

MES Weekly Update

from the Superintendent of Schools

Week of October 19, 2026



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

I'm so glad I live in a world where there are Octobers.

~ L.M. Montgomery

This Week

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
 National Chocolate Cupcake Day	 National School Bus Safety Week – Thank you to our bus drivers! Board of Finance Town Hall 6:30 PM RHAM Board of Education @ RHAM Middle 6:30 PM	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 	 Last Day for Survey Responses - click here Thank you!

Last Call for YOUR INPUT on our Survey



National Youth Confidence Day, October 20, celebrates young people's energy and potential and encourages adults to guide and mentor them. Recognizing challenges and achievements helps build confidence, a positive self-image, and future success. The goal of the day is to inspire young people to believe in themselves and their abilities. **It's a great day to take our survey** as we look to develop skills that make our students "life ready" for all challenges ahead.

The World Economic Forum's "Future of Jobs" report predicts that by 2027, over 85 million jobs will be displaced due to automation and AI, but another 97 million will emerge.

These roles will demand **higher-level cognitive skills, digital agility, and ethical decision-making**. Roles like AI ethics consultants and data privacy advocates are already in demand, but most high school students have never heard of them. The World Economic Forum also projects that by 2027, more than half of all workers will require reskilling. The skills needed are evolving and many jobs that will be created remain unknown.

A large majority of hiring managers, 84%, say most high school students aren't prepared to enter the workforce, according to a report by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and College Board. On top of that, 80% say recent high school graduates are less prepared for the workforce compared to previous generations.

The 500 hiring managers surveyed say they value soft skills such as **critical thinking** and **communication** in entry-level hires.

From K-12Dive.com

We have over 200 responses... [click here to add your input!](#)



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
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	
November 1	2	3	4	5	6	7
 Fall Back! Daylight Saving Time ends	MES PTO MES Library 6:30 PM	NO SCHOOL Parent Conferences Coffee with the Superintendent 8:30 – 10:00 AM MES Central Office 			National Nachos Day 	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
National Young Readers Week		 Debut of Sesame Street in 1969	NO SCHOOL Veterans Day  Thank you, Veterans!	Picture Retake Day	 World Kindness Day Make Kindness the Norm	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	Board of Finance Town Hall 6:30 PM RHAM Board of Education @ RHAM Middle 6:30 PM	Board of Selectmen Town Hall 7:00 PM	Mickey Mouse Day  Mr Mickey Mouse Day!	In 1863, President Lincoln delivered the Gettysburg Address.  Marlborough Board of Education MES Library 6:30 PM	PTO Bingo Night	World Hello Day Say "Hello" to 10 people! https://worldhelloday.org/ 
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
		MES Building Committee MES Library 6:30 PM	Early Dismissal Thanksgiving	Thanksgiving Holiday Weekend 		

Notes



Guidance for the future use of A.I. in education



The Marlborough Board of Education is working with the Superintendent, school administration, and teachers to **develop guidance on the future use of artificial intelligence** in the classroom.

Currently, we are training MES teachers on the use of AI, but there are no immediate plans to use artificial intelligence programs or sites with students. The policy is meant to serve as guidance for the administration and staff in preparing for the potential use of artificial intelligence in the future. The Policy Subcommittee of the Board of Education will review this guidance on Thursday, 10/22 at 6:00 PM.

Input from the community is welcome.

Send your thoughts to psmith@marlborough.k12.ct.us.

Guidelines for Artificial Intelligence in Education

Purpose

The Marlborough Board of Education acknowledges that artificial intelligence (AI) tools are influencing our lives and redefining education and the workforce at a rapid pace. Vital skills such as communication, problem-solving, critical thinking, managing ambiguity, and creativity are becoming increasingly important as we prepare students, teachers, and employees for a future deeply intertwined with AI.

The Board is committed to providing students with the most innovative and effective educational experiences to foster high levels of learning and opportunities for self-expression. As schools prepare students for a future that demands digital literacy, the District recognizes the potential of AI and other related technology tools but will proceed with caution, defining the purpose and usefulness of such tools and vetting any selected tools in order to protect student privacy.

