

# TPS SUPERINTENDENT BULLETIN



*Where Excellence Is Achieved Through Each Individual's Success*



**Equity  
over  
Equality**

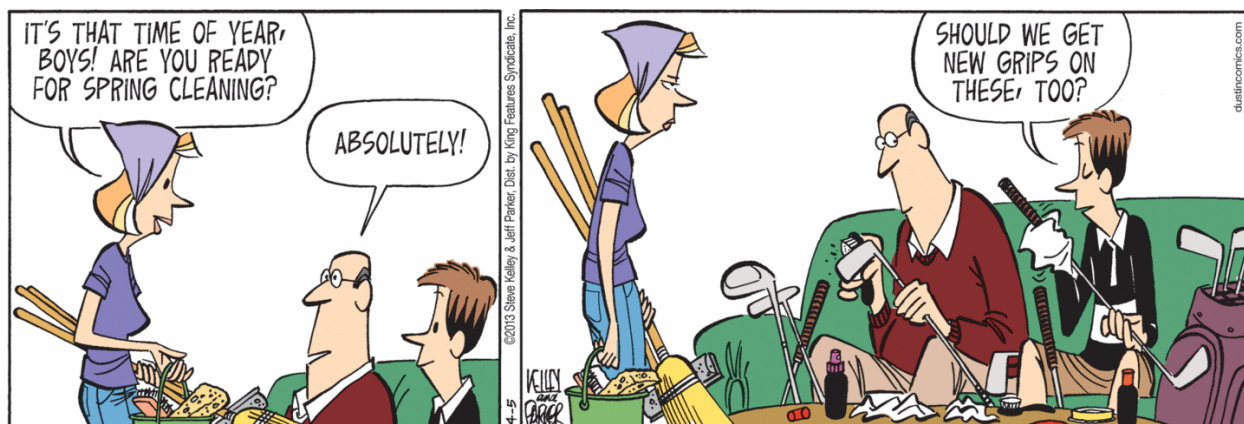


**Stimulate and Support  
over  
Rank and Sort**



**Transformative Practice  
over  
Tradition**

Here for you 860-335-2455



**UPDATE FOR April 2, 2018**

### **JUMP TO SCHOOL UPDATES:**

Please **CLICK BELOW** to get the **DIGITAL BACKPACK** information for the listed school:

- [BG](#)
- [TIS](#)
- [TMS](#)
- [THS](#)



[2018 – 2019 Adopted School Calendar](#)

## Table of Contents

<b>Feature Link (click a link to jump to a section)</b>	<b>Description</b>
<a href="#"><u>Superintendent's Weekly Message/Feature</u></a>	<b>This is the weekly message from the Superintendent. It is usually around some topic related to education and/or the school system.</b>
<a href="#"><u>TPSTV! Tolland Public Schools TV!</u></a>	<b>This section has videos about the great things happening in the Tolland Public Schools!</b>
<a href="#"><u>Breakfast with the Superintendent Dates/Times/Information</u></a>	<b>This section provides information about the upcoming Superintendent's Breakfast. These are open meetings with no agenda in which the public is invited to come ask questions, and engage in conversation, about educationally relevant topics.</b>
<a href="#"><u>Budget Blurb &amp; Budget Information</u></a>	<b>This section provides links and information with regard to the budget of the Tolland Public Schools.</b>
<a href="#"><u>Community Learning Workshops</u></a>	<b>This section provides information about upcoming workshops for the community.</b>
<a href="#"><u>How to Contact the Superintendent</u></a>	<b>This section provides information on the ways to communicate with the Superintendent based on urgency/level of importance.</b>
<a href="#"><u>Job Postings</u></a>	<b>This is a listing of jobs available at this time for the district.</b>
<a href="#"><u>Links</u></a>	<b>These are links provided from community members as well as links that may provide meaningful information.</b>
<a href="#"><u>Mastery Learning</u></a>	<b>This section has a brief synopsis of the Mastery Learning philosophy and plan for the district.</b>
<a href="#"><u>Power School and Unified Classroom</u></a>	<b>This section provides information to guardians and parents about how to access important resources for reviewing their child's grading, scheduling, attendance, and other information.</b>
<a href="#"><u>Social Media Connections and Links</u></a>	<b>This section provides information on the district social media sites.</b>
<a href="#"><u>Volunteering Information</u></a>	<b>This section provides information on how to Volunteer in the Tolland Public Schools.</b>
<a href="#"><u>Other Information</u></a>	<b>Other information submitted by school or community members.</b>

