

MES Weekly Update

from the Superintendent of Schools

Week of October 5, 2026



Marlborough Elementary School Vision: *To inspire wonder, awe, and curiosity and to motivate young minds to embrace learning.*

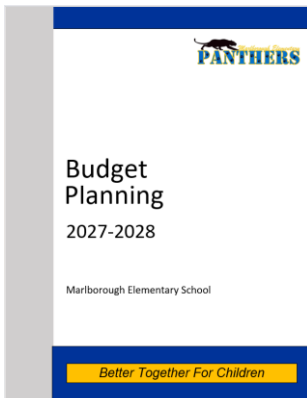
Success is not final; failure is not fatal: It is the courage to continue that counts.

~ Winston S. Churchill

This Week

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	National Fire Prevention Week				NO SCHOOL Professional Development Start of Columbus Day Long Weekend	
	National Do Something Nice Day MES PTO MES Library 6:30 PM	Lions Club Vision Screening Board of Selectmen Town Hall 7:00 PM	Lions Club Vision Screening	National Fluffernutter Day  Town of Marlborough Budget Kick Off Meeting		

Reminder: We want your input for the 2027-28 Budget!



We are encouraging **the entire school community, including teachers, staff members, parents, students, and community members** to participate in the budget process by sharing your wishes, requests, and ideas for next year's budget.

Each request made will be shared with the Board of Education and the public. All requests will then go through a vetting process in order to be included in next year's budget.

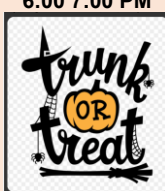
Every request will be shared with the Board of Education and the public for consideration in the 2027-28 budget.

Instructions for School Personnel including teachers and staff members	Instructions for Students, Parents, and community members
There are three forms included in the budget planning package. The three forms are only to be used for new items/programs that are being requested. These request forms should be completed by teachers and staff members and forwarded to the Principal. Form 1 – <i>request for additional funds in supplies or other ongoing accounts.</i> Form 2 – <i>request for additional programs, texts, equipment or other one-time expenses.</i> Form 3 – <i>request for additional staffing.</i> All requests will be shared with the public and may be typed or hand-written. Details are included in the attached document. All request forms for new items, programs, texts, equipment, etc. must be submitted to the Principal no later than Friday, October 30.	Interested students, parents, and community members are strongly encouraged to offer suggestions as to new items or programs for consideration in the 2027-28 school budget. Simply send an email to the Superintendent of Schools, Paul K. Smith - psmith@marlborough.k12.ct.us. Describe the item or program for inclusion in your email. Do not worry about costs; details will be completed on our end. Please submit all requests no later than Friday, October 30.



October /November 2026

Send information on school sponsored and community events to psmith@marlborough.k12.ct.us for inclusion.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	NO SCHOOL Columbus Day		Rotary Club Grade 3 Dictionaries	Coffee with the Superintendent 8:30 – 10:00 AM MES Central Office Budget ideas welcome! 	National Boss's Day <i>Shout out to our Principals!</i>	
		National School Lunch Week				
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
 National Chocolate Cupcake Day	Board of Finance Town Hall 6:30 PM RHAM Board of Education @ RHAM Middle 6:30 PM	National School Bus Safety Week				 Last Day for Survey Responses - click here Thank you!
		National Youth Confidence Day Board of Selectmen Town Hall 7:00 PM		RHAM Invitational Concert Marlborough Board of Education MES Library 6:30 PM	MES PTO 6:00 7:00 PM 	
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
		MES SPIRIT WEEK!				
		 National Black Cat Day MES Building Committee MES Library 6:30 PM		Coffee with the Superintendent 8:30 – 10:00 AM MES Central Office Budget ideas welcome! 	Preliminary Budget requests due	
				Assembly Japanese Drummers		
November 1	2	3	4	5	6	7
 Daylight Saving Time ends		NO SCHOOL Professional Development Parent Conferences Coffee with the Superintendent 8:30 – 10:00 AM MES Central Office 			National Nachos Day 	
	MES PTO MES Library 6:30 PM					
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
		 Debut of Sesame Street in 1969	NO SCHOOL Veterans Day  <i>Thank you, Veterans!</i>	Picture Retake Day	 Make Kindness the Norm	

Notes

 **We have over 160 survey responses – and we’re looking for 200!**



At the same time as we are asking you to help choose the skills and dispositions of the MES Profile of the Learner, advice is available all around us. Below is an article from the Harvard Gazette in which college professors talk about the traits of their most successful students.