While ensuring the responsible use for those interacting with and creating content from generative AI technologies, the Board underscores its commitment to fostering a dynamic and engaging learning environment that leverages the advances in AI to enhance student learning outcomes and equip students with the skills and dispositions needed for success in the digital age.

Guiding Principles

The future use of AI in the District will ensure:

1. Students and educators remain at the center of education;
2. Evidence-based AI technology enhances the educational experience;
3. The ethical development and use of AI technology and strong data protection practices;
4. Equitable access to and use of AI tools; and
5. Ongoing education with and about AI for all students and educators.

Definitions

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI): Machine-based systems designed around human-defined objectives to perform tasks that would otherwise require human intelligence.

AI LITERACY: Understanding what it means to learn with and about AI while gaining specific knowledge about how artificial intelligence works, the skills necessary to master AI tools, and how to critically navigate the benefits and risks of this technology.

DATA GOVERNANCE: A set of practices that ensures data assets are formally managed throughout a system/enterprise and that defines the roles, responsibilities, and processes for ensuring accountability for and ownership of data assets.

GENERATIVE AI: Artificial intelligence tools that generate text, images, videos, or other content based on existing data patterns and structures.

TRANSPARENCY: Open disclosure of how AI systems work, including how they reach decisions and the data used to do so.

Equitable Access

The District will provide all students and staff with equitable access to AI tools as they are adopted by the school, irrespective of gender, ethnicity, disability status, socioeconomic status, geographic location, or displacement status. The District will ensure that any chosen assistive AI technologies support diverse learning needs, including accommodations for students with disabilities according to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Student and Educator Data Privacy

The District shall adhere to all federal and state laws regarding student and staff data privacy. Only vendors with thorough data protection practices will be used for any purchases within the District. The District will inform educators, parents, and students of what and how AI tools are used in schools. Student information is not to be shared and any data collected through AI shall be subject to protocols providing transparency about the types of data collected and how the data is stored, utilized, and protected.

Vendor and Tool Selection

The District shall require all vendors of AI tools and resources to meet district standards for transparency, equity, and ethical decision-making. AI tools and resources shall only be adopted once there is data supporting a tool's appropriateness and efficacy with potential users and, for instruction-focused AI, its alignment with high-quality teaching and learning standards and practices.

Professional Learning Opportunities

The District shall provide educators high-quality, multifaceted, ongoing professional learning opportunities that help increase their AI literacy and understand what, how, and why specific AI is being used in their educational settings. Special attention will be paid to how to use AI appropriately for all learners, including early learners, students with disabilities, and emergent multilingual learners. Learning opportunities shall assist educators in researching and assessing available evidence about effective AI uses in education; understand AI bias and know strategies for reporting and mitigating the harmful impacts of AI bias; and understand the ethical and data privacy hazards associated with AI.

AI Literacy and Curriculum Integration

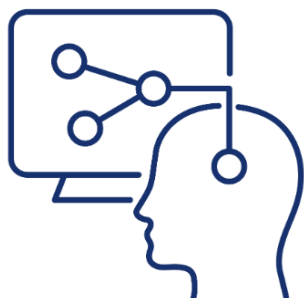
The District shall take steps to ensure all students and educators become fully AI literate and develop a sense of agency with these technologies. Future curricular changes will incorporate AI literacy across all subject areas and education levels so that all students understand the benefits, risks, and effective uses of these tools.

Continuous Improvement

The District will conduct, at minimum, an annual evaluation of AI practices to ensure they meet district goals. The District shall regularly engage educators, students, families, and local associations through workshops, surveys, and forums to gather input on AI use in schools.



AI Literacy is the NEW literacy...



Which skills did educators say were most important for student success in future careers?

- **Critical thinking and problem-solving (95%)**
- **Real-world, applied learning experiences (95%)**
- Career exploration and vocational guidance (93%)
- Communication and collaboration (91%)
- Financial literacy (91%)
- **AI literacy (84%)**

A lesson from the field...



