

SUMMER/FALL '19

# outreach

"Go confidently in  
the direction of your  
dreams. Live the life  
you have imagined."

**Henry David Thoreau**  
Essayist, Poet, Philosopher.



**EA** education  
alternatives

## EVENTS

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**SPRINGFIELD OPEN HOUSE**  
August 23

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**FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL**  
August 26

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**LABOR DAY**  
September 2

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**IN-SERVICE DAY**  
October 11

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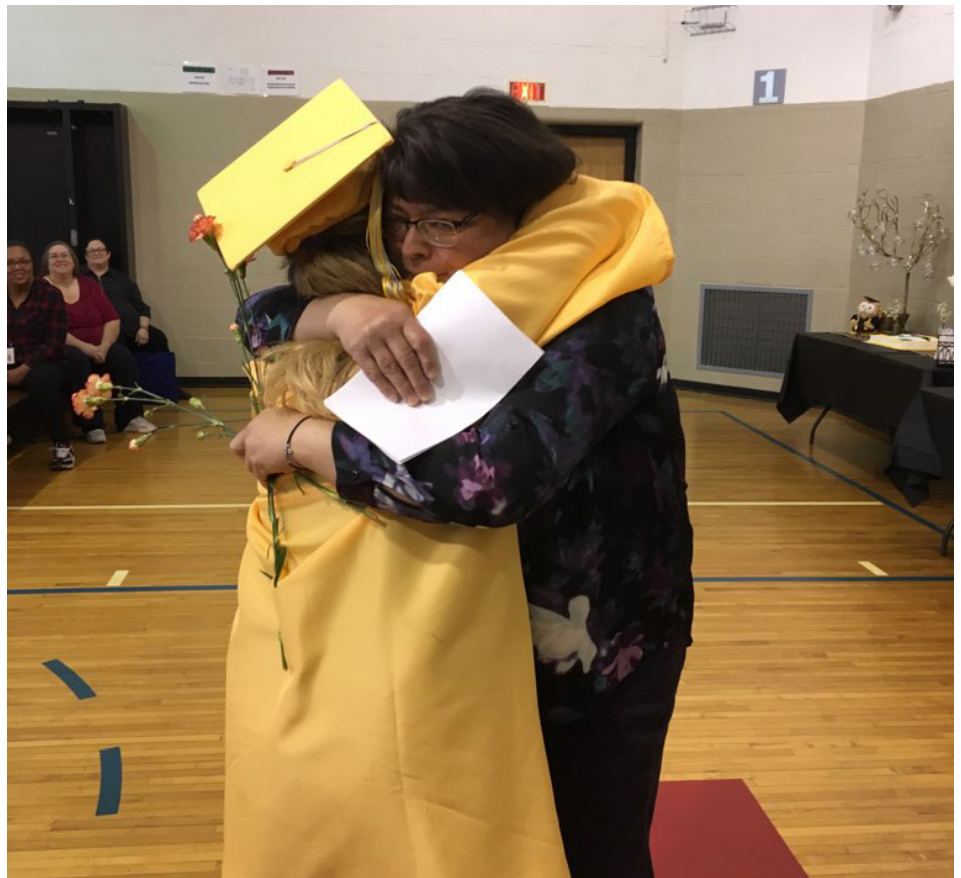
**END OF QUARTER 1**  
October 29



Find us on Facebook for a  
full list of upcoming events.

## New Beginnings.

This school-year is Education Alternatives' 21st school year. While we've grown and changed over time, our core mission remains to provide excellent special education and mental health services for Northeast, Ohio children. This year, we opened our ninth campus in the Springfield school district, providing education, day-treatment and credit recovery services to students in the greater Akron community. As our students grow, learn, and graduate, we too improve and push ourselves to stay at the cutting edge of treatment and research for at-risk youth in Northeast Ohio. Our commitment is to provide our students Learning for Life. Learning for Life encompasses our philosophy that school should encompass academics, as social skills, positive connections to the community, and practical skills to become successful adults. We can't wait to tell you more about the last few months, what we're doing now, and what's coming up!



# EXPANDING our impact



## Akron Campus.

In summer 2019, we opened our 9th campus. Located in the Springfield Local School district and serving Stark, Summit, Portage, and Columbiana Counties, EA Akron/Springfield is the newest addition to our thriving Day Treatment services for students K-12. Managed by an experienced team of teachers and counselors under Building Director and seasoned EA educator Tyler Eliason, EA Akron/Springfield represents an opportunity to bring our proven model to even more children and families. As we grow, now serving up to 600 children in as many as 80 school districts, we understand the importance of maintaining smaller classes. We also know that families are busier than ever and location is an important factor in deciding on an alternative program.

Our first Springfield class, a mix of current EA students and new arrivals, are already thriving in the new location. Says Eliason, "The year is off to a great start!" He adds that Springfield is still

accepting more students for the 2019-2020 school year. To schedule an intake tour or learn more about the Akron/Springfield campus, contact [enrollment@easchools.org](mailto:enrollment@easchools.org) or call the office at (234) 867-8260.

## Outdoor Education.

Time outdoors and exposure to green space is good for children and teens, boosting mood and promoting emotional regulation. In the past few months, each EA campus has been purposeful about cultivating outdoor opportunities through both stand-alone and ongoing programs. In the spring, all EA campuses hosted field days to kick off the beginning of summer and the start of summer programming through REACH. Over the late summer and early fall, we've spent time outdoors playing sports, hiking, and learning interesting lessons about ecosystem biology.