While our students have a few years before they are applying to colleges, good habits and learning styles are developed now while they are attending MES.

Join us in identifying the traits we want our students to master now and in the future. You can get a few hints from the article below.

Fill out the [MES Profile of the Learner Survey here](#).



[Take the Survey and help us craft our MES Profile of the Learner](#)

What makes a good student?

By Sy Boles Harvard Staff Writer in the [Harvard Gazette](#)

Inner drive, integrity, open-mindedness among qualities highlighted by faculty

Many of us spend years or even decades of our lives as students, and some of us are better at it than others. We asked professors and lecturers from around Harvard University to **share the qualities and practices they notice in their best students**. Get out a pen and paper: You’ll want to take notes.

Integrity matters

I’ve had the good fortune of working with many wonderful students in my time here. In my experience, the best students have had four qualities.

The first and most important is a **genuine, deep, persistent curiosity** that extends beyond the student’s core area of study. Curiosity like this is really a love of learning and discovery, in a very broad sense, and it gives students the motivation to keep going even when the material gets difficult, which it always eventually does. This expansive kind of curiosity also helps students make nontrivial connections that can lead to novel insights and breakthroughs.

The second is **rigorous thinking**, of the kind taught in a serious philosophy course. Students who can formulate their ideas as carefully reasoned arguments, from clearly stated premises to precisely argued conclusions, are not only more likely to understand what they’re doing, identify hidden assumptions, make new discoveries, and avoid making mistakes, but are better at teaching and communicating their ideas to others.

The third is **integrity**. My best students are honorable. They hold themselves to high moral standards, do their work honestly, and earn the trust and respect of their peers and colleagues. These students don’t cheat or take ethical shortcuts, especially the sorts of ethical shortcuts that don’t seem like a big deal or that seem widespread.

The fourth and last is **knowing when what they’ve done is enough**. It’s easy for curious, rigorous, honorable students to go down rabbit holes or never manage to finish projects. It’s difficult to develop a sense for when it’s time to conclude a project and move on to the next one — but it’s a crucial skill, and one well worth working on.

— **[Jacob Barandes](#)**, senior preceptor in physics and associated faculty in philosophy in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Process-oriented

One of the key skills you need as a medical student is **prioritizing information**. Often when medical students struggle, they are trying to remember everything. This comes from a place of deep caring, a commitment to their future patients. In these moments I try to talk with the students about the differences in how experts and novices process information. Novices first need to build scaffolding for the new information — they need to focus on the connections and bigger picture — before they can add all the details. Experts can take in details much more quickly. They already have a lot of knowledge to connect the new information with, so it “sticks” with much less effort. Building that scaffolding is hard, slow work, and it may feel like you are missing out in the moment. I encourage

students to examine their relative “expert-novice status” on any topic and adapt their study strategies and expectations of themselves accordingly.

— [Henrike C. Besche](#), director of education at the Harvard-MIT Program in Health Sciences and Technology

Drive defines them

The quality I’ve found most consistently in good students is **inner drive**. They don’t need an external push; they’re motivated by a genuine desire to understand rather than just to perform well on an assignment or exam. That kind of drive is hard to teach, but when it’s there, everything else tends to follow.

“They don’t need an external push; they’re motivated by a genuine desire to understand rather than just to perform well on an assignment or exam.”

Tied to that drive is genuine curiosity. Good students want to know how things work and why. They ask deeper questions and follow threads that go beyond what’s strictly required. That curiosity is what keeps them engaged when the work gets challenging — and in physics, it will get challenging. That’s where perseverance and resiliency become essential.

— [Cora Dvorkin](#), professor of physics in the FAS

Passion and purpose

I like to draw a distinction between what it means to be a **good student versus a good learner**. I often see kids, even young ones, who have learned what’s expected of them in school and they aim to perform well in that context: They know how to be organized; they have beautiful binders; they get good grades. But too often these kids get to the end of high school, or maybe even college, and they’re asking, “What have I really learned?” Much of what they have learned doesn’t transfer to their lives beyond school.

