

East Longmeadow Public Schools

Our mission in the East Longmeadow Public Schools is to promote Achievement and Accountability in all endeavors as we educate today for the challenges of tomorrow.



SPOTLIGHT ON YOUR SCHOOLS

Volume 1, Issue 1
FALL, 2002

OUR DISTRICT'S BELIEF STATEMENTS

The East Longmeadow Public Schools recognize education to be the individual's most unique and valuable asset; therefore, the school district and community have adopted the following nine basic principles of philosophy, called belief statements, as criteria for determining the educational program for the East Longmeadow youth. We Believe:

1. All students can learn and can be successful.
2. All staff, students, and parents deserve respect and must demonstrate respect for human differences.
3. Learning must be the focus of all student experiences.
4. Schools function best through shared decision-making.
5. Every child's full potential should be explored, directed and challenged.
6. Moral and ethical behavior should be practiced, reinforced, and expected from all students, staff, and parents.
7. Schools, parents, students, and community share the responsibility for the education of students.
8. Schools must provide a curriculum conducive to developing the whole child towards life-long learning.
9. All students and staff have the right to a safe environment.

A Message From The School Committee

Celebrating Education was the highlight of this year's opening day convocation at Birchland Park Middle School on September 3rd. Students, administrators, and educators were recognized for their achievements. Some of those achievements include the following:

- The East Longmeadow School District has developed a strategic plan to give direction for the education of the students of our community. From this document, issues are discussed and policy and budget is set for each school year and for the long-range outlook.
- Developed last year and now to be promoted over the course of the next several years is the district's Community Character Traits. All people associated with the district will utilize the traits on an every day basis.
- We continue to make great strides in our alignment with the state's educational reform. The proof is in the scores associated with the MCAS.

Even with our successes, the issue the school committee and the community must work through

is overcrowded classrooms. The state suggests that for elementary school class size should be no more than 20 students. Current class sizes in our district currently range from 22 to 28. All available closet



space is taken and fine arts programs and student services are beginning to be squeezed. This creates a negative effect on the student's education. Research also urges school districts to adopt a full-day kindergarten format. Many suggest that class sizes "when we were going to school" were often 33 to 35 students and that current class sizes are

not an urgent problem. What needs to be recognized is that education has evolved through research. Also, business is looking for well-educated Americans to fill the job market. Shortly, the superintendent will be approaching the school committee with alternatives to meet the overcrowding issue.

Please enjoy our school district's first official newsletter.

Mr. Thomas McGowan
School Committee Chair

STRATEGIC PLANNING: THE DOOR TO THE FUTURE

In September of 1998, the East Longmeadow School Committee, school staff members and community began a strategic planning process. The initial year of 1998 began with teachers, support staff, parents, students, community, administrators and school committee meeting in numerous committee meetings to examine the past, present, and future. Additionally, we began to identify commonly shared values, principles and

beliefs concerning the education of our children. Data generated from these meetings provided a foundation for the district strategic plan

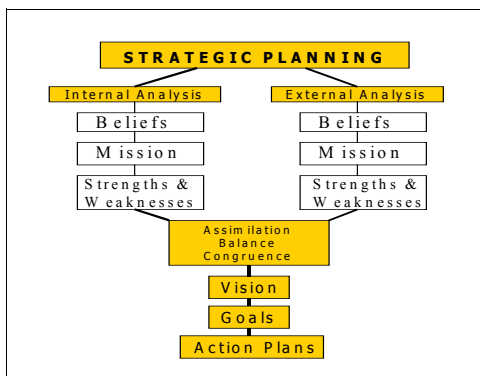
In July of 1999, the East Longmeadow School System under the guidance of the school committee drafted a mission statement, core principles, guiding belief statements about all students, and ten (10) strategic district goals. Since July of 1999, ongo-

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ing meetings with internal committees composed of teachers, administrators, school committee members and parents have met regularly to refine the drafted strategic goals and district wide strategic plan.

