

East Lyme Public Schools



East Lyme High School

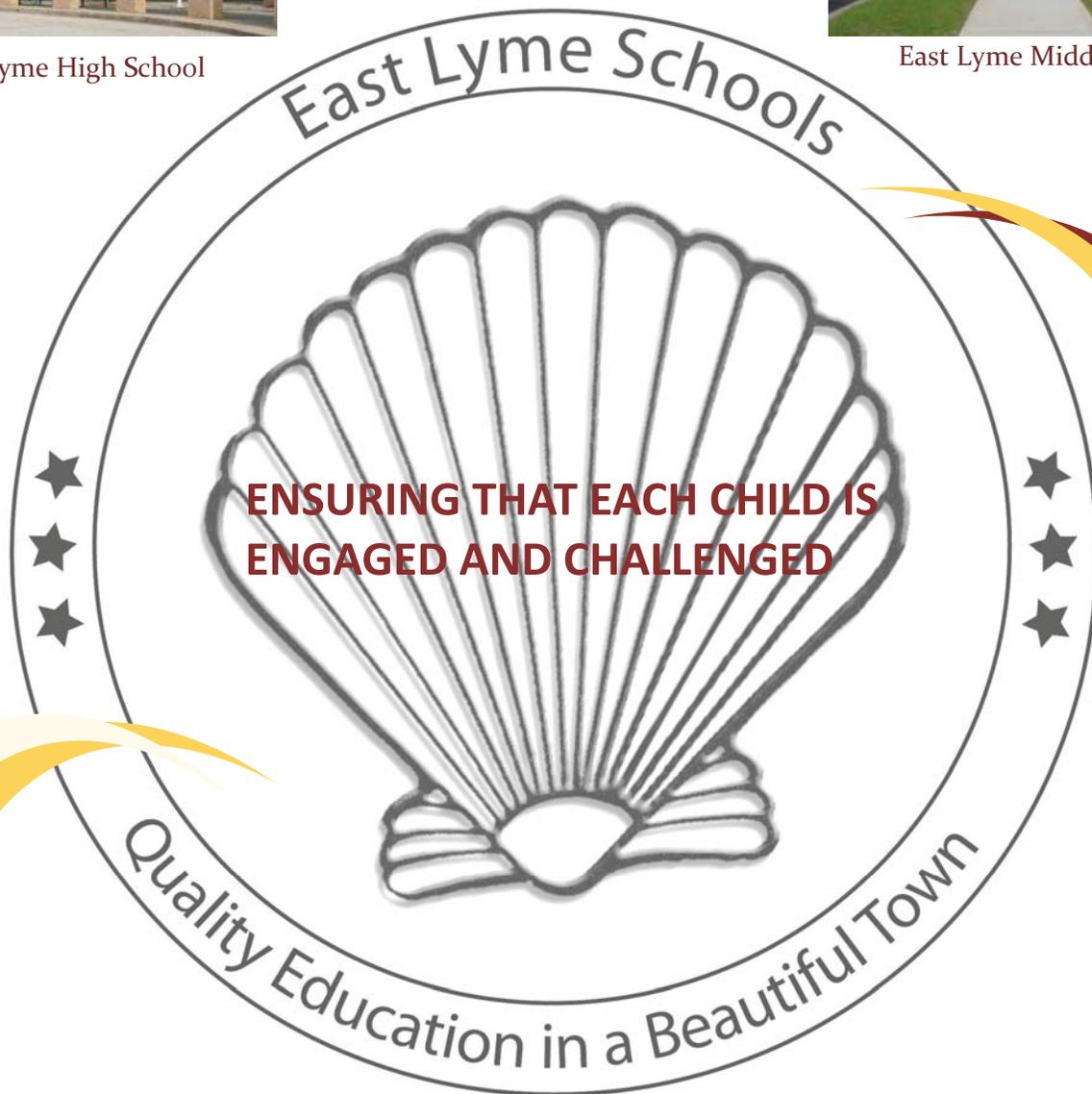
East Lyme, Connecticut

January/February 2011

Volume 1 Issue 1



East Lyme Middle School



Lillie B. Haynes School



Flanders School



Niantic Center School

East Lyme Public Schools

WELCOME FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS



I am pleased to present our first East Lyme Public Schools newsletter. This edition presents an overview of our planning activities for the future, as well as a rich picture of the many learning opportunities our talented teachers provide to the students of East Lyme.