Good learners, by contrast, are motivated by their passion for finding out. They are willing to take risks and work at “learning edges.” They don’t play it safe; they learn from both their successes and their failures. They’re mastery-oriented, which means they see intelligence as learnable, which it absolutely is. They have a purpose for what they want to do — the changes they want to create in the world — so they’re motivated to develop the skills they need to make those changes. Interestingly, sometimes they have a disregard for what it means to be a “good student” as they make choices in favor of their learning over grades, requirements, tests, etc.

In the work I do at the [Next Level Lab](#), we encourage learners to be agentive, but beyond that, we teach people how to use their agency to leverage their contexts toward their best learning and performance. This includes looking for malleability, where possible, in their social, emotional, technological, cognitive, and physical environments. I have had students physically rearrange their workspaces to support their attention and perception. Often in schools, teachers are the ones creating contexts that are conducive to learning, but it’s the students who need to learn this. They’re not here to please their teachers. They need to do it for themselves.

— [Tina Grotzer](#), faculty and principal research scientist in education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education

The right questions, on repeat

In law, as in the University more generally, we are teaching students to think about the world in a different way than they have before. We are teaching methods, perspectives, and techniques in addition to imparting detailed knowledge. The **good students ask questions — and keep asking them**. They see a phrase in a legal opinion, or hear something the professor has said, and want to know more. They are conscious that no matter how much they know, there are more questions to ask. And they see the project of university learning as not simply the validation of their preexisting political and ideological beliefs, nor the balancing of different ideological or political views in a stilted discussion, but rather, the shifting of one’s perspective. **Good students work hard and persevere**. They aren’t afraid to come see the professor at the end of class to say they don’t understand something. My students have gone on to be professors, big city mayors, members of Congress. But the ones I remember best, and who have impressed me the most, are the **curious** ones. They always want to know what they don’t know.

— [Kenneth W. Mack](#), Lawrence D. Biele Professor of Law and affiliate professor of history at Harvard Law School

Seeing what others miss

The qualities I've noticed that support success in design begin with a **sharpened attention and a willingness to commit to closely reading things in the world**. The form of attention that I refer to enables students who possess it to pick up on details that others might miss. The capacity to lock in and sustain a close read of these pickups unfolds new details and questions that can be explored and advanced through iterative thinking, visualizing, and making — the methods of design.

Most importantly, these traits allow the student who wields them to first problem-set, and then to problem-solve — dual actions that define design. First: What is the right question to ask? Followed by: What material, scale, and making technique is best suited to exploring possible solutions to that question?

These traits can be cultivated with knowledge of their power and with practice — things that are regularly taught, talked about, and then put into play in the design studio.

— **Megan Panzano**, senior director of early design education and lecturer in architecture at the Harvard Graduate School of Design

Deep curiosity

There is an old story in medical education about what the professor tells their students on the first day of class: “Half of what we will be teaching you in the next four years will be found to be wrong in 20 years; the only problem is that we don’t know which half.” While this is probably not unique to medicine, the field continues to evolve at an incredible pace. Given the nature of medical practice, what kind of student do I want? What kind of student will make the best doctor not just on the day they graduate school, but decades later as well?

“What kind of student will make the best doctor not just on the day they graduate school, but decades later as well?”

For me, **curiosity is the key ingredient**. Curiosity to keep asking questions, to want to know not just what to do, but why one should do that. Curiosity about how things work. Why did the blood pressure fall? Why did the chest pain change? How is this shortness of breath different from what the patient experienced in the past? Not only is curiosity the key to understanding human biology, it is also the key to being a humanistic physician. One needs to be curious about the patient sitting before you. Who are you? What is important to you? How do we make a decision on your care that is consistent with your values?

Mix curiosity with the humility to admit that none of us has all the answers and the determination to always get better at your craft, and you have the right student.

