

FALL '21-'22

outreach

"The best preparation
for tomorrow is doing
your best today."

H. Jackson Browne, Jr.
Author, Thinker.



EA education
alternatives

IMPORTANT DATES

END OF FALL QUARTER
November 4

THANKSGIVING BREAK
November 24-26

WINTER BREAK
December 20-31

CLASSES RESUME
January 3

Welcome back.

Our EA community is excited to begin another school year alongside students, families, and district partners. While 2020 had its challenges, together we learned many important lessons about persistence and resiliency. Working collaboratively, we created safe campuses where students were able to learn, engage, and make progress, even in the midst of pandemic.

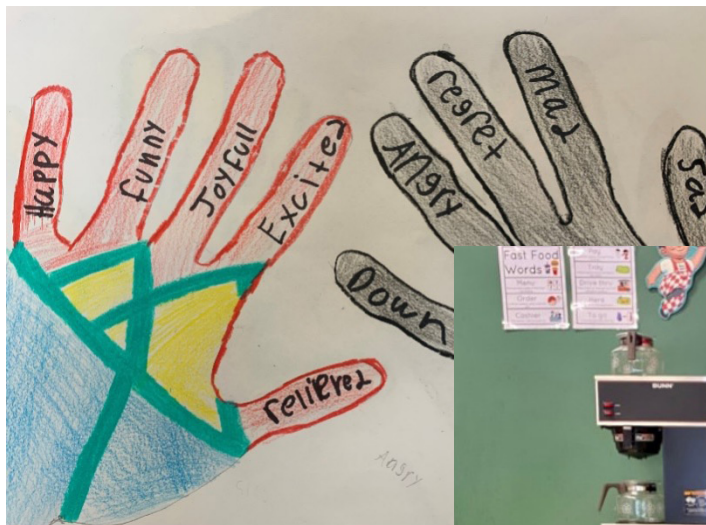
As we return for another school year, these lessons continue to guide us as we create new experiences and opportunities. In 2021, EA's newest location in Akron/Springfield celebrated its third full year of school. Brook Park enthusiastically welcomed a new playground, thanks to the generosity of our community. The Vision Quest program in Ravenna also expanded its vocational and life skills programming and is joined this year by EA Prints, a student-run printing business housed at Brook Park.

In the following pages, we share more about what makes us hopeful and excited for the year ahead. As always, we are thankful for the support of our entire community – from parents and teachers to local businesses and support staff. Together, we look forward to another impactful year.



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

What's going on at EA?



Above: Student artwork explores positive and negative emotions.



Above: Ravenna elementary students read together as a group. Center: Vision Quest Ravenna returns.



Above: A message for back to school left behind by summer program students.



Above: Springfield campus spends time together outdoors.

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

REACH Elyria

REACH Behavioral Health works within EA schools to provide individual and group therapy to our students. This year, REACH opened a new standalone counseling center on the **EA Elyria** campus. REACH offers this same compassionate, empathic care to members of the community. The new counseling center offers services ranging from individual and family counseling and psychiatry, .

Experienced, caring therapists apply the same concepts used in our schools to help community members achieve healing and growth. Services are open to the entire community, regardless of whether they are affiliated with **EA schools**.



Left: Brook Park students play on the new outdoor playspace.

Right: A Springfield student completes an art project.



Left: Student pumpkins are displayed for Halloween.

