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[Directions to East Lake High School](#)

**9/8/24**

This is Dan Schmittiel, Principal at East Lake High School, with some important reminders and updates for the week. As always, let's look outside of the academics to support and celebrate our students in their various extracurriculars – our students are always ready to SOAR to success as we progress throughout the school year both in and out of the classroom. This week we continue with our Fall Athletics season. Let's show our school spirit and cheer on our different sports teams, clubs, and performing arts programs throughout the year – a list of this week's events can be found below:

- **JV/Varsity Volleyball** faces Bishop McLaughlin Catholic HS on Tuesday 9/10 away and Palm Harbor University HS at home on Friday 9/12
- **Swim and Dive** face Seminole HS at Seminole on Wednesday 9/11
- **Boys Golf** faces Boca Ciega HS and Osceola HS on Monday 9/9 at Pasadena Yacht & Country Club
- **Girls Golf** faces Countryside HS, Tarpon Springs HS, and Palm Harbor University HS at Countryside Country Club on Thursday 9/12
- **JV Football** faces Pinellas Park HS at home on Wednesday 9/11
- **Boys and Girls Bowling** faces Lakewood HS at Seminole Lanes on Thursday 9/12
- **Varsity Football** faces Mitchell HS away on Friday 9/13

Some of our students also participate in the local East Lake High School Hockey Club which started their season against PHU this past Friday. This week they take East Manatee

## **Upcoming Testing (FAST PM1 – 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade)**

As a reminder, this week all 9th and 10th grade students will take their FAST ELA PM1 assessment, and it is crucial that students put forth their best effort, as this assessment sets the tone for the year. All 9th graders will take the assessment on Tuesday, September 10th, and 10th graders will take it on Thursday, September 12th. The FAST PM1 assessment is adaptive, meaning the questions will become more challenging as students answer correctly. Therefore, students should not guess and flag questions to return to later. It is important that they carefully consider each question and provide their best answer before moving on.

Students will start the assessment at the level where they left off last school year. For example, if a student earned a passing score of a 3 last year, their questions will start at level 3; if they had a score of a low 2, their questions will start at that level. This system applies to all PM assessments (PM1, PM2, PM3). It is essential for students to perform well on PM1 so that their starting point for PM2 is not low as a result of not taking PM1 seriously. We want to accurately measure their growth throughout the year on PM2 and PM3, and we don't want them to face an unnecessary challenge due to not taking PM1 seriously.

Attached you'll also find some reminders on the test strategies taught last school year and sent out in many callouts. Please go over these strategies with your students throughout the year, but especially before September 10<sup>th</sup> and September 12<sup>th</sup> testing. Students have been discussing testing strategies and locations in their English classes this past week, but we also posted testing locators near Student Services on the first floor.

- <https://www.pcsb.org/cms/lib/FL01903687/Centricity/Domain/110/EaglesSOARontheFAST.png>

The poster is titled "ELHS EAGLES SOAR ON THE FAST" and "Test Taking Strategies and Tips". It features an eagle logo in the center. The content is organized into three columns and two main sections. The top section addresses "What do I do if I don't know the answer right away?" and "What will happen if I flag and skip a question?". The bottom section addresses "How can I prepare for the FAST on my own?".

**What do I do if I don't know the answer right away?**

- 1 Stop. Breathe. Relax.**  
Remember that you have plenty of time to take your test. Don't get worked up and take a moment to collect your thoughts.  
**TAKE A DEEP BREATH**
- 2 It's not a crime to take your time.**  
If you need to, you have the WHOLE DAY to complete your assessment. Don't rush.  
**WHOLE DAY**
- 3 Use your resources.**  
Refer to the text and use the reading strategies you've learned to annotate and take notes. Use your calculator, periodic table, reference sheet, or blank paper. Brain dump!

