

**ELLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
DISTRICT AREAS OF FOCUS
MONTHLY REPORT
APRIL 2016**

1.0 Status of Initiatives

District Data – Mathematics

Grade 1: Bridges in Mathematics Unit 3–Adding, Subtracting, Counting and Comparing		
Post-Assessment Data Class Average = 85%		
Level:	# of Students:	Percent:
Exceeds	22/182	12%
Meets	133/182	73%
Approaching	20/182	11%
Significantly Below	7/182	4%

Grade 2: Bridges in Mathematics Unit 3 –Addition and Subtraction within 100		
Pre-assessment:	Post-Assessment Data	Overall Growth
Class Average = 58%	Class Average = 81%	+23 %
Level:	# of Students:	Percent:
Exceeds	28/195	14%
Meets	115/195	59%
Approaching	41/195	21%
Significantly Below	11/195	6%

Grade 3: Bridges in Mathematics Unit 3 –Multi-Digit Addition and Subtraction		
Pre-assessment:	Post-Assessment Data	Overall Growth
Class Average = 49%	Class Average = 85%	+36 %
Level:	# of Students:	Percent:
Exceeds	29/195	15%
Meets	125/195	64%
Approaching	35/195	18%
Significantly Below	6/195	3%

Grade 4: Bridges in Mathematics Unit 3 –Fractions and Decimals		
Pre-assessment:	Post-Assessment Data	Overall Growth
Class Average = 43%	Class Average = 80%	+37 %
Level:	# of Students:	Percent:
Exceeds	6/200	3%
Meets	133/200	67%
Approaching	51/200	26%
Significantly Below	10/200	5%

Grade 5: Bridges in Mathematics Unit 3 –Place Value and Decimals		
Pre-assessment:	Post-Assessment Data	Overall Growth
Class Average = 38%	Class Average = 87%	+49%
Level:	# of Students:	Percent:
Exceeds	59/212	28%
Meets	115/212	54%
Approaching	35/212	17%
Significantly Below	3/212	1%

Grade 6: Math Innovations Notable Numbers –Fractions, Decimals & Percents		
Pre-assessment:	Post-Assessment Data	Overall Growth
Class Average = 43%	Class Average = 87%	+44 %
Level:	# of Students:	Percent:
Exceeds	68/218	31%
Meets	115/218	53%
Approaching	29/218	13%
Significantly Below	6/218	3%

Over 100 parents volunteer their time at Center School, helping out in classrooms, in the library, on the playground, or in our many events. We had the opportunity to thank all our parent volunteers in celebration and honor during National Volunteer Week. Our gratitude and respect was shown to all the individuals who have dedicated their time to share their talents with our school, whether they had given one hour or many hours in service to the school.

Thanks to **Maureen Armstrong** and her many volunteers for organizing Bingo Night, a fantastic family night at Center School. The event chair took caution to be in compliance with all Bingo regulations, having filed all completed paperwork and passing an onsite visit from state regulators. Over 250 adults and children attended the event, with a bus arranged for transporting families enrolled through the Open Choice program. The Center School PTO hosted their second annual Color Run on the school playground. Students ran a mile lap, while parents sprayed them with colored cornstarch! Along with the main attraction were a DJ, face painting, other activities, and costume supplies for sale. The weather was perfect and grand time was had by all. Students were able to select books as a result of home reading in the PTO Reading for Fun store organized by **Lauren Kindall**.

April 24 was National Poem in Your Pocket Day. For our fifth annual celebration of this exciting day, Center School students wrote their own poetry, crafted class poems together, or read poetry books to find their favorites. Students and staff carried these much-loved poems throughout the day and eagerly shared them with others. Students read poems to their book buddies, heard authors read their poems aloud via the SmartBoard, and/or engaged in poetry circles.

First graders went on a field trip to the Connecticut Historical Society. Rocky's Running Club has students coming early to school to run a mile lap before their day begins. Forty five students lace up their sneakers, logging personal and collective miles. A festive bulletin board in the cafeteria celebrates their achievements.