This strategic plan is consistent with current programs, teaching pedagogy and new initiatives. Goals and objectives from site-based school improvement plans, grant programs, and school councils were incorporated into the strategic plan. Individuals and groups from the community were invited to share



their reactions and ideas with the drafting process. Although steering committee members wrote the plan, the goals, future positions, and strategies reflect the priorities of many different stakeholder groups within our schools and community.

As a living document, this strategic plan will continue to undergo change. Its value lies in building a foundation, establishing direction, and providing a framework for decisions within the East Longmeadow Public School District.

ELPS Successfully Formulates District Goals

The East Longmeadow school district has formulated a list of district goals that prioritize the focus of the education community.

They are developed and reviewed during the summer prior to each school year and approved by the East Longmeadow School Committee. Periodic reports of annual operating goal accomplishments are made to the School Committee throughout the school year.

GOAL 1: foster a climate of communication and collaboration throughout the district.

GOAL 2: maintain a favorable student-staff ratio.

GOAL 3: improve the quality and quantity of professional development for all employees.

GOAL 4: provide a well-balanced and appropriate curriculum for all students.

GOAL 5: management of all levels of the educational system will be

done in a productive, efficient, and accountable manner.

GOAL 6: encourage parents to be partners in the education of our children.

GOAL 7: encourage and develop partnerships with local businesses and community organizations.

GOAL 8: provide a safe and attractive environment and appropriate facilities for all students and staff.

GOAL 9: create, facilitate and evaluate site-based school improvement plans to grow and evolve with the community.

GOAL 10: each student will be enabled to pass the Massachusetts comprehensive assessment system (MCAS).

“ENCOURAGE PARENTS TO BE PARTNERS IN THE EDUCATION OF OUR CHILDREN”

The High School Seeks NEASC Accreditation

The New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEASC) is the New England region educational accrediting association. Its purpose is the promotion of high standards for all levels of education. The NEASC monitors schools through its Standards for Accreditation developed and approved by the membership. Its three-phase accreditation process is school-based and site-specific involving a 12-month Self-Study by the school and community, an on-site evaluation by a Peer Review team, and a commitment by the school community to continuous improvement through required Follow Up activities. Currently, East Longmeadow High School is going through the NEASC accreditation process.

To perform the massive self-study, members of the staff of ELHS have been appointed to eight committees that represent the scope of the activities that take place in the school as the year progresses. Parents and students have also been recruited for these committees. A Mission and Student Expectations Committee is gathering data and composing a school mission statement and a set of student civic, social and academic expectations. In addition, the committee is putting together a rubric through which to measure student progress in these areas. A Curriculum Committee is exploring what is specifically being taught at ELHS and how the various courses dovetail to provide



a good mix for the students. An Instruction Committee is researching the methods that teachers use and the training that they receive. An Assessment Committee has been exploring how students are evaluated and how teachers know that their evaluations work. The Leadership Committee is exploring the hierarchy of the school administration and its effectiveness. A School Resources Committee has been gathering data on the school’s support systems such as the library and the nursing staff. A Community Relations Committee has been checking out the connection of the school to the community – what the school contributes to the community and visa versa. Finally, a Steering Committee serves as the hub of all of the committees by monitoring their activities and keeping everyone on track.

In late March of 2003, the NEASC Committee will arrive at ELHS and spend three days analyzing the detailed reports from each of the committees and interviewing staff, parents, and students to gain the data that they need to create a report on the status of the school. The NEASC makes it clear that no school is expected to be perfect. The whole point of the study is to provide a school with the tools that it needs to understand what it must do to steer in the direction of its mission statement and student expectations. A high school’s standards are always a work in progress, and the study is meant to encourage the

maintenance of introspection so that a school will never become complaisant and will always be seeking improvement.

ELPS Welcomes Two New Additions To The Administrative Team

Our district begins the 2002– 2003 school year with two administrators who are new to our district. At the 605 student Meadow Brook Elementary School, replacing the retiring Linda Prokopy as principal, is Judith A. Fletcher. She comes to East Longmeadow after 27 years as an educator in the Holyoke Public Schools. Her career began there as a reading teacher and she spent the last five years as principal of the White Elementary School, a building with an enrollment of 445 students in grades K-5. Judy earned her bachelor’s degree at Westfield State College and her master’s degree from American International College in Springfield. She is currently enrolled in a doctoral degree program at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst.