Please enjoy the articles and feel free to contact us with any thoughts you may have about our schools or programs.

Dr. James D. Lombardo
Superintendent of Schools

East Lyme Public Schools

Ensuring That Each Child is
Engaged and Challenged

January-February 2011 / Issue 1 Volume 1

Publisher:

Dr. James D. Lombardo
Superintendent of Schools

*Thank you to the numerous staff
members and administrators
who contributed articles.*



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East Lyme Offers

Asian Studies Opportunities

As part of our goal to increase students' understanding of the world and its people, East Lyme Public Schools will offer two unique learning opportunities for our students and families.

Bangkok-East Lyme Student Exchange Program

This program provides students in grades 9-12 with the opportunity to spend three weeks in Thailand from June 19-July 5, 2011. Students will live with Thai host families, attend school in Thailand's most revered public high schools, and visit numerous Thai cultural and religious icons. The complete cost for this Thai journey is \$2,000, plus flight costs.



In October 2011, 25 Thai students will spend three weeks living and learning here in East Lyme. We are seeking host families to share their homes and families with one (1) or two (2) Thai students during their October visit.

Chinese Language and Culture Camp

East Lyme will host thirty (30) visiting Chinese high school students from July 15-30, 2011. We are seeking 15 East Lyme Families who are willing to share their homes with two (2) Chinese high school students for the two-week period. Host family children will have the opportunity to join their Chinese guests during the day camp, which features workshops learning about American life, as well as tours to a variety of area historical and cultural sites. Small stipends will be provided to host families to cover part of the expenses related to the visit.



To Apply or to Learn More

If you are interested in participating in any portion of these programs, contact Ms. Lynn Bodnar in the Superintendent's Office at lynn.bodnar@eastlymeschools.org or 860-739-3966 ext. 5602.

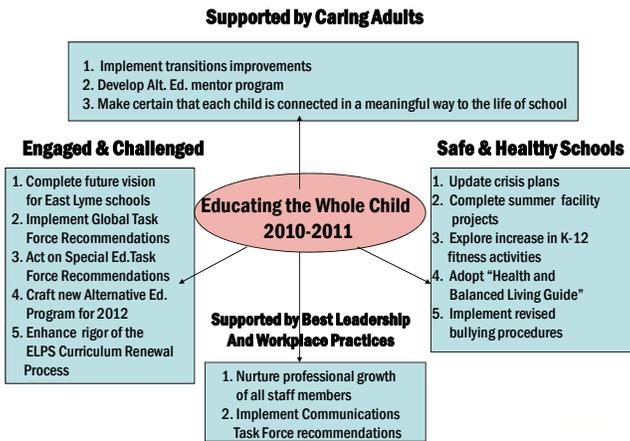
East Lyme Public School Task Forces

East Lyme Schools Plan For A Successful Future

THE SCHOOLS OF EAST LYME have enjoyed tremendous success in preparing our students for their college and work lives. Most recently our community was named “one of the best small communities” in the United States, principally because of our great shoreline and excellent schools.

We also know that the world is changing rapidly. The world in which our students will continue to live and work requires a new set of skills to solve the problems they will encounter in their future. At the beginning of the year, the East Lyme Board of Education adopted several district goals. During the 2010-2011 school year, we are continuing to expand upon our early work.

The following graphic organizer best illustrates the scope of this effort with focus on what is best for nurturing the development of the whole child in the context of a ‘rapidly changing world.’



To assist in the accomplishment of the four goal areas, four task forces were developed and continue to work toward fulfillment of the goal areas.

THE VISION TASK FORCE was charged with the development of a future vision for our schools that will ensure that each student acquires the skills, knowledge and sensibilities to develop a “personal vision of success.” The vision shall include a mission statement, a clearly articulated picture of the district’s program aims for the coming years, and a statement of beliefs and goals that will move the district and its schools closer to that vision.

Following several community forums, a Steering Committee was formed, comprised of 30 teachers, students, community

members, administrators and Board members to guide the future of our schools’ improvement efforts.



The Vision Committee involved in the process of drafting a vision and long range plan to provide the best education possible for our students in the East Lyme School District.