The Crystal Lake School grade level instructional data teams continued their work throughout April:

The kindergarten data team is currently working on a data team cycle focused on “no excuse” words. The team’s SMART goal is, *The percentage of students able to write targeted “no excuse” words will be 70% or higher as measured by the Kindergarten No Excuse Word Assessment administered in May, 2016.*

The first grade data team is currently working on a data team cycle focused on math problem solving. The team’s SMART goal is, *The percentage of students scoring at mastery or higher will increase from 29% to 83% as measured by the Number Story section of the Bridges Unit 6 Post-test administered by May 13, 2016.*

The grade two data team is completing a data team cycle focused on efficient subtraction fact strategies.

The grade three data team recently completed a data team cycle focused on fractions. The team’s SMART goal was, *The percentage of students scoring at mastery or higher will be 80%.* The team exceeded their goal with 84% of students demonstrating mastery on the post assessment.

The grade four data team is working on a data team cycle focused on sentence mechanics. The team’s current SMART Goal is, *The percentage of students scoring at mastery or higher on a teacher created comma use assessment will be 70% or higher as measured by teacher created assessment administered on May 10, 2016.*

Several teachers and students piloted our first-ever student-led conferences to parents and family members. Many students shared self-evaluation results, led families through a writing discussions, and toured their family around their classroom, sharing important projects, classroom procedures, and tools and resources used throughout their school day. For many parents, it gave them a better understanding of the state standards, classroom routines and procedures associated with delivery of the standards. For some grade levels a view of our Bridges Math program was key. Students appeared confident and excited to share their learning progress with family members. Thank you to our teachers, parents, and students for being an integral part and triad in this learning process.

Building capacity at Windermere School is a collaborative effort. Staff, students, and parents should always align themselves with a fundamental theme - for every decision, we must ask, “What’s best for our kids?” Windermere was selected as a **2015-16 Banner and Model School for the State of Connecticut** by the State Education Resource Center!

Our WPTO is always busy with ideas to connect with our large parent community. From Doughnuts with Dads to Plant Sales to Tag Sales to Beach Party Bingo, parents are always willing to go out of their way to create a family fun atmosphere at Windermere School. This year, the PTO organized and sponsored a talent show for our intermediate students and their parents. This was a spinoff from the first talent show presented last year, representing grades K-4. The talent show was well-attended and parents, students, and staff were treated with a potpourri of talented student acts that energized the audience.

Mrs. Garrow, a second grade teacher, planned a heartfelt and hometown welcome for one of our parents at Windermere School. This excerpt from the community section of The Hartford Courant on Thursday, April 21, 2016 tells the story:

*When Serena Pomerleau came back from a nearly year-long tour of duty with the U.S. Army, including a stint in Kosovo, she was invited to come to Windermere School to have lunch with her daughter, Autumn, a second-grader. What Pomerleau didn’t know was that she would be greeted with a celebration by teacher **Cynthia Garrow’s** entire second grade class. The students had rehearsed*

*patriotic songs with music teacher **Sharon Bigge**, and read a few words about what service men and women mean to everyday Americans. The result was a surprise presentation, including the students dressed in red, white, and blue, and wearing "Uncle Sam" style hats. "This is awesome," Pomerleau said. "I just expected to eat lunch with her and go home."*

At our April faculty meetings, **Ms. Dhandapani** and **Mr. Collins** presented the new district website and the branding it will offer our district and Ellington in general, focusing on the website's features and ease of use. **Mrs. Bordieri**, **Mrs. Anderson**, and **Mrs. Faraci** also presented to the staff providing information on our PAL program. There had not been a presentation to the entire staff in many years. The presentation included specifics about the program, interventions and strategies, and Windermere and district numbers regarding students in the PAL program. **Dr. LaPorte** and **Mrs. Haberern** also attended in support of the presentation.

Ms. Marshall and **Ms. Toback-Reveley** recently completed the sixth grade students' academic goal-setting and goal reflection activities for their Student Success Plans. These plans will continue to guide our students as they enter middle school and beyond. We continue to host Town Meetings for all our grade levels at Windermere School. Fifth and sixth graders shared a "no bullying" PowerPoint and student members of various Rachel's Clubs discussed past and current happenings. Also, both Ms. Marshall and Ms. Toback-Reveley initiated a three-week Career Awareness guidance unit in the fifth grade classrooms.