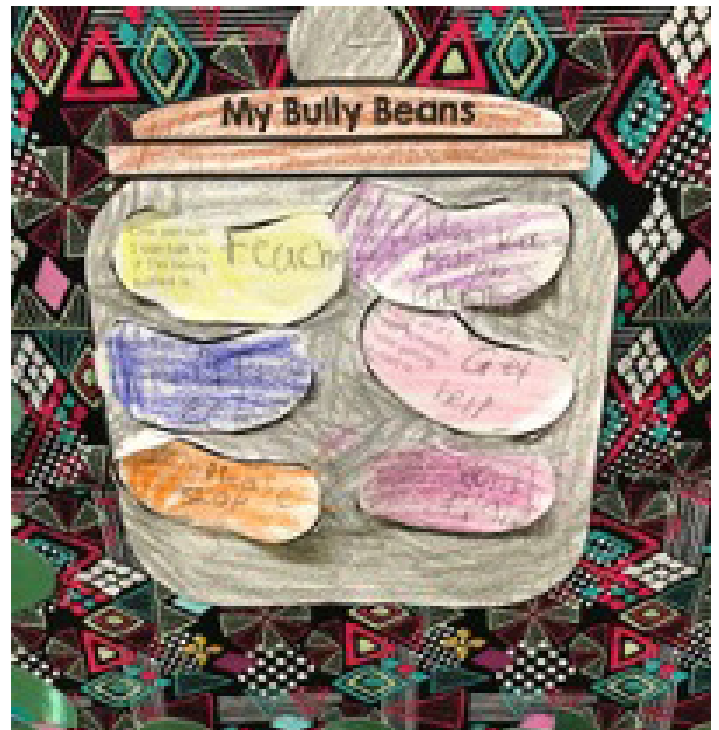


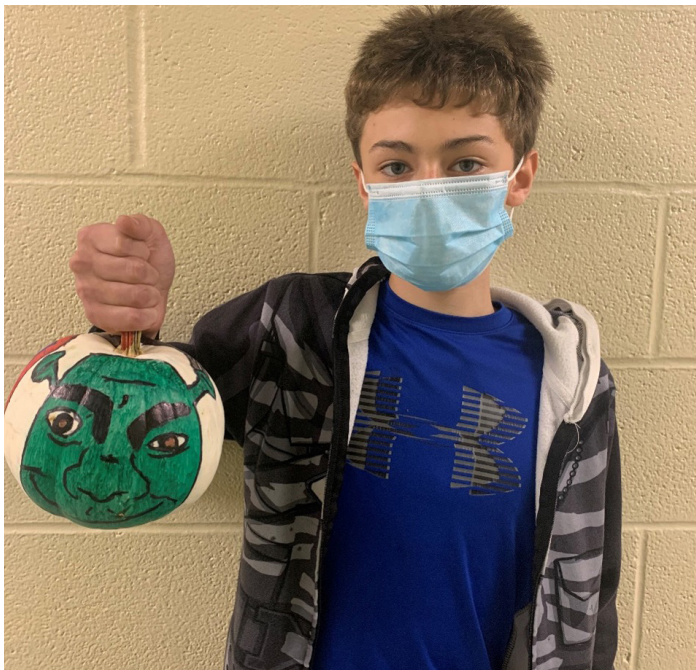
What's going on at EA?



This year, Brook Park campus broke ground on its new playground! Thanks to the support of our school community, local businesses such as Black Horse Construction, and a generous \$30,000 donation from **Mike and Franscene Davis, the owners of Rock-n-Roll City Harley-Davidson**, the new facility is currently in use for the new school year. The playground has been a longtime goal for Building Director Jennifer Napier. "For me, it's always been important for my students to have a place to play. The trauma some of them have experienced is life changing, and not a lot of them have a safe place to play outside," says Napier. "They don't get as much exercise ... they don't have community playgrounds ... or even the ability to get to certain places. I wanted them to have a place to play. Play heals, and they learn from play." The new playground is already an enthusiastic favorite Brook Park's K-12 students. "They love it!" Napier says. "They actually helped me pick it out! I picked out a few in our price range – options with climbing and large motor work, which can help them metabolize the cortisol that trauma can cause – and they chose their favorite." EA thanks our donors and all the Brook Park staff for making the playground possible – including the maintenance staff who worked with the manufacturer to build the playground on-site.