---

*Superintendent Weekly Message*

---

The Board of Education met last night and took the following action:

**Regarding 2017-2018**

1) The 2017-2018 calendar will be reduced by one student school day, from 181 to 180. This will restore April 20th as a vacation day.

If there are no additional school closings, April break will occur as originally scheduled from April 16 - 20.

If there are additional school closings, school days will be made up from April break starting with Friday April 20th, and moving backward from Friday to Monday.

**Regarding 2018-2019**

2) Please see the newly adopted: [2018 – 2019 Adopted School Calendar](#)

---

**SBAC (Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium) Testing**

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Tolland, and other school systems across the state are giving the SBAC (Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium) test, in other words the State's standardized test. If you have any questions about the State standardized test, please do not hesitate to reach out to me. Please also see the available parent resources (links) below made available by the State of Connecticut.

Parent guides:

<http://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Student-Assessment/Smarter-Balanced/Smarter-Balanced-Parent-Guides>

Common Core Standards:

- [CTCoreStandards.org](http://CTCoreStandards.org)
- <http://www.corestandards.org/>

National Assessment of Educational Progress (Federal Random Sample Test – NOT SBAC) included for informational purposes:

- <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/about/>
- <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/about/international.aspx>

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium

- <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/smarter-balanced-assessments/>

Contrary Opinions

- <http://dianeravitch.net/>

**[Back to Top](#)**

---

*Tolland Public Schools TV!*

---

Video link	Description
<a href="https://youtu.be/eOVWkBqtQao">https://youtu.be/eOVWkBqtQao</a>	March 14 <sup>th</sup> Assembly – In Memory
<a href="https://youtu.be/R0EGNXyNb0c">https://youtu.be/R0EGNXyNb0c</a>	March 14 <sup>th</sup> Assembly – Student Voices – A Commitment to Change
<a href="https://youtu.be/UxbJOpMEzOo">https://youtu.be/UxbJOpMEzOo</a>	March 14 <sup>th</sup> Assembly – Anatomy of a student rally
<a href="https://youtu.be/l1U9ZLDRwQA">https://youtu.be/l1U9ZLDRwQA</a>	TIS Door Decorating for Safety
<a href="https://youtu.be/A2mvaaZJYh8">https://youtu.be/A2mvaaZJYh8</a>	Read Across America at Birch Grove
<a href="https://youtu.be/z0or0x4kx0U">https://youtu.be/z0or0x4kx0U</a> <a href="https://youtu.be/tRHtaS-Mgr0">https://youtu.be/tRHtaS-Mgr0</a>	Students testing their “Space Landers”

[Back to Top](#)

*BREAKFAST WITH THE SUPERINTENDENT*

*10:00 AM AT THE TOLLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION*

*51 Tolland Green, Tolland, CT*

---



May 7, 2018

June 4, 2018

[Back to Top](#)

---

*BUDGET BLURB*

---

**BUDGET INFO ON THE WEB:**

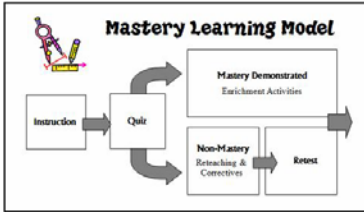
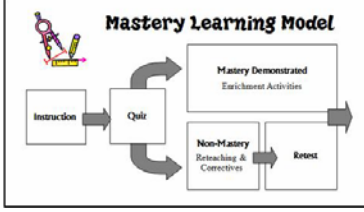


[http://www.tolland.k12.ct.us/board\\_of\\_education/budget](http://www.tolland.k12.ct.us/board_of_education/budget)