THE GLOBAL EDUCATION TASK FORCE was charged with the development of recommendations to best prepare our students to achieve success in an increasingly interdependent world. The task force has conducted a thorough study of the literature regarding preparation of students in a changing world, and has developed concrete recommendations for curricular change.

This year the elementary Spanish program has been changed to better use available time and resources. Third and fourth grade students learn Spanish language and culture during weekly 50-minute blocks. Students in third grade are currently studying family, foods and music of Cuba. Students in 4th grade are learning about past times and activities in Mexico. The language focus at the elementary level is on useful communication dealing with subjects of interest to children, not merely the learning of word lists. The cultural approach starts with the already familiar and branches out to the interesting and unknown.



4th grade students at Lillie. B. Haynes stretching and singing to Mexican Mariachi music.

East Lyme Public School Task Forces

THE COMMUNICATIONS TASK FORCE was charged with studying and making recommendations regarding communications. The committee has proposed the following questions: (1) How can ELPS ensure timely and significant communications within its school district employee groups? (2) How can ELPS better use technology and other forms of media to communicate with its parents, community members, and the world beyond East Lyme?

Dr. Karen Costello, Administrator for Program Improvement

THE ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION TASK FORCE was charged with reviewing and making recommendations to improve the ability of the ELPS Alternative Education program to meet the needs of its students.

The East Lyme High School Alternative Education Program has been in existence for approximately 12 years. While the program has changed direction and location over the years, it currently operates out of 25 Chesterfield Road, East Lyme. In February of 2010, the Superintendent of East Lyme Public Schools charged a task force with reviewing the current program and making recommendations to expand and improve the program's ability to meet the diverse needs of its students. Based on the work of the task force, a new model is being proposed that will allow students to pursue their learning through LTI's or Learning Through Interests. Students will spend some of their time in an interest-based internship and the remainder of their time in a unique setting that connects their learning to their work experience. The model will give students the opportunity to participate in authentic and relevant learning, ultimately helping to make our school even better and more rigorous.

Jason Bitgood, Assistant Principal



Mariah Anton, senior writer for "Alternative Perspectives", the programs first newsletter.



GREETINGS FROM THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

While it was a few years ago, I can still vividly recall my third grade teacher exclaiming, "See how Patrick did that, now you do what he did." As Patrick turned a few shades of red, the class focused their eyes on his work. I do not know if my teacher knew it at the time, but she was on to something. Students learn many lessons from their peers.

Here in East Lyme we use this knowledge with our three and four year old students. By creating a learning environment for a small group of students, our preschool students learn everything from their letters to how to take turns to playing a game. As these students learn and practice their skills, the students who have disabilities learn by watching them, playing with them and, of course, listening to their teachers. While the teacher plays a critical role in these classrooms, the students become powerful teachers simply by learning in their curious and playful ways.

A strategy using the same premise is used in the classrooms of our elementary and secondary schools. Students with and without disabilities are placed side by side in classrooms throughout the district. The current educational term for this is "inclusion". Similar to that of the pre-school, we create an environment where students learn from each other. Opportunities for learning from this teaching methodology are numerous, if not infinite.

Currently, we in East Lyme are working to connect students in high school with adults in the community who are working in the 'real world'. While these adults are in most cases not teachers by training, their life experience is precisely what our students need as they ready themselves for the post high school world. We are excited to be creating these connections with community members and will bring you more details in future editions. Whoever knew the wisdom one could glean from third grade?

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to call (860-739-3966) or send me an email at brian.reas@eastlymeschools.org.

*Brian Reas
Assistant Superintendent for
Special Education and Pupil Personnel*

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

MINI-METRIC OLYMPICS HELD AT NIANTIC CENTER SCHOOL

Even though it is not officially an Olympic year, third graders in Mr. Discordia's, Mrs. Muir's and Mrs. Soule's classes at Niantic Center School competed in the "Second Annual Mini-Metric Olympics." All students competed in categories such as the "Javelin (plastic straw) Toss," "Discus (Paper Plate) Throw," "Kidney Bean Grab and Weigh," "Big Foot Measuring," and the dreaded "How Much Water Does a Sponge Hold?" competition. During the hour-long competition, each student was expected to estimate the results first (in metric units) and then compete in each area. Once they competed, their actual measurement was recorded and students were expected to find the difference between their estimate and the actual measurement. A great time was had by all and teams were awarded medals based on their creativity, cooperation, patience, focus, respect, direction-following and overall teamwork.