At East Longmeadow High School, replacing Mr. Brian Walsh, who left in June to accept a principal’s position in Maine, is the new assistant principal, Gordon C. Smith. He comes to our district after working for nine years as an English teacher and then as assistant principal at the Hingham Middle School. A Native of Greenwich Connecticut, Gordon holds a master’s degree from the University of Bridgeport in secondary education and another in educational leadership from Bridgewater State College.

ELPS Character Committee Presents Community Character Traits

During the 2001-2002 school year the Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Edward Costa, convened a Character Trait Committee to devise a list of exemplary character traits. Our district is committed to actively emulating and promoting these traits in our day-to-day operations.

- KINDNESS:** Helpful, sympathetic, compassionate, favor, forbearing, caring, generous, considerate, thoughtful, understanding
- PERSEVERANCE:** Strive, continued belief, steadfastness, diligence, determined, persistence, commitment, endurance
- RESPECT:** Thoughtfulness, courtesy, consideration, esteem, appreciation, high-regard, deference, full attention
- RESPONSIBILITY:** Accountable, answerable, reliable, conscientious, dependable, trustworthy
- CARING:** Interest, concern, empathetic, fondness
- COURAGE:** Strength, persevere, brave, overcome fear, firmness of mind/will
- EMPATHY:** Feelings, understand, sensitive, awareness, identification, ... of others
- HONESTY:** Not lying, truthful, genuine, straightforward, fairness, moral, display integrity, candor, sincerity
- INCLUSIVE:** Broad, all-encompassing, contain, group everything, comprehensive, welcoming

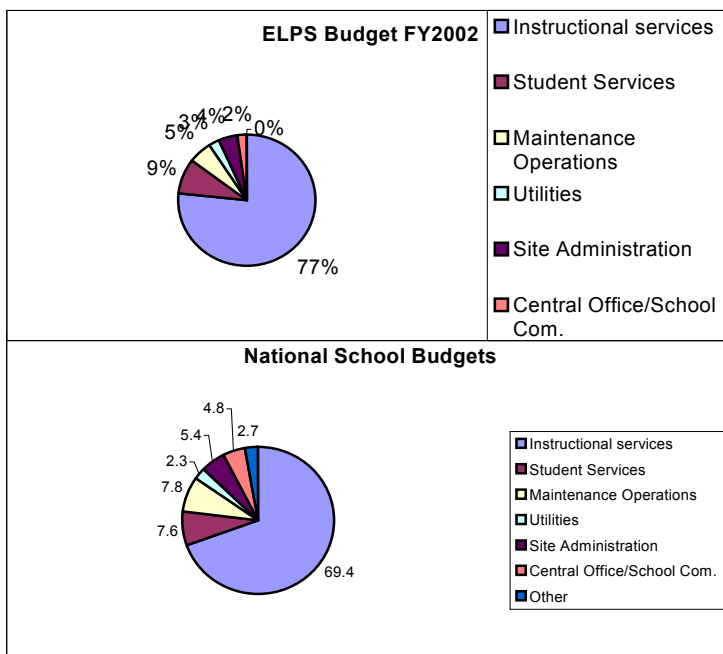
East Longmeadow Education Spending Compared:

**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION 2000 - 2001
PER PUPIL EXPENDITURES**

Comparison Of Integrated Costs By Area Communities:

1.	Amherst	8987
2.	Conway	8400
3.	Pelham	8230
4.	Northampton	7863
5.	Springfield	7756
6.	Whately	7724
7.	State Average	7450
8.	Deerfield	7266
9.	Longmeadow	7233
10.	Sunderland	7091
11.	East Longmeadow	7027
12.	South Hadley	6885
13.	Agawam	6869
14.	West Springfield	6743
15.	Ludlow	6528
16.	Southwick	6377
17.	Tolland	6369
18.	Westfield	6334
19.	Hampden/Wilbraham	5979