Our library media specialist, **Ms. Palasek**, created a display of poetry books for National Poetry Month. This also helped to support the third grade curriculum as they were working on a poetry unit. She has begun the process of introducing 5th and 6th grade students to *Prezi*. Students in grades 3-6 became involved in *Google My Maps*. This tool enabled them to customize and save a Google map in their Google Drive. They were able to add text, pictures and videos to specific locations on the map. Students used it for a variety of purposes - showing a character's journey, westward expansion, biomes, highlight points for a nonfiction feature article, and personal journeys from their home country to Ellington.

Grade four classes kicked off the annual Windermere Reading Olympics. The entire fourth grade class paraded throughout the cafeteria led by their teacher, torches, and the Wizard of Words (**Mr. Welch**). In its eighth year, fourth graders are always very excited for this challenge - accumulated minutes of reading in a given time period. The opening remarks were delivered by **Mrs. Duff** and **Mrs. Schumacher**. Songs and chants were also part of the presentation. **Mrs. LaFleche's** first grade class sang a reading song as well. Last year's challenge was 150,000 minutes of reading. The students surpassed this goal with just under 200,000 minutes of reading. This year's goal is 175,000 minutes devoted to reading.

Melissa Haberern attended the Justice and Equity Symposium in East Hartford with several other administrators, teachers and a Board of Education member from Ellington. The team completed a self-assessment to determine areas of needs.

Melissa Haberern, **Liz Cole** and **Michele Cirillo** attended the PSAT Data Collection Workshop with Alan Bernstein. They were shown how to access data and provided information about Khan Academy and the personalized learning plans for students. They also learned about the PSAT and SAT benchmarks and dates for release of scores.

Melissa Haberern and **Kristy LaPorte** continue to work with **Michael Larkin**, **Michael Glasgow** and **Megan Glunt** to develop a behavior support program at Crystal Lake. A PAL program will be in place at Crystal Lake starting the 2016-2017 school year.

On April 1, the EHS Vocal Ensemble and Concert Band completed their, "World Tour" of the Ellington elementary schools. Both ensembles performed a wide variety of repertoire ranging from classical literature to the Pentatonix. The elementary students were excited with the music and one lucky individual actually got to conduct a 90 piece High School Concert Band. The looks in the eyes of the students was unforgettable. From Principal Welch, "I wanted to extend my appreciation and kudos to Matt, Richie, and certainly the EHS musicians who put on a wonderful concert for our K-6 students at Windermere! They were dressed as professionals and sounded like experts. Our students (and staff) were enthralled with the performance. Thank you for allowing them to show off the best in performance groups in our schools. They certainly make Ellington shine!"

On Tuesday, April 19 and Wednesday, April 20, the Ellington High School World Language Department hosted an International Celebration. During the long blocks, world language classes were grouped together with other world language students to learn about Henna, play a language and cultural trivia game, and eat foods from many different cultures. The International Celebration was a collaborative effort among all world language students and teachers. Students supplied a cultural dish that they eat at home with their families to share with the rest of the world language classes and faculty during that block. Students were given the opportunity to create a video project that shows what "Languages Enrich Your Mind" means to them. The winners were: 3rd Place - **Caitlin Wing** and **Liz Lamont**; 2nd Place - **Emma Babiec**; and 1st Place - **John Pasini**.

On Friday, April 1, the EHS Library Advisory Board met during all three lunch waves. The group discussed books and videotaped a project for the state library. The library advisory board meets monthly to discuss library book recommendations, special projects such as creating a video for the CT State Library Research IT CT, and deciding how to promote books among the student body. On Friday, April 29, the EHS book discussion group met to discuss the book Bruiser by Neal Shusterman. Students shared their ideas about the book during all three E lunch blocks.

2.0 Next Steps

Placement of next year's classes has begun with parent input sought. Teachers will be meeting to discuss groupings for the 2016-2017 school year, including our fifth graders this year!

Center School will celebrate Turn of the TV Week. **Ines Knospe** is providing extracurricular experiences for each grade afterschool for the week to promote physical activity over screen time.