Sometimes our students learn as much on athletic fields as they do in the classroom. Good coaching is like good teaching. It leaves a strong impression on our youth.

As adults, never miss a chance for a teachable moment.

Lessons from the Pitch (excerpt) By Sarah McKibben in *Educational Leadership*

It was a JV soccer scrimmage in late August. An away game. Ninety degrees, thick air, two minutes on the clock.

Then came the collision. One player flipped, spun full-circle mid-air, and hit the turf hard. He didn't get up. The coaching staff jogged out as he lay there in the grass, barely stirring. Out in the rural district, help would take time.

What happened next wasn't in any playbook.

Our varsity coach—warming up his squad on the sidelines for their turn on the field—marched his players across the grass, waved them into a half-circle, and had them stand shoulder-to-shoulder around the injured boy. **For nearly 40 minutes in the sweltering heat, those teenagers stood there until an ambulance arrived. Creating a wall of privacy. Casting shade. Protecting an opponent lying in the grass.**

The coach knelt beside the young player, so he wasn't alone. We'd find out later he broke his collarbone—painful, but otherwise, he'd be OK. A huge relief for everyone holding their breath.

That day, parents in the stands were moved. The principal called our district. The story reached the superintendent. But from my vantage point—watching from the bleachers, knowing my freshmen sons were absorbing every second of it—it wasn't about the praise. It was a defining moment of culture. This young varsity coach, new to the school, was showing the community that **character, empathy, and relational trust come far before the scoreboard.**

Getting better every day, one step at a time



Getting better takes practice. And, even at our best, we work to improve our crafts, skills, and interests. The same is true in teaching (and parenting). The article below offers sound advice for improving daily habits to refine and improve teaching skills.

How Good Teachers Get Even Better By Youki Terada in Edutopia - <https://www.edutopia.org/>

Like elite athletes and musicians, even outstanding teachers have room to grow. Here are 6 research-based ways to keep sharpening your skills.

Teaching is one of the most complicated jobs in the world.

Ignoring, for a moment, the much-hyped statistic that **teachers make 1,500 decisions a day**, what makes teaching so complicated may be the real human consequences of those decisions. The right question at the right time for one student can make a murky concept suddenly click, while a poorly handled interaction with another can sow confusion. With dozens or even hundreds of students under their care, **even the most highly skilled teachers look for ways to refine their craft.**

That complexity of human systems explains why a Harvard-led team of researchers concluded that **teachers need more than pedagogical theories and mental models of how classrooms work—they also need opportunities to break complex teaching down into smaller parts, study how other teachers handle them, and rehearse those moves with feedback until they become second nature in the chaotic flow of the classroom.**

Effective teaching, then, is less about executing a set of prescribed strategies and more about developing the “informed judgment” necessary to “engage in complex decision-making and practice,” the researchers note. For example, watching how a master teacher delivers a lesson or handles difficult moments in the classroom, and then rehearsing those moves while getting feedback from coaches, allows for authentic “feedback in the moment” along with quick hints on “how to elevate instruction.”

That kind of expertise doesn’t happen automatically; it develops when teachers take the long view and engage, over many years, in a disciplined course of deliberate practice, identifying a set of skills they want to improve and then making the time to reflect on and practice them.

1. Pinpoint What Needs Work

Elite athletes don’t get better simply by playing more games. They **isolate specific skills**—a serve, swing, or jump shot—identify what needs work, and drill those skills intently, making small refinements until their movements hold up under pressure. That approach also works in the classroom, according to a 2016 *Deans for Impact* report. **The best teachers learn more when they “focus on improving a particular aspect of teaching rather than working toward broad, general improvement.”**

The challenge, then, is figuring out what areas to work on. For Jill Yamasawa, a college and career readiness teacher, **the key is to resist the urge to improve everything at once. “Focus on one thing you want to improve on in the year,”** Yamasawa suggests in an Edutopia article. It could be asking better questions, spotting moments in your lesson when students tend to get confused, or redesigning classroom materials to better support a wider range of learners. Once you’ve identified a target, keep it narrow enough that you can experiment with changes, watch for their effects, and refine your approach over time. The goal isn’t to overhaul your teaching, but to make small, meaningful changes.