— **Richard M. Schwartzstein**, Ellen and Melvin Gordon Distinguished Professor of Medicine and Medical Education, Harvard Medical School

Never indifferent

Each student is different, and so are their learning styles and study habits. The **hallmark of a good student is a commitment to learning rather than solely achieving high grades**. Good students demonstrate **critical, analytical, and imaginative thinking**. They abhor both laziness and indifference to learning. Such students are **organized, prepared, and diligent**, and they pay close attention in class. They **consider alternative viewpoints** while remaining open-minded, and are receptive to feedback without being defensive. Over time, good students develop a **growth mindset**, fostering healthy curiosity and a desire to acquire new knowledge. They reflect on the significance of mistakes, move beyond them, and extend grace to themselves. Good students recognize **preparation and curiosity as essential virtues**. They seek assistance promptly and use professors’ office hours effectively. Motivated by setting and achieving learning goals, good students are also good citizens because they contribute positively to the learning environment as responsible members of the academic community.

— **Dehlia Umunna**, clinical professor of law, Harvard Law School

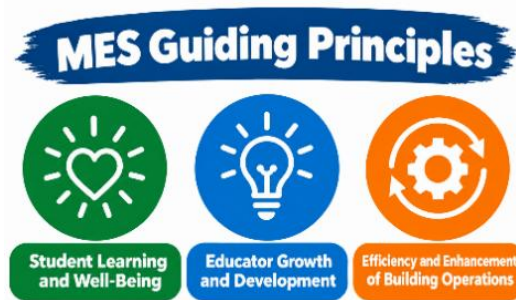
Up for an argument

A good student is defined by a **willingness to engage with perspectives different from their own**. In government, we deal with questions that are often contested and rarely settled. The strongest students take disagreement seriously: They listen carefully, try to understand where others are coming from, and respond thoughtfully rather than reactively. They are open to revising their views when the evidence points them in a new direction, while still expressing their own arguments with clarity and respect.

— **Yuhua Wang**, Ford Foundation Professor of Modern China Studies and Harvard College Professor, FAS



As we start budget planning for 2027-28, below are our guiding principles...



Guiding principles are developed to anchor every budget decision in what actually matters for Marlborough Elementary School, rather than letting resource allocation drift toward whatever is easiest to fund or most visible in the moment.

- Centering the budget on **student learning and well-being** ensures that spending decisions are evaluated first by their impact on academic growth, safety, and the social-emotional health of students — not simply on cost or convenience.
- Prioritizing **educator development** recognizes that teacher quality is one of the strongest levers a school has over student outcomes, so investing in training, coaching, and professional growth pays dividends across every classroom.
- Finally, a focus on **efficiency and enhancement of operations** ensures that projects at the school funded by limited public dollars are responsibly planned over time.

Together, these three principles create a budget that is not just a financial document, but a clear statement of institutional values — one that holds the Board of Education and the school's administration accountable to the mission of the school and gives the community confidence that every dollar spent is in service of student success.

Student Learning and Well-Being Principles and Expectations at MES

1. Advance academic growth for every student by ensuring mastery of essential content, skills, and competencies.
2. Support students' social and emotional well-being as a foundation for engagement, learning, and achievement.
3. Create inclusive learning environments that value diverse perspectives, mutual respect, and cultural understanding.
4. Strengthen family communication and community partnerships to support student learning, well-being, and success.

Budget Impacts:

- Maintain appropriate class sizes based on enrollment figures and direct resources toward instructional investments with clear, measurable impact.
- Invest in early academic, behavioral, and social-emotional supports that reduce the need for higher-cost interventions over time.
- Align funding with proven instructional practices at MES and in other high-performing districts.
- Explore partnerships within Region 8 communities to expand capacity, share resources, and offset district costs.

Educator Growth and Development Principles and Expectations at MES

1. Recruit, develop, and retain high-quality staff who are aligned with district values and priorities.
2. Develop an annual school continuous improvement plan that is founded on highly effective programs and practices.
3. Invest in ongoing professional learning that advances evidence-based practice, innovation, and measurable instructional impact.
4. Utilize collaborative, data-informed systems and processes to guide resource decisions and instructional practices.

Budget Impacts:

- Maintain staffing levels that are responsive to enrollment trends, class-size guidelines, and student needs.
- Use a continuous cycle of program evaluation to identify high-value programs that demonstrate strong outcomes and a clear return on investment.
- Fund essential staff training and targeted professional learning that strengthen instructional practice and elevate staff performance.
- Improve resource efficiency in order to expand student opportunities and strengthen program offerings.
- Ensure budget requests account for staff contractual obligations and related compensation requirements.