The Mini-Metric Olympics is a great way to engage students as they apply a variety of different math skills and concepts, cheering each other on and interacting with team members.

Student comments included, "We should do this every Friday. It was awesome!"; "I think we learned a lot about teamwork and we learned that milliliters (ml) are a type of measurement used for liquids."; "It made you think more and work as a team."; "It was fun. Nobody won; it was all about having fun while we learned."

Everyone was indeed a winner!

*Robin Soule,
Third Grade Teacher*



FUTURE SCIENTISTS EXPERIMENT AT NIANTIC CENTER SCHOOL

Mrs. Swan's second grade students had a great time making slime while learning about liquids and solids in science. Pfizer scientist, Qiang Wang (Aden Lu's mom), came to NCS to teach the children how to make slime. While making this favorite polymer, children were excited to witness first hand a chemical reaction. This activity taught the children what it is like to be a scientist. Students learned how to practice safety procedures, conduct experiments, and record their results. Pfizer's "Science and Math Kits-to-Go" is a wonderful outreach program that partners scientists with schools to enrich children's learning experiences. The children, and even Principal DeLoreto, had a fabulous time being "scientists" for the day and look forward to doing more experiments with Mrs. Wang.

Diane Swan, Second Grade Teacher



EAST LYME BOARD OF EDUCATION

At its November convention, the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE) presented the East Lyme Board of Education with the *Level One Board Leadership Award* in recognition of effective leadership.



Board of Education members (left to right) Mary Broderick, Jaime Ellis, Laura Greenstein, Tim Hagen and Dr. Lombardo receiving the CABE Level One Board Leadership Award

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Lillie B. Haynes School

Making the World a Smaller Place



The third grade teachers at Lillie B. Haynes Elementary School are making the world a little smaller through their dynamic study of Japan. Ms. Kuja, Mrs. Arnold, Mr. Faulkner and Ms. Orsini have designed an integrated study

that includes learning experiences in geography, poetry, art, music, traditions and even food! The students' journey begins through reading a variety of texts that introduce them to Japanese culture. Children read both non-fiction and fiction books. The study continues with activities in the specials areas. Kimono prints in art and Japanese songs like "Yuki" taught in music are exciting additions to classroom lessons. Another highlight is the Japanese luncheon that provides students an opportunity to sample authentic Japanese foods.

Global awareness is further enhanced with a special visit by high school students from Nagano, Japan. The third graders are already anticipating the visit. Grace Catalano, a third grader at Lillie B. Haynes, states, "I'm excited for the Japanese visitors, because I want to learn how to use chopsticks and create origami." The visit is coordinated by Arlene Brown, Home Stay Coordinator, and Robert Brown who work with the Center for International Training Inc. The mother and son, who is an East Lyme graduate, have had a long-standing relationship with Lillie B. Haynes. During this visit, students participate in an authentic tea ceremony, make origami, and write their names in Kanji characters. Everyone involved is excited to learn about each other's cultures and the feeling in the room is magic!

This year, communication was established with the visiting students at Nagano City High School via the internet. With the help of Melissa Chiappone, students in Catherine Orsini's third grade class learned how to use technology to enhance their study of other cultures. Students used pictures and videos to teach their

Japanese friends what a typical day at Lillie B. Haynes Elementary School looks like. Students posted photos on Voice Thread, a website that provides students thousands of miles apart an opportunity to communicate with each other.



The students' journeys around the world will continue throughout the year. Their next stop will be Mexico and then a country of their heritage. Students will apply research skills taught as they create a project for the *Cultural Showcase* held at the end of the year. Olivia Adams, a third grade student, says it best, "It's important to learn about other cultures because you get to learn about places on the other side of the world that you have never been to."

Kara Arnold Julie Kuja and Catherine Orsini, Gr. 3 Teachers

Flanders School — "The News"

The NEWS is a live, daily, five minute, morning television program that is produced by our students and shown throughout our school. We produce the NEWS to share what we're learning and to help unify our school community. By learning to produce television, we are making good use of a wide range of resources like paper, pencils, books, computers, cameras, Smart Boards, as well as the latest networking systems.