**What will happen if I flag and skip a question?**

- 1 The test is adaptive.**  
All questions need to be answered in order for the test to determine your correct level.
- 2 If you skip, you'll take a dip.**  
Skipping or flagging a question will cause it as wrong, making your test lower your question track.
- 3 Answer every question in order.**  
You need to take your time and answer every question in order- don't skip or flag a question.

**How can I prepare for the FAST on my own?**

- 1 Practice Brain Dumps.**  
For every unit of study in your classes, jot down notes of the most important terms, concepts, names, dates, formulas, etc. Remember, you get a planning sheet for all of your tests—USE IT!
- 2 Read, read, read.**  
The more you read for a purpose, the more confident and comfortable you'll feel taking the test.
- 3 Ask for help & study.**  
Ask your teachers, counselors, administrators, parents, or any other adult to help you understand concepts you're struggling with! Take time to study your notes and prepare ahead of the test.

## Semester Exam Exemption Updates

For those unaware, there have been adjustments made to the exam exemption process for this school year and moving forward, specifically surrounding student absences (*no more than 5 in a specific course*), classroom grades that qualify (*C or higher*), and specific semesters a class can be exempt (*can exempt both semesters if they qualify*). Semester 1 exams will take place from December 17 to December 20 this year. A highlight of those specific changes are:

- **Student Absences:** Absences count on a course-by-course basis. Students must have less than 5 absences for the specific course that they are hoping to exempt. *In prior years, 5 absences in any course would disqualify a student from exempting any exam.*
- **Quarter 1 and Provisional Quarter 2 Grades:** Students with a C or better in quarter 1 and a provisional grade of a C or better in quarter 2 qualify for the grade component.
- **Courses that Qualify:** Students can still exempt up to three classes that qualify (cannot exempt an EOC, AP, or AICE semester exam). Unlike in past years, students that exempt a qualifying course semester 1 can also exempt that same course semester 2 (i.e. if they qualify to exempt World History both semester 1 and semester 2, they could elect to exempt it both semesters).

## Additional Reminders:

- **Anonymous Reporting**
  - o As you are aware, Pinellas County Schools has partnered with Sandy Hook Promise which allows us to offer the Say Something Anonymous Reporting System. This allows stakeholders to submit a secure and anonymous safety concern that helps us identify and intervene in a proactive way. Please remind your student(s) that this is in place to assist with addressing a concern and also a way for someone get any help that may be needed – tips are passed along to appropriate law enforcement and school personnel. FortifyFL is also another reporting system that is available to report

suspicious activity which allows Florida students and the community to relay any safety concerns. Both links can be found below.

- **Say Something Tips** <https://www.sandyhookpromise.org/say-something-tips/>
- **FortifyFL** <https://getfortifyfl.com/>

- **ELHS PTSA**

- The ELHS PTSA would like to thank everyone that came to the meeting on Tuesday! We will be posting meeting information on the school website under the Get Involved/PTSA tab – come check it out! Next week we will begin our Membership Drive from August 19<sup>th</sup> to August 30<sup>th</sup>. We will be giving some comp tickets to an ELHS home football game this season. This will go to one family that has already signed up for the PTSA this year and another family that signs up during the Membership Drive! Please help us meet our goal of 300 members this year. The PTSA's annual budget is using this number to meet their support proposals but would love to exceed that. Also, if you are considering becoming a family or business sponsor, there's also an opportunity to join our sponsorship tiers listed on our membership site, see the link below. Additionally, you can buy spirit wear on the site below to support our PTSA and rep the school!
  - [ELHSPTSA.givebacks.com](https://ELHSPTSA.givebacks.com)
  - <https://east-lake-high-school-class-of-gear.itemorder.com>

- **Innisbrook Golf Resort Cars & Coffee Show:** Saturday, November 9th and students here from 6:30am – 12:30pm. Contact John Schroeder [jschroeder@innisbrookresort.com](mailto:jschroeder@innisbrookresort.com) for more information.