---

[Back to Top](#)

Community Learning Workshops

Community Workshops	Information
<p>April 23 and April 24 6:00 pm</p> <p>Tolland Board of Education, 51 Tolland Green.</p>	 <p><b>Mastery Learning at the HIGH SCHOOL level</b> Come find out what it is about, and how ML is being planned for Tolland HIGH SCHOOL.</p> <p><i>Please rsvp to Jen Palumbo at <a href="mailto:jpalumbo@tolland.k12.ct.us">jpalumbo@tolland.k12.ct.us</a> if you are planning on attending.</i></p>
<p>May 2, 2018 7:30 PM Tolland Public Library</p>	 <p><b>Mastery Learning in the DISTRICT Workshop</b> Come find out what it is about, and how ML is being planned for Tolland.</p>
<p>May 16, 2018 7:00 – 9:00 PM Tolland Public Library</p>	<p><b>HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT</b> <i>Are you sure you'd recognize the signs of youth drug or alcohol use in your home? <u>Don't leave it to chance!</u></i> <b>EXPLORE</b> a teen's bedroom to see and identify the newest drug paraphernalia, hiding places and other signs that may indicate drug or alcohol use by a teen. <i>How many can you identify?</i> <b>LEARN</b> about area substance abuse trends, and signs &amp; symptoms of use. Prevention professionals will also provide resources for parents and community members. <b><u>THIS PROGRAM IS FOR ADULTS ONLY!</u></b></p> <p>Questions? Call THS/860-870-6818 Ext.1 or Youth Services/860-871-3612</p>

[Back to Top](#)

---

*HOW TO CONTACT THE SUPERINTENDENT:*

---



Please take a look at the link below for some of the best ways to get an answer, meeting, or something else:

[http://www.tolland.k12.ct.us/DistrictOffices/superintendent\\_s\\_corner/superintendent\\_wille\\_tt\\_s\\_page/c\\_o\\_n\\_t\\_a\\_c\\_t\\_m\\_e/](http://www.tolland.k12.ct.us/DistrictOffices/superintendent_s_corner/superintendent_wille_tt_s_page/c_o_n_t_a_c_t_m_e/)

[Back to Top](#)



---

*Job Postings*

---

- None

[Back to Top](#)

---

*Links*

---

[Lifeguard Recertification Course](#)

[Spring Fling Volunteers Needed](#)

[Rage Robotics-Rhode Island District Event \(RIDE\)](#)

[TEF-Family Self Defense Course](#)

[Eastern Youth Soccer Camp](#)

[5K Spirit of spring 5K Event Date- Lions Club](#)

[Fall TOPS Soccer](#)

[Channel 3 Kids Camp](#)

[Town of Tolland-Camp Director Position](#)

[\*\*Town of Tolland-Asst. Camp Director Position\*\*](#)

[Author Kevin Kurtz Parent Letter](#)

[Author Kevin Kurtz Book Order Form](#)

[Memorial Day Essay Contest](#)

[Hartford Yard Goats-Tolland High School Night at Dunkin Donuts Park](#)

[2018 Cider Mill Road Race T-Shirts](#)

[SBAC State Parent Letter](#)

[\*\*Back to Top\*\*](#)

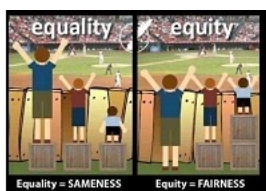
---

*Mastery Learning Information*


---

The districts core values of providing individualized attention to a student's needs, supporting a student and their family, and providing a transformational experience leading to continual growth are all crucial aspects of 21<sup>st</sup> century education in the literature, and espoused by the State of Connecticut (<http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2767&q=336508>).