While learning to produce the NEWS program we learn to be effective communicators. We acquire information by talking to people, reading calendars and asking questions. We use the computers to research the news and weather. We also learn that television is made by real people who work as a team to make something together. We practice cooperation and good work plan skills such as being on time and completing a task. All fourth graders cycle through the program for two-week long assignments, to prepare and announce the daily elements of the show: announcements, book & birthdays, weather and "word of the day." Other students shadow these jobs for a week and then take them over while the next group shadows. By mid winter, all fourth graders have participated. We then start working with third graders who are eager to show what they can do.

Everyone in the school watches the program, and everyone has a chance to be on the show from time to time by participating in feature stories or answering the "Question of the Day." Students can also join in by submitting writing samples to the "Treasure Chest" kept in front of the library. Each Friday we hold "Writers' Corner" where students are invited to share what they've written.

Our mission statement reads: "This program is produced each day so that we may all spend some time together and share what we're learning." For the past nineteen years, that's just what we have done!

Mike Mullen, Library/Media Specialist

EAST LYME MIDDLE SCHOOL

Differentiation: Middle School Teams

Collaborate to Enhance Math Unit



Sixth grade students at East Lyme Middle School recently enjoyed a chance to enrich a pre-algebra math unit using TI-84 Plus graphing calculators. Teachers Kathy LaPlatney and Carey Moran were discussing the unit during a recent meeting where teachers of the same grade level were encouraged to share ideas and strategies as part of the professional learning community initiative adopted at ELMS. Mrs. LaPlatney suggested the two teachers merge students from their individual teams into one classroom to facilitate the lesson. “The results were exciting! Not only were the students mixed with peers they don’t normally see during academic classes, but they were also challenged by the use of technology not typical in a sixth grade classroom,” Carey Moran said.



The task of differentiating instruction and teaching each student at a pace that is right for them is often one of the toughest challenges a teacher faces. Using flexible grouping is typical within each team at East Lyme Middle School, but having the flexibility to integrate lessons between teams takes the cooperation of many. Both Moran and LaPlatney agreed that the collaboration among their individual teams is what truly makes ELMS a professional learning community.

Carey Moran, Grade 6 Math
Kathy LaPlatney, Grade 5-6 Math

EAST LYME HIGH SCHOOL

East Lyme High School Marching Band Presents

Superintendent with State Championship Trophy



The East Lyme Viking Marching Band (ELVB) presented Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Lombardo, with the 1st place trophy won at the USSBA New England State Championship competition in Bridgeport held in October. The band was very successful with their popular crowd pleasing show “West Side Story” (written by Leonard Bernstein and arranged for marching band by Jay Dawson). Students began memorizing the music and drill (field marching) during band camp in August. Under the leadership of Ms. Susan Johnston, the band is accompanied by a wonderful color guard that brings the music to life on the field by using movement, flags and rifles. This talented group of young musicians was lead by drum major Rajesh Thanabal; woodwind captain Kiersten Sinko; brass captain Quentin Wysopal; drum line captain Sean McCarty and color guard captain Victoria Luce.

Sue Johnston
ELHS Band Director

EAST LYME HIGH SCHOOL

Students Make "Real World" Connections

In Math Classes

Different classes in the math department have kept busy working on exciting projects and activities that allow students to apply their math knowledge outside of the classroom.



All fourteen classes of Algebra II participated in the Barbie and Ken Bungee Jumping Project. Students worked in groups to create the perfect bungee jumping experience for Barbie and her beau. Before the jump, students determined the optimum number of rubber bands to use in crafting the bungee cord. Students collected data in order to compare the number and type of rubber bands to the amount of free fall that Barbie would achieve. They worked to determine the line of best fit to describe this relationship and made an equation to compare the number of rubber bands to Barbie's free fall. Using these equations, students decided on the length of their bungee cord and conducted the final jump off the catwalk. After Barbie's jump, students wrote a report to describe how they determined the equation and decided, as a small group, on the number of rubber bands to use.

In Algebra I, students completed a calendar project in order to apply their knowledge of variables and expressions. They chose four dates in a month and marked them on a calendar. Each student determined a variable and wrote equations to relate the position of the four chosen days on the calendar. Using the completed equations, another student had to be able to find the original dates that the Algebra I students chose.