Ravenna's VisionQuest program, located at EA Ravenna, is ramping up its life skills curriculum to include even more student-run businesses. The program, which serves 25-35 students with disabilities, focuses on four pillars of independent living: employment skills, health and nutrition, community engagement, and independent living. The employment skills pillar has long housed the student-run Cubby Cups coffee cart business as well as PawPrints screenprinting and design. This fall, grEAT Outdoors Groundskeeping joined the roster of student-run businesses. Students learn gardening, landscaping, and other outdoor upkeep and maintenance skills by caring for the school garden and baseball field as well as adding flower beds to the building entrance. Building Director Michael Horning plans to expand grEAT Outdoors this winter to include some simple building and carpentry projects such as epoxy tables. When asked about VisionQuest, Horning explains that as some students move through the EA program, "academic goals are no longer the driving force and vocational/independent living goals need to become our primary focus." By creating a robust, hands-on curriculum, Horning and the VisionQuest staff are fostering independence in well-rounded, focused, and competent young adults.





Milestones and more.

Springfield's 3rd Year.

EA's newest campus, EA Akron/Springfield, opened its doors to its first class of students in 2019. 2021 marks its third full school year. Now serving 32 students from 13 school districts in the greater Akron-Canton area spanning grades K-12, Akron/Springfield offers credit recovery, day treatment, and specialized autism services through Coral Autism program. Under building director and former EA teacher Tyler Eliason, Springfield is poised for even more exciting growth in the third year. Now enrolling students in all programs, EA Akron/Springfield is scheduling in-person tours for this school year. To learn more, find us online at easchools.org/locations/akron.



Director Spotlight

Jennifer Napier

Jennifer Napier, the Building Director at EA Brook Park, is celebrating her 13th year at EA this fall. Napier started out as an intervention specialist for EA in 2008. "I was a teacher initially ... in a classroom until 2012, and that is when I became a director," she explains. Napier's education roots go back even further than her decade-long tenure at EA. "I started teaching in 1998; I was an English teacher in a charter school," she says. "I found that in my experiences with teaching general education that the special education students were my favorite. ... They provided the biggest challenge for me but the one that I enjoyed the most."

Napier is passionate about helping students unlock their potential, and she believes it is limitless. "I was always excited by the idea of challenging myself and the students that I worked with to do things they didn't think that they could do," she explains. "I always wanted and still want for kids to feel important and to feel like they are capable of doing things they didn't know that they were capable of doing. My philosophy on education is that a teacher is only as good as how capable she makes her students feel."

An enthusiastic and engaged teacher, the transition to Building Director was a challenge for Napier, who initially missed teaching her own class. "The kids are the thing that make me happy, that's where I find my joy - even now. Making the transition out of the classroom, I felt that I could meet the needs of more kids as a director - if I could teach others ... that means more kids were getting the benefit of that. That was the reason I wanted to be a director. I wanted to help other people understand the students we work with. I want to teach other adult professionals how to work with our kids to give them what they need," says Napier.

As Director, she prioritizes teaching acceptance, cultural diversity, and celebrating differences. She explains, "we've been celebrating different cultures because we are such a diverse group of people. We want to make sure everybody feels celebrated, feels seen, feels validated. We've been working to celebrate cultures, we try different foods. We try to open doors and open minds." Together with her staff, Napier makes a positive impact in the lives of EA students every day. We are so grateful for her enthusiasm, innovation, and leadership!



Jennifer Napier, Brook Park.



EA education
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Brook Park, OH 44124

LOCATIONS

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

PAINESVILLE

273 E. Jackson Street
Painesville, OH 44077
440.709.0053

RAVENNA

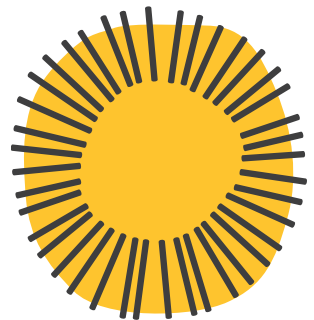
310 Bennett Avenue
Ravenna, Ohio 44266
330.839.9966

SPRINGFIELD

2141 Pickle Rd.
Akron, OH 44312
234.867.8260

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