Efficiency and Enhancement of Building Operations Principles and Expectations at MES

1. Maintain safe facilities and design safety protocols that support learning and staff effectiveness.
2. Advance facility improvements through a forward-looking Master Capital Plan that prioritizes long-term value and sustainability.
3. Strengthen technology infrastructure, equipment, and software to support secure, and efficient learning environments.
4. Implement streamlined operational systems that improve service delivery, accountability, and resource efficiency.

Budget Impacts:

- Budget annually for safety needs, preventive maintenance, and eligible grant-funded facility enhancements.
- Fund capital projects through a coordinated, multi-year plan developed in collaboration with town partners.
- Plan for recurring technology investments in infrastructure, equipment, software, and cybersecurity.
- Prioritize annual maintenance and repair needs to preserve safe, effective, and well-functioning facilities.
- Account for market factors that affect utilities, transportation, heating oil, diesel fuel, gasoline, and other operating costs.



Join the Superintendent of Schools for Coffee and Budget Suggestions!





**Join the Superintendent of Schools for
Coffee & Chat concerning Budget Ideas
for the 2027-28 School Budget.**

Bring your ideas for the budget!
Your thoughts are welcome.

Thursday, October 15 & Thursday, October 29
MES Central Office 8:30-10:00 AM

Don't miss a chance to be part of the budget process right at its inception.

Advice of staff, parents, students, and community members is welcome.

Get involved as the budget is being assembled for next year.

Ways to get involved early on in the budget development:

- Come to the Coffee & Chat mornings and share your ideas for programming, etc., with the Superintendent.
- Email the Superintendent (psmith@marlborough12.ct.us) to find an alternate time for Coffee & Chat.
- Drink coffee on your own and email your ideas directly to the Superintendent (psmith@marlborough12.ct.us).
- Don't have coffee, but still share your ideas morning, afternoon, or evenings.

Thoughts from the Superintendent

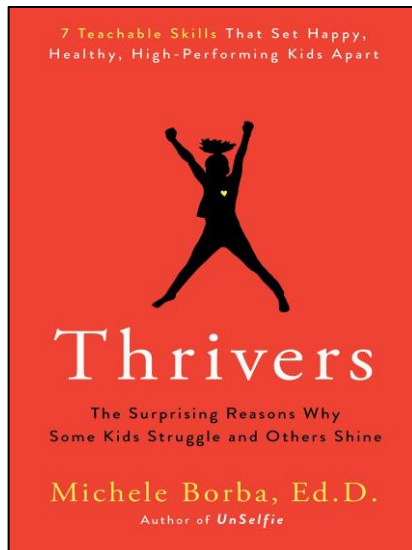
Complete the character analysis for your child or a child you know, then read the book, *Thrivers*.

Thrivers is a book that boasts 7 teachable skills and how they set apart children as happy and high performing. The author's goal is to answer the question, "why some kids struggle and others shine." The book is a quick read offering some good advice for both teachers and parents. Our goal in education is to ensure that kids not only survive, but **thrive**.

We know that the issues of mental health and wellness in our children have been documented. Now it is time to move past lamenting about the concerns and doing something to address them.

I have included a survey from the book that any parent should complete. It's a survey to determine your child's strengths. (Complete it for yourself, too!)

As you read below, you may get some great ideas for our **Profile of the Learner Survey!**



You can order the book on Amazon by clicking here.

Thrivers feel "We've got this": they meet the world on their own terms because they know they can control their own destiny. And so they keep trying despite challenges and are more likely to rebound from those challenges and overcome adversity with confidence. Strivers may have similar hopes and dreams but lack inner strength and an "I can do it" mind-set, so when confronted by obstacles they often fall short of success. But what makes kids become Thrivers or Strivers? We now know that answer, and it comes from science.

Thrivers: The Surprising Reasons Why Some Kids Struggle and Others Shine. The book, by Michele Borba is a great read for **parents or teachers**.

Bring a copy to an upcoming Coffee and Chat with the Superintendent and highlight your favorite section – or just schedule a time with the Superintendent, psmith@marlborough.k12.ct.us and share your thoughts.

ASSESSING YOUR CHILD'S CHARACTER STRENGTHS

(Click here for a separate PDF of this questionnaire to print and share.)