Students in Trigonometry recently wrote newspaper articles—something not often associated with math—as part of a class project. Students analyzed the change in temperature in a given city over the course of a year. They graphed these temperatures on a sine curve to understand the relationship between the temperature and time of year. Students then assumed the role of a newspaper writer in any department—be it fashion, sports, travel, etc. The students wrote an article from this perspective and included the weather data in their writing. A fashion reporter might recommend when to buy a new summer wardrobe when the temperature rises, while a sports reporter might write about athletes freezing on a game day during a colder month.

ELHS Math Department & Lauren Dickey, Intern



High School Students Learn

Child Development

The ELHS Preschool Program is over 35 years in operation and is a critical connection between East Lyme High School and the community. Many parents of our preschool children participated in this program as teenagers and now continue the tradition by sharing their children with us.

Preschool Lab is the second in a sequence of four child development classes offered at ELHS which also include Birth to Three Playgroup, Pre-K Lab and Human Development, an Early College Experience course that students can take for UCONN credit.

This fall our two Preschool Lab classes hosted 17 resident children. Working in cooperative learning teams, the high school students plan, teach, and assess age-appropriate lessons on a variety of preschool themes. The students are responsible for the operation of the program, as well as developmental observations dealing with cognitive, social, emotional and physical aspects of development. Their final exam includes the writing of a Case Study report on a child as well as an electronic portfolio of the best child development work.



ELHS Preschool & Lauren Dickey, Intern

East Lyme Middle School Drama Club

Presents

Roald Dahl's Willy Wonka Jr.



February 4 at 7:00 p.m.

February 5 at 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.

(Snow dates are February 11 and 12)

EAST LYME HIGH SCHOOL

Science is Alive at East Lyme High School

On Thursday January 5, Brad Normand's Physics class received a hands-on lesson in friction and laws of motion through a hovercraft demonstration. Mr. Normand created a hovercraft with a sturdy circle of plywood, a tarp, and a leaf blower. The craft's design allows for a thin layer of air to exist between the inflated tarp and the ground. While the hovercraft does not



lift off the ground, it allows anyone sitting on it to feel how an air hockey puck must feel—slightly elevated with much less contact with the ground. The students have been studying friction in class, so this experiment is a creative way for them to apply their knowledge. Mr. Normand

has conducted this hovercraft demonstration for five or six years.



On the same day the AP Environmental Science class and the Ecology Club heard a presentation by

ELHS alumna Kelsey Thompson. Kelsey presented to the students about her summer internship studying mammals in Alaska. The students in AP Environmental Science had just studied population demographics, counting techniques, and determining sustainable yield in an environment.

The AP Environmental Science students have also been studying sustainable management techniques and forest management. They completed national park environmental assessment designs, monitoring the recreation, forest, and wildlife aspects of a national park. Students also studied sustainable farm designs, and created an environmentally friendly farm.

Marie Hobbes's ninth grade science class has been studying dinosaurs. Students took a field trip to Dinosaur State Park to study the geological history of Connecticut. Two hundred million years ago, Connecticut was covered in shallow lakes and mudflats and had a subtropical environment. Dinosaurs roamed the state, leaving their footprints preserved in the sandy shale of the region. The footprints at Dinosaur State Park are the best-preserved footprints in North America and the most footprints found in one place. All

of the ninth grade science students visit this national landmark each year.

Holly Buckley's Biology class is working on a genetics project. Each student is researching a different genetic disorder and giving a presentation for the class. Ms Buckley is also planning two fieldwork trips for the study of marine biology.

On April 14-23 East Lyme High School has coordinated a trip to Gansbaai, South Africa where students will learn and work with the White Shark Volunteer Program. Students will hear lectures on white shark biology and behavior. They will work alongside crew members on the White Shark Project boat, where they will report data on wind direction, water currents, water visibility, and shark behavior. They also will assist crew members with duties on board. Led by ELHS Guidance Counselor, Michelle Dean, this trip is open to students at least seventeen years of age who are enrolled in Marine Biology 1, Marine Biology 2, or AP Environmental Science.

On May 19-25 Ms Buckley is leading a trip to Bermuda for a course in sub-tropical island ecology. The trip is open to marine biology students in grades eleven and twelve. So far seven students are signed up for the trip to study at the Bermuda Institute for Ocean Sciences.