- **Student Expectation Reminders**

- We will continue to focus on Powering Up Learning to assist with removing the distractions of cellphones and headphones throughout the year. To learn more, see the links below:
  - Power Up Learning – <https://tinyurl.com/w59wevby>
  - Strategic Communications /Power Up – <https://www.pcsb.org/PowerUp>
- Please continue to review the ELHS and PCS dress code with your students. We do expect that all students are in dress code each day. For more details on the dress code, please use the link below:
  - <https://www.pcsb.org/dresscode>
- We want every student to have an amazing high school experience and be involved in any and all of the extracurricular activities that we have on campus, but some discipline infractions could get in the way of that. Any major offense including infractions like vaping, use or possession of an illegal substance, fighting, etc. will result in your student not being able to participate in certain after school events, including homecoming, prom, etc. Multiple repeat referrals may also result in a loss of that privilege at all. Please make sure to review this with your student as well.

- **College and Career Center**

- The College and Career Center is open! Contact Ms. Gallaty, [gallatyn@pcsb.org](mailto:gallatyn@pcsb.org) or visit our [virtual resource center](#) for help planning for life after high school. Whether it's college, career or military we have resources to help.

- **National Honor Society Application**

- The National Honor Society Application is now open for NEW members, and QR codes are posted around campus! Returning members do NOT need to reapply. If your student is an 11th or 12th grader with a 3.5 GPA or higher and a clean discipline record, they are eligible to apply for membership in the National Honor Society. If accepted, members will need to complete 10 service hours per semester, including in-person hour requirements, and pay dues of \$20 for each year of membership. There will be an informational meeting on Tuesday, September 10th after school in

the media center to learn more. Students can also see Mrs. Munson in room 4222 or Mr. Eustace in room 3-222 with any questions. The application will remain open through Friday, September 13<sup>th</sup>.

- **Rho Kappa Social Studies Honor Society Application**

- Rho Kappa Social Studies Honor Society applications are now open! Interested students must be a Junior or Senior with a 3.0 or higher in their Social Studies courses to apply. A link to the digital application can be found on the school website. Applications must be completed by Tuesday, September 10<sup>th</sup>. For any questions, please reach out to Mrs. Lee ([leecas@pcsb.org](mailto:leecas@pcsb.org)) or Mr. Rundle ([rundlee@pcsb.org](mailto:rundlee@pcsb.org)).

- **East Lake Theatre Program Fundraiser**

- The theatre department will be running a fundraiser for the program through September 12<sup>th</sup> – use the QR code within the flyer or click the hyperlink!



- **East Lake Silver Sound Marching Band – DC Trip**

- We're excited to announce that the East Lake Silver Sound Marching Band has been accepted to represent the State of Florida in the 2025 National Independence Day Parade in Washington D.C. There is still time to join our marching band, and the group is looking for piano players and dancers that want a way to get involved with one of our largest organizations on campus. See Mr. Black in the band room during lunch or after school to find out more or email him at [blacki@pcsb.org](mailto:blacki@pcsb.org).

- **Clothing Donations**

- In the south end of the school within the teacher parking lot, there's a clothing donation bin. If you have any clothing you're giving away, feel free to drop it off at any time – not only is it for a good cause, ELHS also receives some funding to support the school!

- **Chess Club**

- Chess club will meet this Wednesday during A and B lunch in room 3-241.

- **Yearbook Sales**

- Please order your yearbook before our Back to School Sale is over. [www.yearbookordercenter.com/job/1232](http://www.yearbookordercenter.com/job/1232) or contact Mrs. Wall at [walln@pcsb.org](mailto:walln@pcsb.org) with any questions. She can also answer questions about senior portraits, senior dedication ads, and our upcoming picture day.

If you have any questions at all, please don't hesitate to reach out to your Assistant Principal or Counselor. We look forward to the amazing year ahead! Always remember that Life is Better at the Lake where we SOAR together – have an amazing rest of your weekend and GO EAGLES!

Dan Schmittiel, Principal  
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*Vision- 100% student success*

*Mission- The community of East Lake High School will develop productive and responsible students who are prepared for post-secondary education, the workforce and citizenship.*