Answering the statements below will help you determine your child's Character Strengths that help him/her thrive.

There are no right or wrong answers. This is only for you to see where your child is right now and help you determine which traits are his/her strengths and which to encourage. To evaluate your child's strengths, write the number you think best represents your child's current level on the line following each statement.

5 = Always, 4 = Frequently, 3 = Sometimes, 2 = Rarely, 1 = Never

MY CHILD . . .

1. Can easily and accurately describe her special strengths and positive qualities _____
2. Is proud and confident in her abilities; enjoys being herself _____
3. Focuses mostly on her strengths instead of weaknesses and past failures _____
4. Speaks mostly positively about herself, rarely negatively _____
5. Has a few developed hobbies and interests that encourage natural strengths _____
6. Shows sensitivity toward the needs and feelings of others _____
7. Recognizes when someone is distressed and responds appropriately _____
8. Shows a willingness to understand someone else's point of view _____

9. Displays concern and wants to help when someone is treated unfairly or unkindly _____
10. Tears up or is upset when someone else is suffering _____
11. Is honest, admits mistakes, and accepts blame for incorrect actions _____
12. Can identify his wrong behavior and turn a wrong action into a right one _____
13. Feels guilt about his wrong or improper actions _____
14. Rarely needs admonishments/reminders as to how to act right _____
15. Can be trusted to do the right thing and keep his word even when no one is looking _____
16. Able to manage her own impulses and urges without adult help _____
17. Easily calms down and bounces back when excited, frustrated, or angry _____
18. Can identify his unhealthy emotions and stress signs prior to their escalating _____
19. Has the ability to wait for something; can cope with behavioral impulses _____
20. Can remain focused on age-appropriate tasks without adult prompts _____
21. Asks copious why-type questions that don't always have yes/no answers _____
22. Enjoys finding new ways to use conventional things or solving problems _____
23. Loves learning new things that drive her interest _____
24. Intrigued or easy to motivate about trying something new, different, or surprising _____
25. Willing to be wrong and try a different, unconventional way _____
26. Willingly tries new tasks with little concern about failing or making a mistake _____
27. Recognizes that the way to improve is by working harder _____
28. Does not become upset when something is difficult; rarely quits but keeps trying _____
29. Willing to try again if not successful with a task _____
30. Doesn't equate a mistake as a personal failure but a learning opportunity _____
31. Expresses gratitude, is appreciative, and takes stock of the good things around her _____
32. Uses positive self-talk to express hope and reinforce good outcomes and attitudes _____
33. Doesn't blame but forgives; knows something she can do to make things better _____
34. Can find the silver lining in a hardship or challenge _____
35. Equates setbacks and failures as temporary, not permanent _____

Then add up the scores for each **Character Strength**:

Questions 1–5 = Self-Confidence;

Questions 6–10 = Empathy;

Questions 11–15 = Integrity;

Questions 16–20 = Self-Control;

Questions 21–25 = Curiosity;

Questions 26–30 = Perseverance;

Questions 31–35 = Optimism.

Determine your child's highest and lowest character traits. The top traits are your child's natural strengths that build confidence and help him thrive, so continue nurturing them to ensure that your child recognizes them in himself.

Go to the book sections that address the one or two traits receiving the lowest scores so you can enhance your child's potential to thrive.

Thrivers Summary (Excerpt from: <https://fourminutebooks.com/thrivers-summary/>)

Thrivers explores the perspective of a child born in today's fast-paced, digital era and how the average minor is being educated towards higher-than-usual achievements, being mature, responsible and successful, instead of being happy and focused on their own definition of success.

Today's kids are smarter, more ambitious, and creative than ever before. The digital era has enabled people from all over the world to connect and share information faster than ever. So once humans were born in this environment, it became inevitable for them to apprehend skills and information faster than average.

Still, every action has a reaction. Children are more driven and clever than their parents. However, this also means that they're more likely to have depression, anxiety, and suicidal thoughts. Nowadays, high performance is a standard that adults teach them to achieve at every cost, including at the cost of their happiness.

Schools measure and monitor their continuously, with their grades and scores. And then skills and jobs later in their life. As this race starts from their first days and doesn't stop after, the pressure and anxiety build up to a point where some children can't cope.

Thrivers delves into this particular subject and encourages its readers to gain a deeper understanding of generation Z and their struggles.