ELHS Science Department & Lauren Dickey, Intern

Student Art Work in Scholastic

Art Awards Program

Fine Arts Teachers James Warykas, Rachel Michaud, Eloise Gada, and Nancy Henchey and Tech Teacher Rachel Redding entered the art work of twenty students into the Connecticut Scholastic Art Awards 2011, an affiliate of the national Alliance for Young Artists and Writers. The show dates at the Hartford Art School Silpe Gallery will be through February 4, open daily 10-4 and on weekends 12-4. Art students have just finished doing portraits, landscapes, life size boat sculptures, baskets, large paintings, photography installations, ceramic pieces, printmaking, jewelry, and still life drawings of bones to complete the semester. Ceramics students made cream pitchers for the La Belle Aurore Restaurant in Niantic.

ELHS Art Department & Lauren Dickey, Intern

EAST LYME HIGH SCHOOL



Physical Education Classes Promote Long-Term

Fitness at East Lyme High School

In Jen Carney-Brush's Lifetime Fitness II class, the students have had the opportunity to venture out into the community in the name of fitness. In October, the class took a trip to Mt. Monadnock in Jaffrey, New Hampshire where all the students made it to the top of the mountain in less than three hours. Some other lifetime fitness II activities include ice skating at the Norwich Ice Rink, laser tag at Laser Inc. in Middletown, roller skating at Galaxy Roller Rink in Groton and bowling at Family Bowl in Waterford. But one of the favorite activities that students perform right here at ELHS is ZUMBA! Zumba is a dance fitness program set to international—especially Latin—music.



Freshman Academy is a course intended to help freshmen transition into the high school. They develop their study skills and learn about physical, mental, and social wellness. This semester, Jen Carney-Brush's Freshman Academy class finished a unit on giving back to the community.

Ms. Carney-Brush has been partnering with the Women's Center of Southeastern CT for about five years, helping provide donations. The students donated toys, clothes, household items and gift cards to the Women's Center for Christmas. Together the students & faculty donated over \$2000 worth of gifts that were distributed to the families at the shelter. Roughly \$600 of the grand total came from a faculty jeans day fundraiser.

In Rudy Bagos's Freshman Academy class, the students recently finished a media blitz project. Students spent three or four class periods creating skits that document the dangers of alcohol. Each group created a skit and filmed their story using the library's Flip video cameras. The students had a significant margin for creativity, though each film had to address a high school audience and had to convey the message about alcohol.

This year Kim Thompson's Adaptive PE class participated in two dance presentations for student audiences. In the first performance, the students performed a choreographed dance as well as a glow stick dance. During the glow stick dance, students performed on a darkened stage, their costumes lined with glow sticks to make the dancers visible. This dance was performed a second time during the

annual Holiday Extravaganza. Ten Adaptive PE students chose to be in the Extravaganza this year—nine students dancing and one student singing along with the music as the group performed to "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree."

Other Outdoor Pursuits activities included a field trip to Prime Climb, a rock climbing gym in Wallingford and Brownstone Adventure Park in Portland. At Brownstone Adventure Park the students were able to swim, zip line, climb the inflatable slides and pyramids, and safely cliff jump. Students also participated in a high ropes course where they learn teamwork and cooperative learning skills. The tasks are challenging physically and mentally, requiring the students to work together. Later in the year, the class is looking forward to the upcoming skiing field trip to Wachusett Mountain.

ELHS Physical Education Department & Lauren Dickey

New Music Course Rocks East Lyme

The music department is celebrating the start of a new class this year, Computer Music. Sue Johnston helped design this course that meets in the music lab, a classroom relatively new to the school. It has taken a few years to accumulate the equipment now found in the music lab. Ms. Johnston credits the music department staff and Ms. Robyn McKenney for helping set up the equipment and installing the software that makes Computer Music possible.

A number of students come into the Computer Music course without much—if any—experience as musicians. Using computer software like Finale, Audacity, and Cuebase, students are able to manipulate music and layers of instruments to put together a composition. Cuebase is an advanced music production system that was introduced to the class by a student who was familiar with the program. With the help of these technologies, students have had a chance to be creative as they put together music in a variety of styles, from piano compositions to techno.