Mrs. Varga, Mr. Pechie, and Mrs. Donovan (Windermere PBIS Coaches) will be attending a two-day PBIS Workshop in Mystic, Connecticut in May. Windermere School continues to implement three tiers of intervention through the Behavioral Intervention Team. The staff recently completed the yearly school wide online survey to gain a better understanding of the staff's perspective in terms of PBIS implementation and subsequent success.

3.0 Recognitions

Center teachers opened their doors to model Readers Workshop lessons to visitors from Stafford Elementary School. **Cristine DiVenere** facilitated their visit to observe **Katie D'Addona, Ashley Caputa, Taylor Parker** and **Amy Borio**. **Becky Wentworth** hosted a Nutmeg Book Club lunch-bunch with seven fourth graders. After discussing the selected books, the students voted for The One and Only Ivan by Katherine Applegate as their nomination for the award.

Esther Boucher, Ashley Caputa, Sumitra Ratneshwar, Abbey Menard, and Taylor Parker are hosting student interns from the Ellington High School Early Childhood class led by **David Helmin**.

This collaboration allows high school students to engage in direct interactions with our elementary students as they learn the skills and strategies of becoming teachers.

Crystal Lake School students were treated to a fantastic concert on April 1 performed by Ellington High School students. Under the direction of Mr. Diamond and Mr. Delassus the bands and choral groups entertained CLS students, with a surprise guest conductor, our very own **Kyle Casey!**

Crystal Lake Students **Calvin McNamar, Tate McNamar, Nathan Rawlinitis, Anna Tevelde, Isabella Tevelde, Carter Covino, Christopher Boan, Abby Lund** and **Alex Emery** all participated in the annual Ellington Invention Convention. Congratulations to **Tate McNamar**, winner of the Ellington Invention Convention who went on to share her invention at UCONN.

In support of the ongoing work at Crystal Lake School to develop growth mindsets in our students, CLS parents were invited to a Mindset: The New Psychology of Success Parent Book Club on April 5. Parents **Tammy Krawczynski, Katie Milheiro, Beth Spanswick, Kim Griswold, Ninnette Rawlinitis, Stephanie McNamar, Darcy Murphy, Jennifer Lund** and BOE member **Kris Picard-Wambolt** joined **Michael Larkin** and **Colleen Bava** in a discussion of the book and its implications for teachers and parents.

April 8 was Stripes Day at Crystal Lake School! In honor of our lovable tiger mascot Stripes, students and staff wore stripes! The more stripes the better.

CLS fourth graders culminated their unit on westward expansion with a Westward Expansion Gallery on April 8. Students shared with their families their multimedia presentations depicting various points of view of the participants in the westward expansion movement.

Crystal Lake School proudly hosted visiting members of the Board of Education on April 18. Board members were given a tour of the building by fourth grade students **Noelle Krawczynski** and **Sophia Bourgoin** and had the opportunity to visit K-4 classrooms.

The Crystal Lake School Climate Committee met on April 19 to plan for the May meeting of the CARES Groups. **Colleen Bava, Christine King, Martha Terrion, Lynn Seyapura** and **Michael Larkin** are all serving on the School Climate Committee.

The Crystal Lake School Shared Leadership team met on April 21. The Shared Leadership Team worked on developing a mission and vision statement for the school as we transition to our ultimate grade K-6 grade configuration. The team also discussed Makerspaces and how providing such spaces connect with our vision and mission. **Lisa LaForte, Jessica Giroux, Colleen Bava, Erica Lombardi, Christine Marshall, Nancy Connelly, Martha Terrion** and **Michael Glasgow** are all serving on the Shared Leadership Team.

The Crystal Lake School PTO sponsored an amazing and engaging assembly for our students on April 22. The Prismatic Magic Science Spectacular Laser Light Assembly enchanted everyone in the audience, students and staff alike!

The Ellington Public Schools proudly held its annual evening Open Choice Meet and Greet Dinner Event on April 28 at CREC Coltsville in Hartford. The district's participating Open Choice families were invited for dinner and conversation with staff members. **Alison Morris, Cheryl Warriner, Mark Wursthorn, Christina Saccoccio, Colleen Bava, Beth Shaw** and **Michael Larkin** organized the event. A special thank you is owed to **Jenna Dhandapani** and **Brian Evarts** for helping to create the video of our Open Choice students that was played at the event.