Here are my three favorite lessons from the book:

1. Exams and scores are important, but emotional literacy is more important.
2. We should see kids for who they are, and tailor the educational system to their own talents.
3. Creativity declines with age, so nurture it while the mind is still young.

Now, let's see what it takes for children to grow into happy adults!

Lesson 1: Children should be taught that emotional intelligence is more important than test scores.

Growing up, schools have taught children that test scores measure one's cognitive capabilities. They also taught them that exams are definitory for their future success. Grades, school merits, and academic success are universal metrics for analyzing pupils and students.

However, this leaves very little time for hobbies, going out with friends, or just being a kid in between. Instead, many of us pressure children into taking part in a highly competitive environment. Environments where they must strive for perfection in all areas of life.

On top of that, the social media influence leaves no room for reality, and it forces teenagers and children to grow up quicker than expected to fit into an adult world. **As a result, the new generation is more stressed, anxious, and depressed than ever.**

A study conducted on children revealed that we raise them as products rather than humans and that they don't know how to be empathic, form meaningful relationships or handle mistakes and stress. In other words, they lack basic life skills, and most importantly, they don't have a character of their own.

The solution is simple: Teaching the new generation emotional literacy and building on their emotional intelligence so that they know how to handle it when they face a challenge in their life. Moreover, we should eliminate the pressure of high academic credentials, as it builds frustration in those who struggle in school.

Lesson 2: A system that can build skills based on one's talents will create more successful people.

We all have different sets of skills and talents that help us navigate through life. Essentially, that is what helps humanity survive and evolve. Unfortunately, however, it seems that the current educational system fails to adapt to one's unique characteristics. Therefore, it fails to raise capable people that can hold their own in society.

An American psychologist, Martin Seligman, suggests that the key to happiness is self-confidence. To build it, one has to focus on their unique strengths. As a parent, this should be a priority in the process of educating children. Building the identity of a child based on their native skills and talents will increase self-confidence.

A person who receives assurance that they are good at what they are doing will be more motivated to keep on building their career and life around their skills. **This, in fact, is the recipe for happiness.**

Sadly, today's educational system relies too much on memory skills, which is something that not all children possess equally. Then, it measures success based on academic credentials instead of balancing a series of skills, activities, and personal traits that denote emotional intelligence to measure performance.

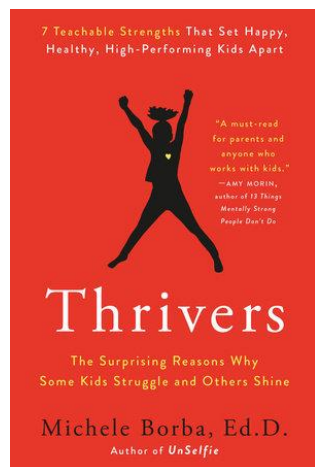
Lesson 3: An innovative mindset is something specific to children, and it fades rapidly once they grow up.

Children tend to be fascinated by everything they discover. Their curiosity often pushes them to learn more and more every day, get out of their comfort zone and pursue new activities. Essentially, these are some of the most sought-after skills today.

So why do people lose them as they grow up? Psychologists studied how children tend to have their creative skills fade slowly as schools and adults expose them to standardized tests and receiving rewards after successfully completing tasks.

As a result of these practices, we teach children that we don't appreciate their curiosity and finding new ways to do things. **This leads to an unlearning process, where they lose sight of creativity, curiosity, and an open-ended mindset.**

Moreover, the rewards that come after completing tasks as they are being told stimulates a cause-and-effect action. Good grades get you to a good college. A good college gets you a good job, and so on. There is no room for interpretation in the life scenarios they are being exposed to, so as an effect, there is no reason to look for newer alternatives.