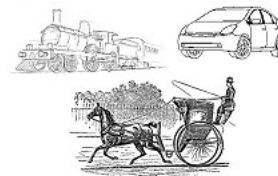
As Tolland competes with magnets and charters, and seeks to draw more students to its own programs and pathways of study, Mastery Learning practices will support those endeavors as it is grounded in contemporary philosophy and research. For an overview of 21<sup>st</sup> century educational philosophy, research, and practice please see the information below:



*Equity*  
over  
*Equality*



*Stimulate and Support*  
over  
*Rank and Sort*



*Transformative Practice*  
over  
*Tradition*

### Equity over Equality

Educational professionals that practice mastery learning recognize that different students have different needs. This necessitates providing each learner with what is uniquely required for that person's success. While equality implies *sameness*, equity implies *fairness*. Equity is about making sure people get access to the same *opportunity*. Advantage, opportunity, and privilege associated with socioeconomic, racial, cultural, or historical factors can impact learning. It is the mission of all educators to do our best to provide each learner with opportunities to succeed that transcend disadvantage.

### Stimulate and Support over Rank and Sort

Educational professionals that practice mastery learning recognize that students do not come to school having experienced the same level of preparation and opportunity. As a result institutional **ranking and sorting** can inadvertently stigmatize, de-motivate, and perpetuate the trajectory the initial limitations on opportunity created. Educators try to help students overcome this, and institutions have to be structured so student success is less reliant on the individual heroics of some educators, and more on *systematic* and consistent *processes and practices* of the institution that provide the greatest opportunities for restorative justice, productive habits, and academic success.

Standardized assessments beyond those used as universal screens (assessments given to all learners for the purpose of providing specialized assistance), or those that can be used to impact instruction (progress monitoring), should be carefully evaluated for their usefulness in the process of educating children. The objective should always be to benefit the child, and to do no harm. For instance, if poverty correlates significantly with lower state standardized test performance, how many times is it necessary to report to a

disadvantaged child and family that they are performing poorly before institutional processes are put in place to address the challenge? In other words, some standardized tests tell us what we already know – and in the process jeopardizes the confidence and self-concept of the learner. Instead, assessment focused on *progress monitoring* over one-shot standardized assessments, provide the most useful and actionable information for improving the performance of all students.

### Transformative Practice over Tradition

Educational professionals that practice mastery learning question current assessment traditions, and seek to transform teaching and assessment with a focus on practices that have the greatest chance of increasing student agency, ownership, reflection, and motivation of students towards their own learning and development. Mastery learning is recognized as a crucial aspect of SRBI (<http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2618&q=322020>) supports, and as such practitioners take into consideration developmental level and cognitive considerations of students when delivering instruction, remediation, and methods of encouraging habit change. It is the process of doing things because they work for students, not simply continuing “traditional” practices because it is what has always been done.

### Areas of *emphasis* for Tolland

1. All forms of assessment are standards-based and criterion-referenced, and success is defined by the achievement of expected standards, not relative measures of performance or student-to-student comparisons.
2. Formative assessments measure learning progress during the instructional process, and formative-assessment results are used to inform instructional adjustments, teaching practices, and academic support.
3. Summative assessments evaluate learning achievement, and summative assessments results record a student’s level of mastery at a specific point in time.
4. Academic progress and achievement are monitored and reported separately from work habits, character traits, and behaviors such as attendance and class participation, which are also monitored and reported.
5. Academic grades communicate learning progress and achievement to students and families, and grades are used to facilitate and improve the learning process.
6. Students are given multiple opportunities to improve their work when they fail to meet expected standards.

### Resources

- District Mastery Learning Plan



**POWERSCHOOL UNIFIED CLASSROOM**  
**Expanding information opportunities for parents and students!**



Dear Parents and Students,

On February 9<sup>th</sup>, we upgraded the parent and student portal access to the new Unified Classroom. If you access your student's information with the mobile app, there are NO changes. If you use a desktop/laptop, then you will need to create your new Unified Classroom account. (If you have never created an account, please contact us, and we will be happy to help you. (860-870-6818 x10804)

**Parents**

If you already have an account follow the steps below.

<https://tollandschools.powerschool.com/public/home.html>

1. Click on Parent Sign In
2. Create PowerSchool ID
3. Enter your current login information
4. Next
5. Continue
6. Enter your email (which will now be your username)
7. Create a password
8. Click create

Below is a quick video that demonstrates how to set up your account/move to the new Unified Classroom dashboard. Watch Part 2 of the video if you already have a PowerSchool account.

