly discuss.
  - Conduct survey analysis and form community focus groups to gather feedback.
- **Outcome**
  - Gather a collection of community input in order to inform the current AI position statement.

# Future Steps

- **Board of Education Policy**
  - Craft a draft policy to present to the Board of Education.
- **Pilot Platforms**
  - Test AI applications in real educational settings.
- **Professional Development**
  - Prepare educators for AI integration.
- **Student Involvement**
  - Engage students in AI discussions.
- **Communication and Transparency**
  - Keep the district and community informed.
- **Ongoing Evaluation and Adaptation**
  - Continuously assess AI implementation.



# Setting Goals



**WELCOME!!!**

**As you enter...**

*Review the Leon Furze article if you haven't had a chance to do so.*



# Establishing Guiding Questions

- **How and why do large language models work?**
  - What is a LLM doing differently than a search engine?
- **What are strategies for getting quality output?**
  - How can we prompt for more successful products?
- **What strong guardrails should exist in Eastchester regarding the use of LLMs in our schools?**
  - What are drawbacks/concerns?
  - How should these guardrails be presented?





# Prompting



# Effective Prompting

## Use Step-by-Step Instructions

- If you need a complex response, break it down. For example:
  -  "Write an article about climate change."
  -  "Write a 500-word article on climate change, covering causes, effects, and solutions."

## Specify the Format You Want

- Tell the AI how you want the response:
  - "Summarize this in bullet points."
  - "Write a response in a formal tone."
  - "Give me a step-by-step guide."

# Effective Prompting

## Ask for Examples or Analogies

- If a concept is difficult, request an analogy:
  - "Explain quantum computing like I'm five."
  - "Give an example of how blockchain works in real life."

## Define the Length of the Response

- Want a short or detailed answer? Let AI know:
  - "Give a one-sentence summary."
  - "Explain in 3-4 paragraphs."

# Effective Prompting

## Use Constraints for Creativity

- Guide AI by setting limits:
  - "Write a poem about space in 4 lines."
  - "Generate a product description under 50 words."

## Iterate and Refine

- If the answer isn't quite right, tweak your prompt. Instead of "Make it better," try "Make it more persuasive with strong adjectives."

# Effective Prompting

## Use Keywords and Action Words

- Action-oriented prompts get better results:
  - "List 5 reasons why..."
  - "Compare X vs. Y in a table format."

## Ask for Multiple Perspectives

- If you want balanced insights, say:
  - "Give pros and cons of remote work."
  - "Explain both sides of the AI regulation debate."

# Cautions

## AI Can Generate Misinformation

- AI does not always verify facts before responding.
- It may confidently provide wrong or outdated information.
- Always fact-check important details from reliable sources.

## Not Great at Citing Sources

- AI doesn't have direct access to real-time databases or official books.
- It cannot provide precise citations for academic or legal use.
- If you need sources, it's best to double-check references yourself.

# Cautions

## Can Misinterpret Vague Prompts

- If you ask unclear or broad questions, AI might give a generic or irrelevant answer.
- e.g. Asking "Tell me about the law?" could yield random legal facts.
- Solution: Be specific and structured in your prompt.

## Can Be Biased

- AI is trained on existing human content, which may contain biases.
- It can unintentionally reflect societal, cultural, or historical biases.
- If discussing sensitive topics, critically analyze responses.

# Cautions

## **Struggles with Highly Niche or Recent Information**

- AI's knowledge may not include recent events, discoveries, or niche topics.
- If you need breaking news or ultra-specialized insights, consult real-world experts or sources.

## **Limited Understanding of Humor, Sarcasm, and Context**

- AI can misinterpret jokes or sarcasm and respond literally.
- Complex humor, wordplay, or cultural references may not translate well.
- Solution: Reword or clarify if AI doesn't get it right.

# Cautions

## **Doesn't Have Emotions or Intentions**

- AI doesn't "think" or "feel"—it just predicts text based on patterns.
- Emotional responses are simulated, not genuine.
- If seeking emotional support, it's better to talk to a real person.

## **May Struggle with Multi-Step Logic or Long-Term Context**

- AI can lose track of context in long conversations.
- Complex reasoning may require multiple iterations to refine the answer.
- Solution: Break down complex requests into smaller, step-by-step prompts.

# Cautions

## Doesn't Understand Private or Sensitive Information

- Avoid sharing confidential, personal, or financial information.
- AI is not a secure platform for sensitive data.
- Always use official and encrypted channels for private matters.

## Can Sometimes “Hallucinate” Answers

- AI can make up facts, quotes, or statistics that sound real but aren't.
- Especially common in historical events, medical advice, or legal interpretations.
- Solution: Cross-check critical claims before accepting them.

**What are your  
experiences?**