Look Inside

*Character is what builds inner strength, genuineness, and wholeness and helps turn kids who strive for the next gold ring into young adults who thrive in a fast-paced, ever-changing world. **When kids are missing character strengths like optimism, curiosity, empathy, and perseverance their development is incomplete.** They often don't succeed outside the very narrowly defined parameters of school and classrooms. They're not ready for the uncertain world that awaits them—a world that's even more unpredictable with every passing year. In short, they turn out like beautifully wrapped packages but are missing the gifts inside.*

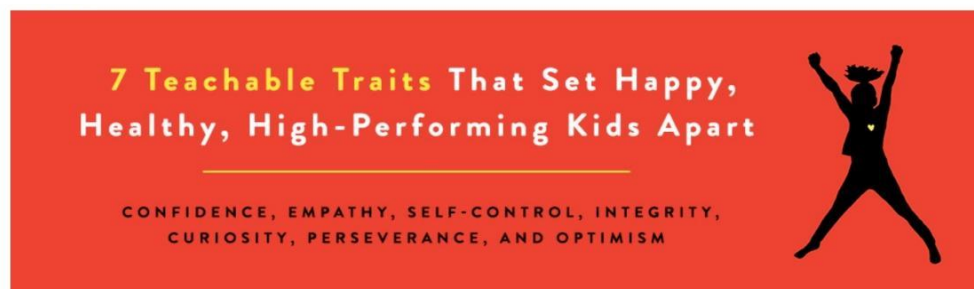
*It is not too late to fill in the missing pieces in our kids' development, but it requires switching our myopic obsession with scores, grades, and big fat résumés to a farsighted view of what they will need to lead meaningful lives. At present, our smart, loved, stellar test takers are failing to launch and handle life. **The character void in their development undermines their human abilities and reduces their potential to thrive.** Character is the missing piece.*

But here's the good news: It's not too late. Character is not innate—you're not born with it. Character strengths can be taught.

In fact, they must be taught.

*This book shows parents, teachers, and other educators how to instill those missing character pieces to produce strong, resilient kids with the complete package of strong heart, mind, and will. **A kid who has character is what I call a Thriver—a person who is ready and able to take on the twenty-first century.** But first, let me tell you why this situation really is so dire—and why all of us need to pay attention...*

You can order the book on Amazon by clicking here.



"Offers both science-based information and respectful, practical, and effective tools ... An essential guide."

—Dr. Tina Payne Bryson,
New York Times bestselling
co-author of *The Whole-Brain Child*

"A must-read for parents and anyone who works with kids."

—Amy Morin,
author of *13 Things Mentally
Strong Parents Don't Do*

"Practical guidance that parents urgently need today."

—Lisa Damour, Ph.D.,
author of *Untangled* and
Under Pressure



Marlborough Elementary School - Better Together For Children

Our mission is to educate, challenge and inspire each individual to excel and become a contributing member of society.



Join the Superintendent for a cup of coffee and conversation at the Central Office at MES from 8:30 – 10:00 AM.

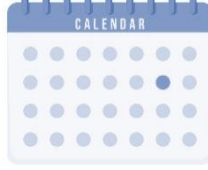


Thursday, October 15
Thursday, October 29
Tuesday, November 3
Tuesday, December 8

No taxpayer dollars used for coffee or supplies

If you have questions, come in for coffee at your convenience with the Superintendent of Schools.

E-mail Paul Smith at psmith@marlborough.k12.ct.us or call (860)295-6236.

Family Resources State of Connecticut 	Mental Health Resources 	Emergencies GET HELP 24/7 Call 2-1-1 in CT 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline: 988 Crisis Text Line: 741741	MES School Calendar 2026-27 	Important Annual Notices from MES 
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Reminder to families: Breakfast is available and FREE to all MES Students this year.



Total Number of Days Absent	Acceptable Reasons for a Student Absence to be Considered Excused	Documentation Required within 10 Days
1-9	Any reason that the student's parent or guardian approves.	Parent or guardian note or email to the appropriate school email address.
10 and above	- Student illness - Religious holiday - Funeral - Mandated court appearance - Extraordinary educational opportunity pre-approved by the Superintendent of Schools. Contact the school for further information.	Parent or guardian note or email to the appropriate school email address and additional documentation as required and outlined in the Board of Education's Attendance Policy #5113 .

Build the habit of good attendance.

[View Marlborough Board of Education Policy 5113 - Attendance](#)



Nondiscrimination Statement of the Marlborough Public Schools:

The Marlborough Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national/ethnic origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, status as a victim of domestic violence, Veteran status, disability in its programs, activities, and employment practices, status as a victim of sexual assault, or status as a victim of trafficking in persons. Equal access is provided to Scouting America and other designated youth groups.