The *Tireless Teacher Awards* for the month of March went to one of our intermediate special education teachers, **Mrs. Frankel**, and one of our third grade teachers, **Mrs. Gentilcore**. Although both work tirelessly with our Teachers College initiatives and programs to assist colleagues at Windermere they also go above and beyond their teaching expectations to promote positive staff morale and assist with grade level town meetings and faculty meetings as well.

Each month, Principal Welch recognizes a paraprofessional in the building with a *Prize Para Award* certificate and lapel pin as a way to say "Thank you for all you do!" Our recipient this past month was **Mrs. Motisi** who assists with multiple students in an elementary classroom with students requiring academic and behavioral support. She continues to be praised by many teachers for her exemplary work. Our aides, paraprofessionals, and tutors are vital to the success which epitomizes Windermere School!

During April break, 8th grade math teacher **Sherryl King** attended the Annual NCTM (National Conference of Teachers of Mathematics) Conference in San Francisco. Mrs. King presented a session about Facilitating Math Discourse – what does this look like in the classroom, what is a teacher's role, troubleshooting, etc. She showed a video clip of a group discussion in her class and broke down the different moves made to help facilitate discourse, and then also talked about what happens when it doesn't work out the way you expected. This presentation was a follow up to a chapter that Mrs. King wrote with a colleague for NCTM. She also received recognition for a different article that she published for NCTM with another group of colleagues. This article was called "Moving Students to the Why", and talked about getting students to justify their reasoning in math.

The spring session of our Zone After School Program began on April 18 and will run through May 20. EMS students can choose between bowling, fishing, photography, set design, and other awesome activities! If students need extra help in math or language arts tutors are available as well. This program is a great way for students to learn new skills, have fun in a positive environment, and meet new friends that enjoy the same sports, academics, activities and interests. Thank you to **Rachel Diorand** (7th grade social studies teacher), for her leadership this past year of this popular EMS program.

On Thursday, April 21, **Mary Walsh** and **Stephanie Neeson**, choral and instrumental music teachers, combined departments to present a Chamber Concert. In this concert, students in 7th and 8th grade band and chorus put together small groups to perform all different types of music. We had solos with piano accompaniment, a jazz combo, duets and trios, plus vocal ensemble, a flute choir, and a saxophone choir. The music ranged from student arrangements of pop music to classical favorites. The students all did a wonderful job, and the audience really loved being able to see such a wide variety of musical performances in one concert. It was a wonderful experience, and we look forward to putting this concert on again next year.

Nine out of the past ten years, Ellington Middle School has had the honor of being recognized as one of the top-performing schools in the Governor's Summer Reading Challenge. In May, Jennifer Reynolds (Literacy Specialist) will be chaperoning students to the Connecticut State Library in Hartford. Students **Kayla Flint**, **Samantha Higgins**, **Sanjana Kantheti** and **Kayla Panagrosso** will be representing EMS at the awards ceremony with Governor Dannel Molloy.

Staff Accomplishments

EHS Director of Vocal Music, **Richard Diamond**, presented a session at the Connecticut Music Educators Association's (CMEA) All-State Conference entitled "Learning Opportunities for All Connecticut Students." This session examined a new CMEA initiative to provide learning opportunities for all students in Connecticut. Included in this discussion was the process of gathering feedback from teachers that CMEA does not currently serve, the actual feedback gathered so far, as

well as a group discussion about the next steps that should be taken to create equity within and among the CMEA community.

On March 31 and April, 1 EHS faculty members **Sean Byrne, Ann Johnson, Emily Wry, Amy DeMarco** and **Principal Neil Rinaldi** attended a Mastery Based Learning Assessment Workshop sponsored by the League of Innovative Schools. Ellington High School faculty members participated in interactive activities that included developing design guides for scoring rubrics, curriculum unit planning, and multiple ways to assess the effectiveness of assessments that are currently used at EHS. These faculty members held a briefing session to decide the next steps in sharing their learning with the faculty.

Student Accomplishments

EHS music students **Colby Villeneuve** and **Emily Walder** participated in the Connecticut Music Educators Association All State Music Festival on April 28 and 29 in Hartford, Connecticut at the convention center. These students were selected after a rigorous audition process. The All State Festival provides our students the opportunity to perform with the finest student musicians from throughout the State of Connecticut under the baton of nationally recognized conductors. Congratulations to these outstanding students.