Once their pieces are composed, the students put their music on a CD or create mp3 files that they can listen to on their iPods. In May, the Computer Music students look forward to sharing their work with the school community during the arts exposition. Ms. Johnston is hoping that her students' pieces can be played electronically or performed by student musicians.

ELHS Music Department & Lauren Dickey, Intern

EAST LYME HIGH SCHOOL

Culinary Arts Classes Serve Up Treats

The Baking and Pastry Arts classes at the high school held a holiday cookie fundraiser before the winter break where the students in the two classes baked and decorated cookies to be sold to teachers and staff throughout the district. The students sold a total of 120 boxes, with three dozen cookies in each box. This successful fundraiser gave the students practice in mass quantity food production as well as product presentation. The cookies were delicious and enjoyed by all.

Melanie Sandoval's Baking & Pastry students are learning about the five components of a plated dessert and making the different components. They will finish on their exam day designing and creating their own restaurant quality plated dessert.

The Culinary II students are gearing up for their Iron Chef competition. This year's theme is the American burger. The secret ingredient will be revealed the day of the competition. Students must use this ingredient when preparing their American burger. They must be creative and flexible enough to incorporate the ingredient in an appropriate fashion. Students will then have 45 minutes to make their dish, plate it, and name it. A team of judges and last semester's winner will judge the final products.

ELHS Culinary Arts Department & Lauren Dickey, Intern

English Teachers Use Technology to Enhance Literature

Pam Nowak's World Literature B English class is more aware of the extent to which literature speaks to our daily lives, thanks to a partnership between the English teacher and counselor Deb Kelly. Mrs. Kelly visited the class to speak to the connections between what the students were reading and what they were experiencing in daily life. The class, for example, read Walter Dean Myers's *Fallen Angels*. The book concerns the Vietnam War and four soldiers trying to escape it alive. Mrs. Kelly came into the class to describe post-traumatic stress disorder. Later in the year she visited to discuss Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and its connection to peer pressure. Her visits to the classes achieve multiple purposes: while the students connect their lives to what they read, Mrs. Kelly gets to know the students and they get to know her. Their relationship helped the students feel more comfortable going to the counselor with their concerns. When not studying literature directly, they spent time getting to know the computer program Naviance and how to use it to plan for after high school.

Computer programs also play a part in English classes through the use of online discussion forums. A number of English teachers use a website called Ning to promote discussion, exchange, and learning outside of regular class time. One teacher, Ryan Ainscough, is experimenting with Edmodo, a similar website. He worked with Ning in the past, asking students to post a quote from the text they read and their reaction to it. In online discussions, students write about the text and its connection to their lives, a question it raises, a prediction they could make, an example of good writing that they could identify, or other reactions. Ning also allows them to upload pictures, a useful tool for assignments where students are asked to visualize a moment in the text.

Mr. Ainscough sees the value of having an online space for discussion outside of class and has witnessed rich discussions occurring between his students online. Since students have more time to compose their comments and responses, it may be easier for some students to participate online than to participate in class. Students who do not participate frequently in class may feel more comfortable sharing in an online space than speaking up during real time discussion. Mr. Ainscough notes that the degree to which a class really uses the online discussion space varies from year to year, class to class. He sees the potential that online discussion forums have for supplementing class time instruction and hopes to integrate technology like Ning and Edmodo more into his teaching.

James Warykas's junior AP English Language and Composition class completed a month-long research project of community issues involving the disadvantaged in conjunction with their study of the nonfiction text *Black Like Me*. Teams studied working conditions, educational opportunities, health clinics, racism-diversity, and housing types in the community with on-site visits and interviews. After doing the research, the teams taught the class for forty minutes in a creative format using an original twenty-page packet of research. Further discussion followed where students evaluated the changes since the 1960's. This emphasis on nonfiction is a requirement for AP and is a departure from their earlier study of literature with the existential and theater of the absurd philosophies.

The Speech Communication classes from the Gateway College Program wrapped up the semester with eight-minute hobby speeches. Students had to present and teach a hobby to at least one student and possibly the whole class in different locations. The topics had a wide range: fishing, electric slide guitar, yoga, cupcake decoration, cooking appetizers, knitting, thread, Wii bowling, off-roading, snowboarding, volleyball hits, ice hockey slapshots, field hockey stick moves, the rowing (erg) machine, cryptograms, and video animation!

ELHS English Department & Lauren Dickey, Intern