2. Actively Solicit Feedback

Collecting student feedback “can serve as a valuable source of information for teachers that encourages them to reflect on their teaching practices,” researchers explain in a 2025 meta-analysis. You might spend an hour giving a lesson, but across a classroom full of students that’s 25 different ways that your lesson could land. **Student feedback** can surface confusing instructions, difficult concepts that are glossed over too quickly, or even practical obstacles that are hard to spot from the front of the room, such as poor acoustics or hard-to-read slides.

“Last year, I began my reflection process by looking through student feedback, including the results of a final survey I gave students to rank their experience of our classroom community according to our stated core beliefs,” writes high school English teacher Marcus Luther in an Edutopia article.

The results were eye-opening, as students ranked *curiosity*—an area that should have received high marks—lower than every other classroom value. This gave Luther a clear target for improvement, as he spent the following year deliberately building more opportunities for inquiry into his lessons. “As teachers, we all want to be better for our students—but the path to better is often foggy or overwhelming,” Luther explains. By collecting feedback from students, he was able to **close the gap between his perception of the classroom and his students’ reality**—and identify a concrete starting point for improvement.

3. Be Objective

Just hours after winning the 2015 national championship, legendary football coach Nick Saban **was reviewing game footage**—not to celebrate the win, but to look for areas that could still be improved. It’s an approach that can help teachers, too, according to a 2025 study. After revisiting classroom video, teachers were more objective about giving, as well as receiving, feedback about each other’s lessons. Pausing and rewinding helped them focus more tightly on key instructional moments and student responses, highlighting moves that clearly worked well, along with areas that needed further refinement. By contrast, teachers reflecting on classroom instruction without the benefit of video “found it difficult to capture the root problems” they had witnessed, relying on potentially spotty memory or notes.

“As teachers, we aren’t always the best at recalling exactly what happened in our classrooms on a given day or assessing how a lesson is going in real time,” write Zachary Herrmann and Sarah Kavanagh, professors of education at the University of Pennsylvania, in an Edutopia article. **“Maybe we thought that the way we explained a concept made things click for our students, only to realize later that it left them more confused.”**

Seeing yourself teach (you can use audio, too, if you can’t bear to watch!) provides a **fresh dose of objectivity**, allowing you to notice habits that are hard to catch in the moment. For example, teachers tend to speak more than they realize,

and video may reveal that you're filling silences too quickly. Watching yourself from a student's perspective can also expose the **curse of knowledge**, the assumption that your lessons are landing well since you're so familiar with the material. Rewinding the tape can surface important steps you missed or a sequence of difficult concepts introduced too quickly.

4. Rehearse the Tricky Moments

Teaching requires making dozens of decisions on the fly, and even experienced teachers can't rely on a script for every challenge that comes their way. In a 2025 study, **researchers discovered that teachers who showed the most growth were the ones who mentally rehearsed difficult instructional moments**, such as a set of important instructions that unexpectedly created more confusion, or learning how to respond to a student who gave an answer that came out of left field.

By thinking through scenarios in advance or even taping yourself reacting to a potential classroom issue—actively engaging in a type of “What if this happens?” practice, in other words—teachers can build a repertoire of responses, making it easier to improvise instead of relying solely on their training or abstract principles.