<https://vimeo.com/227826452/6c02bab055>

**Students**

<https://tollandschools.powerschool.com/public/home.html>

1. Click student sign in
2. Click 'Forgot password' option, enter in your school email (ex. [JohnDoe54321@tolland.k12.ct.us](mailto:JohnDoe54321@tolland.k12.ct.us)) and send request. Go to your school email – there will be a link to click in the email that will send you to a reset password page.

Please feel free to contact the Educational Technology office with any log in issues or questions.  
(860) 870-6818 x10804

**[Back to Top](#)**

---

*Social Media Connections and Links*

---

**CHECK US OUT ON FACEBOOK:**



[www.facebook.com/tollandpublicschools](http://www.facebook.com/tollandpublicschools)

---

**FOLLOW SUPERINTENDENT WILLETT ON TWITTER:**



Search for:

[TPS\\_Sup\\_Willett](#)

Or

[Superint. Willett](#)

---

**[Back to Top](#)**

---

*Volunteer Information*

---

**VOLUNTEERING**



We would love to have you come and volunteer at the Tolland Public Schools!

Thank you for all you do for the Tolland Public Schools. Please contact the Central Office with any questions. For those already volunteering, and those new to the game, the BOE will now do background checks every three school years. If you will be volunteering for the first time in the upcoming school year, please complete the [online form under Quick Links](#). After you have submitted your application, please call 860-870-6850 extension 1 to provide your social security number. You can check with the school secretaries to verify your status.

[Back to Top](#)



---

*Other Information*

---

**Reminder: Public Meeting - April 3 - Old Cathole Road Reconstruction - 7 p.m. at High School**

The Town of Tolland will be reconstructing Old Cathole Road to address deteriorated pavement conditions and to improve conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists. The Town received a grant to help cover the costs of construction. The Town's engineering consultant, BSC Group, has begun design work on the project. The meeting is **Tuesday, April 3, 7 p.m. in the High School auditorium.**

At the meeting, you will:

- Hear an overview of the type of work proposed
- Learn about the anticipated project schedule
- Be able to ask questions of town staff and the consultant engineer
- Provide feedback and ideas on what we might consider over the longer term (beyond this immediate project) to improve this important local road

In the meantime, please contact the Planning and Development Department at 860-871-3601 if you have questions.

---

**Tolland's Seventh Annual Teen Poetry Slam - April 5**

Teen poets will compete in Tolland's Seventh Annual Teen Poetry Slam April 5

Teenage writers will perform original poems and compete for prizes on Thursday, April 5 when the Tolland Public Library Foundation holds its seventh annual poetry slam.

In partnership with Tolland High School and Tolland Middle School, the Foundation and the Tolland Public Library are sponsoring the slam for middle and high school students ages 12 to 18 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the library at [21 Tolland Green](#).

Preference will be given to Tolland residents, but students from other towns can participate if space permits. Poetry slams were born in Chicago in 1986 to encourage and celebrate the art of performance poetry. Students will be performing two three-minute poems, which will be judged by a panel that will include THS Assistant Principal Margot Martello; a THS student, Ginny Brousseau, the Tolland Public Library's young adult/children's librarian; Foundation Board Vice President Dani Titterton and Foundation Board Member Mike Byam. A top prize of a \$50 Barnes & Noble gift card and other prizes will be awarded. Poets must be prepared to perform a third poem in case of a tie-breaker. The slam will be hosted by Tolland High English teacher James MacArthur. Entry forms are available at the public library, the high school library, from any THS English teacher or at [TollandPublicLibraryFoundation.org](http://TollandPublicLibraryFoundation.org).

Students must return the forms to one of the same places and email three original poems to [katefarrish@gmail.com](mailto:katefarrish@gmail.com) by Monday, April 2.

The slam is free and open to the public, but audience members are asked to register for the event by calling the library at 860-871-3620 or visiting [www.tolland.org/library](http://www.tolland.org/library).

**[Back to Top](#)**