On Monday, April 4, members and advisers of Future Business Leaders of America attended the FBLA State Leadership Conference in Cromwell, CT. This annual event includes informative workshops, competitive events in a variety of business areas, networking opportunities, and campaigns for next year's FBLA state officer team. **Dan Barrett** and **April Phelps** served as voting delegates to represent the EHS FBLA membership, and their job was to meet the candidates and cast a vote for next year's state officers. At the awards ceremony at the end of the day, **Anthony Chamberlin** and **Zach Judson** received 2nd place in the Business Presentation team event; **Emma Babiec** placed 5th in the Social Media Campaign event; and **Dan Barrett** placed 5th in the Securities and Investments event. One of the highlights of the day was the announcement of Ellington High School's **Tim Ross** as the new FBLA State President. Congratulations Tim and the other winners at this year's conference!

Accounting I and II students visited Fenway Park to learn about business careers in professional sports organizations. The trip was sponsored by the Asnuntuck College Careers Pathways program. Students were able to meet and interact with professors from the Asnuntuck business department as well as the marketing director from the Red Sox organization.

Sapna Raghavan was awarded the United Bank Academic Scholarship. United Bank presents the Academic Scholarship to recognize graduating high school seniors pursuing college careers or degrees. Assistant Principal Mark Wursthorn attended and Business Teacher Debbie White spoke about Sapna's accomplishments. **Zachary Luginbuhl** was awarded the United Bank Vocational Scholarship. This award is given to graduating high school seniors who have completed formal vocational programs. Principal Rinaldi attended and Technology Education Teacher Doug Luginbuhl spoke about Zachary's accomplishments. These scholarship award receptions were held at the United Bank office in Glastonbury.

Mrs. Lynn Ouellet and Mr. Bill Prenetta were privileged to accompany 16 EHS students to the statewide Connecticut History Day competition at CCSU. They presented their 10-minute documentaries and performances to panels of judges and were interviewed about their work. We are so proud of all of them, as their finished projects were the result of seemingly endless revisions and countless hours of work. In the end, they far surpassed our expectations and demonstrated all of the best qualities that any teacher or parent could hope for. Most of all, they were a pleasure to be around, on what was a very long day. We congratulate all of them on a job well done!

As for the results, here's how they did:

- **Randy Philavong** received the award for “Outstanding Entry in History from 1900-1950” from ConnecticutHistory.org, a program of Connecticut Humanities, for his documentary entitled “Marvel Comics: Superheroes Encounter with Society.”
- **Brianna Fraser** received the award for “Outstanding Entry in the Arts” from the Wadsworth Atheneum for her performance entitled “Exploration of Rock Music: Exchanging Ideas to Change a Society.”
- **Olivia Gionet, Nick Cantin, Grace Hinckley, and Olivia Palmer** won 2nd place in the senior group performance category for their presentation entitled, “War of the Worlds: How an Encounter that Never Happened Drove the Country to Mass Hysteria.” *As a result, they are invited to represent Connecticut at the National History Day competition* which will be held at the University of Maryland from June 12 through June 16.

In late February, 46 EHS Latin students joined over 150,000 others from all 50 states and several other countries in taking the 2016 National Latin Exam. Awards are given according to the student’s score on the exam, and awards include: cum laude, with honors; magna cum laude, with great honors; maxima cum laude, with very great honors which also comes with a silver medal, and finally, summa cum laude, with highest honors, which comes with a gold medal. Congratulations to the following nine students who are receiving awards this year:

Latin III

Lukas Merkouriou, *summa cum laude*, gold medal

Grace Hinckley, *maxima cum laude*, silver medal

Kayla Bonanno, *magna cum laude*

Note: These three students have received awards on the National Latin Exam every year they’ve taken Latin!

Latin II

Tin Nguyen, *maxima cum laude*, silver medal

Sylvia Mutua, *magna cum laude*

Latin I

Hannah Boudreau, *maxima cum laude*, silver medal

Isabella Savona, *magna cum laude*

Cole Kilgore, *magna cum laude*

Olivia Palmer, *magna cum laude*