“Teaching is complex, particularly ‘ambitious’ teaching that prioritizes student thinking and reasoning,” researchers explain in a 2025 study. **Theory-based professional development has its limits; at some point, teachers need opportunities to rehearse the moves themselves, get feedback, and refine their responses before trying them in a live classroom.**

5. Go Beyond the Lesson Plan

Even a perfect lesson plan can only get you so far. Students arrive in your classroom with their own thoughts, fears, interests, and mindsets, all of which shape how engaged they are and their willingness to persist through difficult material. **Understanding what makes a student tick is one of the most difficult aspects of teaching, and it's a skill that can take years to master.**

In addition, misbehavior is often not what it seems. In a 2018 study, researchers analyzed the causes of student misbehavior and discovered that a full **15 percent was attributed to academic confusion**, often stemming from a “failure to provide clear expectations,” for example. Another major source of misbehavior, according to the researchers, came from a student's “inability to perform adequately in academics” because the material was too challenging or confusing.

That explains why it's helpful to **look beyond the behavior**, especially for less serious infractions like talking in class, misusing technology, or not paying attention. In a 2025 study, researchers found that experienced teachers were adept at “addressing the underlying issue instead of just the behavior itself.” It was a hard-earned skill, taking years of practice and trial and error, but a deep understanding of the psychological underpinnings of learning helped teachers read their students and figure out how to get them back on track instead of resorting to reprimands and punishments. Punitive tactics may work in the short term, but they often lead to more misbehavior down the road, according to a different 2025 study.

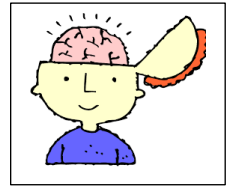
6. Adopt a Lifelong Learner's Mindset

In a 2026 study, researchers studied how veteran teachers, those with more than 20 years of classroom experience, kept improving, and found that they saw professional learning “not as a static requirement, but rather as an ongoing process embedded in teachers' everyday work.” While formal professional development still played a role, it took a backseat to informal learning: **conversations with colleagues, joint lesson planning, reflection, and experimenting with new strategies while seeking feedback**, the researchers explain.

That's an approach adopted by Brooklyn's P.S. 249, where both novice and experienced teachers meet each week to practice instructional strategies with small groups of students while their colleagues observe and give feedback. Afterward, groups of teachers discuss what worked, what needs improvement, and how the strategy can work inside different classrooms. Teachers try the approach in their own classrooms and report back to the group, creating an ongoing cycle of practice, feedback, and fine-tuning.

“Lab sites are a place where teachers can come together and practice pedagogy,” says assistant principal Ana De Jesus. “They're going to research a high-impact instructional strategy and then practice it. It's low-stakes, so teachers are really comfortable providing each other feedback.”

Thoughts from the Superintendent



Making sure the children in our classrooms (and homes) are “self-regulated.”

Reading the article below, it is easy to become alarmed that some of the most important traits in our youth are on the decline including self-control, empathy, and critical thinking.

Who doesn't want children like the ones described below:

...children with good self-regulation are aware, flexible, and creative—and, importantly, they are empowered to reason for themselves. “Self-regulation is a much bigger deal than simple self-control. It’s not just the ability to pause behavior, but it’s having the flexibility to pivot behavior...the ability to blaze a trail toward a goal, while still preserving trust and reciprocity in those around you.”

With greater self-regulation, not only will children be more psychologically healthy, but they’ll also be more altruistic, kind, and connected with their community.

And, yet the alarm bell rings when the case is made that the “qualities that support self-regulation (including self-control) are on the decline in American children.”

Self-control in young children has regressed by two years since the 1940s. Empathy has declined among college students over 30 years, and creativity and critical thinking have declined over 20 years, especially among children in kindergarten through third grade.

We're headed in the wrong direction if we create good scholars and don't create good people.

How Neuroscience Can Help Your Kid Make Good Choices BY [DIANA DIVECHA](#) | GREATER GOOD MAGAZINE

Imagine the following scenario: Your eight-year-old son is repeatedly poked with a pencil by his classmate at school. How does he respond?

He might endure the pokes without complaint by using willpower, or he might stay silent, succumbing to feelings of fear or powerlessness. He could lose his self-control and act out, attacking his classmate verbally or poking him back. Or does your son “self-regulate” by considering his options and resources, taking stock of his feelings and strengths, reflecting on past experience, and responding deliberately?