In Elyria, our student-run greenhouse boasts a full slate of nature-themed programming. Students partner with faculty to grow seedlings, tend and nurture them, and transfer them to

larger beds in time for summer. In the fall, students are learning even more about their garden in preparation for winter.

In Ravenna, students worked outdoors to begin a community garden with raised beds. Over a period of weeks, students learned important lessons about responsibility (caring for plants in a consistent and effective manner), teamwork (outdoor gardening can be physically demanding), and ecosystem maintenance. Giving students the opportunity to get hands-on and take ownership of the outdoor spaces on their campus is an important part of fostering responsible eco-citizens!





## PawPrints.

EA Ravenna hosts Vision Quest, a transitional program for students ages 16-22 with moderate disabilities. Vision Quest's goal is to teach practical life skills to these students at the time they need them the most - as they transition to adulthood. A core component of Vision Quest has always been work at job sites, and we've partnered with local organizations such as the fire department to give practical experiences that closely mirror life after graduation.

Vision Quest also offers student-run business opportunities. Until recently, these opportunities were limited to the Bear Bucks program. Bear Bucks is a student-run coffee and donut station that serves breakfast treats to staff on Fridays. As part of VQ, students work with staff to keep inventory, open the shop, handle payments, and learn customer interaction in the supported environment of their school. Seeing the success of the much-loved Bear Bucks program, Building Director Michael Horning approached EA Executive Director Gerald Swartz

with an idea. PawPrints was born from a need for cost-effective, quick-to-market EA and REACH uniforms and branded apparel for staff and students. Why, Horning wondered, couldn't EA base these operations in Ravenna and give students the chance at another exciting business?

After a few months of careful budgeting and diligent training, PawPrints was born! Ravenna VQ students partner with faculty and staff to design, market, manufacture, sell, and deliver EA branded clothing to the community. The ever-expanding apparel line is available at [easchools.org](http://easchools.org) by clicking on the "Apparel" tab.

Vision Quest has already earned nearly enough to cover the full initial investment and is getting some great local buzz. This fall, several local businesses are already eager to partner with VQ students to produce their own branded apparel. Says VQ client Steven, who's received proceeds from one of his popular designs, "I feel like a celebrity. My artwork has become famous and people are getting merchandise out of it."

**What sets EA apart from other alternative schools? The benefits of Unconditional Positive Regard in treating the symptoms of trauma.**

**TRUST** is a critical prerequisite for children experiencing mental illness or healing from trauma to be open to any intervention. We believe that every interaction has the potential to make a student feel safer and more connected, and each moment can be a chance to re-set and try again. Over time, these interactions build on one another to give students a sense that they will not be judged or punished but rather welcomed and understood. This establishes a strong foundation for therapeutic progress and positive behavior.

**FRESH START** When speaking with our students, a major take-away is that they're confident their teachers and counselors care about them as people and that every single day is a fresh start. Our culture is about keeping that promise to our students every day so when they come to school they know what matters most is what's ahead. The future is always bright and full of hope!





# What's going on at EA?

## Art Shows.

Since the beginning, our schools maintain a connection to art and creativity. Encouraging students to draw, paint, sculpt, and make music is an important part of empowering them to build healthy coping skills. As part of our art program, campuses host seasonal art shows that invite students, parents, and the community to come together to celebrate student art. This past spring, EA Bedford showcased a year of student projects across all media from print-making to painting to poetry. The event not only gave families a glimpse into what their children and teens are learning but also afforded students the opportunity to take pride in their efforts and receive positive feedback. A partner art fair took place involving EA Ravenna and Kent.

This fall, Executive Director Gerald Swartz challenged each building to continue the tradition of art as a positive outlet in the curriculum. We're already seeing amazing, challenging, colorful, and intricate pieces emerge from each campus and eagerly await updates on the EA Art Initiative's progress as the year progresses! At EA, we love to crEAtE!









**EA** education  
alternatives

5445 Smith Rd.  
Brook Park, OH 44124

## LOCATIONS

### **AKRON/SPRINGFIELD**

2141 Pickle Rd.  
Akron, OH 44312  
234.867.8260

### **BEDFORD**

270 Union Street  
Bedford, OH 44146  
440.232.0214

### **BROOK PARK**

5555 Smith Road  
Brook Park, OH 44142  
216.453.1111

### **CUYAHOGA FALLS**

1225 Orlen Avenue  
Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44221  
330.945.4944

### **ELYRIA**

333 Naples Drive  
Elyria, OH 44035  
440.324.1168

### **KENT**

6662 State Route 43  
Kent, OH 44240  
330.956.7182

### **PAINESVILLE**

273 E. Jackson Street  
Painesville, OH 44077  
440.709.0053

### **RAVENNA**

310 Bennett Avenue  
Ravenna, Ohio 44266  
330.839.9966

### **WILLOUGHBY HILLS**

2882 Cricket Lane  
Willoughby Hills, OH 44092  
440.347.0716



Education Alternatives is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) that serves children of all ages with emotional and behavioral disabilities through specialized educational and mental health services.

[easchools.org](http://easchools.org)