Category	Nat'l %	ELPS %	ELPS Sub-totals
Instructional services	69.4	77	\$13,317,340
Student Services	7.6	9	\$1,543,247
Maintenance Operations	7.8	5	\$929,335
Utilities	2.3	3	\$471,444
Site Administration	5.4	4	\$758,187
Central Office/School Com.	4.8	2	\$378,261
Other	2.7	0	\$0
	100	100	\$17,397,814





East Longmeadow Public Schools

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our newsletter? Contact Chris
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We're on the Web!
www.eastlongmeadow.org

2002-2003 ELPS School Committee Meeting Schedule: 7:30 p.m. in the High School

JUL 23	
AUG 27	
SEP 10	SEP 24
OCT 8	OCT 22
NOV 6	NOV 19
DEC 3	DEC 17
JAN 7	JAN 21
FEB 4	FEB 25
MAR 11	MAR 25
APR 8	APR 29
MAY 13	MAY 27
JUN 10	JUN 24

East Longmeadow Public Schools School Committee Members:

Mr. Thomas McGowan, Chair
Ms. Karen Wheeler, Vice Chair
Mr. Bruce Stebbins
Mr. Daniel Manley
Ms. Gina Szynkaruk

Tune In



**School Committee
meetings are broad-
cast live on ELCAT,
cable channel 5**

We gratefully acknowledge our local business partners for their generous contributions and their enthusiastic support of the East Longmeadow Public Schools:

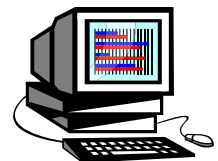
- **The Scantic Valley YMCA:** Birchland Park Middle School
- **The East Longmeadow Chamber of Commerce:** East Longmeadow High School
- **Maybury Materials Handling, Tom Wilson Excavating, and U.S. Academy of Martial Arts:** Mapleshade School
- **United Cooperative Bank, Savage Arms Company, Perkins Photography:** Mountain View School
- **The Reminder, Junior Achievement, Fenway Golf:** Meadow Brook School

ELPS Curriculum Published On CD-ROM

In September of 2001 the East Longmeadow Public Schools began the school year by distributing to each and every staff member, a computer CD-ROM copy of the district's PreK-12 curriculum guides. This was done not only to save money and natural resources, but also to make the curriculum guides for all grades and subject areas more easily available for daily use by our instructional staff.

In the past, our curriculum guides were revised, printed and bound as specific grade level or subject matter documents. Only specific components of the guides were distributed to each grade level or subject matter teacher. While each of our district's schools had a paper copy of the district's entire curriculum in the principal's office or library, referring to this large document was both cumbersome and time consuming. Teachers seldom had the time to do so. Printing and distributing the entire curriculum guide to every teacher was deemed impractical and, of course, quite costly. Teachers, especially at the elementary level, needed easy access to curriculum guides at other grade levels or subject matter areas. For example, to prepare a science lesson, a third grade teacher might need to know what science learning standards were covered in the previous year.

The solution: the creative use of computer technology. Our district incorporated the entire curriculum into web html templates and used them to create our East Longmeadow Public Schools PreK-12 Curriculum Guides on CD-ROM. Its software runs automatically on any computer that has a web browser and, the entire curriculum literally fits in your pocket. The unit cost for each CD is far less than that of the old paper copies and the annual up-date and publishing of the curriculum is greatly simplified. Since the district began using the CD, referencing the curriculum has become much easier. Teachers usually use the CD-ROM to produce a print version of the classroom curriculum for their own grade level or subject area but they really enjoy using this unique technology tool to access the entire curriculum. Visitors to our web-site at www.eastlongmeadow.org can also review and print the curriculum for any grade or course.



We believe that publishing our curriculum guides on CD-ROM is an accomplishment that sets the East Longmeadow Public Schools apart from other school systems. It demonstrates how "outside the box" thinking can be used to creatively apply modern technology to produce a simple, cost-effective remedy to the problem of sharing essential information within a large organization. To our knowledge, we are the only school district in the area and perhaps the country, to publish its PreK-12 curriculum on CD-ROM. In an era of district accountability to standards based education and assessment, the merits of publishing important documents using this technology are apparent.