Self-regulation may sound like a tall order—but it's also the best choice, according to Erin Clabough, a neuroscientist, mother of four, and author of the book *Second Nature: How Parents Can Use Neuroscience to Help Kids Develop Empathy, Creativity, and Self-Control*. Self-regulation is a skill that we need whenever we want to make a good choice or work toward a goal, especially when strong feelings are involved—in ourselves or others.

Unfortunately, the qualities that support self-regulation are on the decline among American children. Self-control in young children has regressed by two years since the 1940s. (On the same task—standing still while not moving—today's seven year olds perform the way five year olds did earlier, and today's five year olds perform like the earlier three year olds.) Empathy has declined among college students over 30 years, and creativity and critical thinking have declined over 20 years, especially among children in kindergarten through third grade.

➡ If we want to live in a civil, peaceful, and productive society, interrupting those trends is imperative. In her book, Clabough weaves developmental neuroscience with anecdotes from her family life to explain how parents can help children cultivate empathy, creativity, and self-control, and more importantly why they should. Together these qualities support a child's ability to self-regulate in a balanced way, leading to greater personal fulfillment, better relationships, and enhanced success in life.

Self-regulation vs. self-control

Over the course of the book, Clabough draws a distinction between the multi-faceted self-regulation and self-control.

Self-control has received a great deal of attention following the famous “marshmallow test,” which has been cited for decades. In this classic 1970 study, 1,000 four to six year olds were given a small reward (one marshmallow, pretzel, or cookie) but could choose not to eat it and wait for a larger reward later (more treats). Longitudinal studies showed that

the children who could delay gratification had higher SAT scores in adolescence and better health, higher income, and lower crime rates 40 years later. The ability to delay gratification in early childhood was a better predictor of later success than intelligence or social class.

But the marshmallow experiment may not mean what we think it means. As Clabough writes, it might actually have tested children's obedience, how they felt about authority figures, or whether they trusted adults. Or it might have tested how much a child liked marshmallows, whether they wanted to wait, or whether they even had developed the capacity to (e.g., older children were better delayers than younger children).

In addition, Clabough argues, self-control is an incomplete goal, because it's ultimately about *not acting*—something parents and teachers might find desirable in children, but not the only key to success in life. Self-regulation, on the other hand, is about *taking action*, she says, and teaching it should be a parenting goal.

Someone with good self-regulation does have self-control and can, for example, stifle an initial gut reaction when necessary. But they also use creativity and empathy to consider alternative avenues that can help them accomplish their goals. They consider rules, but they also might creatively reframe them or invent new ones. In order to decide on an action, they take into account their own feelings and concerns, but they're also empathic and consider other people's perspectives in complex social situations.

For example, your son who is being poked might first read the other child's motivations—is the poking in fun and a continuation of recess play, is it a distressed call for help, or is it taunting and part of a bullying pattern? What are your son's goals—does he want to continue the fun, is he trying to concentrate, or does he need help? Creativity allows him the freedom and flexibility to respond with a joke, or assert a boundary, or involve an adult; self-control allows him to thoughtfully make this choice rather than instinctively react.

In other words, children with good self-regulation are aware, flexible, and creative—and, importantly, they are empowered to reason for themselves. "Self-regulation is a much bigger deal than simple self-control," writes Clabough. "It's not just the ability to pause behavior, but it's having the flexibility to pivot behavior...the ability to blaze a trail toward a goal, while still preserving trust and reciprocity in those around you."

With greater self-regulation, not only will children be more psychologically healthy, but they'll also be more altruistic, kind, and connected with their community. And, Clabough writes, they can also expect greater academic success, a "career boost," and "greater competitiveness in a global economy."



Second Nature: How Parents Can Use Neuroscience to Help Kids Develop Empathy, Creativity, and Self-Control (Sounds True, 2019, 288 pages)

[Click here for link to Amazon](#)

Self-regulation in the brain

Second Nature is probably the first, most applicable primer on brain development for non-scientists that neither overwhelms nor oversimplifies. Clabough describes stages of brain development to help parents have more appropriate expectations: What are children capable of, neurologically, at different ages? Which limitations can be gently stretched, and where do children need extra support? For example, she reports that while play in early childhood is important for creativity, today's kids have fewer opportunities to play in early childhood classrooms, a trend that should be reversed.

Clabough offers a simple, friendly, but thorough description of the fundamental neurological processes of synaptogenesis (the formation of synaptic connections), pruning (the elimination of synaptic connections), and myelination (the insulation of connections to speed up transmission). It's helpful for parents to know that they are actually reinforcing synaptic connections and shaping and remodeling neural circuits via the experiences, habits, and routines they offer to children. And what parents don't do is as important as what they do.

Clabough describes parenting approaches grounded in developmental science, including scaffolding (providing a framework or template for children to learn and practice new skills) and modeling (demonstrating self-regulation as a

parent), along with supporting children's autonomy and helping them reflect on their experiences. My favorite chapters in *Second Nature* are the how-to's, in which she offers specific parenting guidance, hacks, and shortcuts. For example, she points out that brain cells that are working hard to maintain self-control use glucose at a faster rate, so one tip is to "feed your tantrum-thrower ASAP."

She even points out how power structures affect self-regulation: Long-held privilege can erode empathy, making it harder to consider someone else's point of view, while chronic disadvantage can be harmful to children. In her own family, she finds ways to switch up and equalize the power dynamics among the siblings—for example, by letting the youngest dole out treats or speak first, asking an older sibling to teach a younger one, exposing her children to different cultures, and encouraging friendships across ages and groups. This kind of sensitivity makes the book feel especially thoughtful and expansive.

Room for debate

Once in a while, Clabough strays into territory where scientific opinion varies or isn't available yet. For example, she suggests that children who are bullied should "find a grownup," but the current research doesn't support such a simple approach. (We know that some grownups aren't sympathetic or skilled and that most teenagers don't want to turn to a grownup.) Instead, today's research points to two key solutions to bullying: developing social and emotional skills in children and adults, and creating a positive school climate.

Additionally, Clabough advises parents to confront other people's children, or intrude in children's social networks, to help set ground rules for their interactions—but a larger, more nuanced discussion is needed there. She also champions one or two social and emotional learning (SEL) programs that cultivate mindfulness without exploring the benefits of other SEL programs that have been proven to enhance self-understanding and social skills along with self-regulation. (Full disclosure: I have an affiliation with the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence.) I am heartened, though, by Clabough's suggestion that children and adults alike should learn how brains grow and develop. Adults can only teach what they understand and embody, and the field of developmental neuroscience is rapidly advancing.

→ **Empathy, creativity, and self-control are strengths that can be learned.** And when they're taught with respect for a child's autonomy and decision-making capacity, they can support lifelong well-being. By nurturing these traits in our children, Clabough writes, "we will raise creative thinkers who get things done in a way that benefits others as well as themselves."

Additional Information:



There is a profound difference between self-regulation and self-control. Self-control is about inhibiting strong impulses; self-regulation, reducing the frequency and intensity of strong impulses by managing stress-load and recovery. In fact, self-regulation is what makes self-control possible, or, in many cases, unnecessary. The reason lies deep inside the brain.

– Dr. Stuart Shanker

Dr. Shanker's website.

→ Visit the Yale School of Emotional Intelligence
Click on the "RULER" section on the front page.

RULER is an acronym for the five skills of emotional intelligence:

- **Recognizing** emotions in oneself and others
- **Understanding** the causes and consequences of emotions
- **Labeling** emotions with a nuanced vocabulary
- **Expressing** emotions in accordance with cultural norms and social context
- **Regulating** emotions with helpful strategies



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.

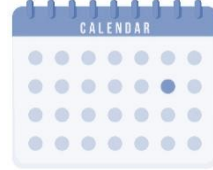
Thursday, October 29
Tuesday, November 3
Tuesday, December 8



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.