

## East High School's New Cardinal Period – Making Connections

Does your child have a friend who is always at your house? They frequently sleepover, eat meals at your house, and join in on your family activities. There's a good chance that child is not just hanging around for the food or because he or she is friends with your child. They hang around because of you! They are there because they know you care about them. You are playing a very important role in that child's life.

Recent research documents that children who have a connection with at least one caring adult tend to be happier, healthier, and more resilient. These positive connections with caring adults help to promote success in school, lower the odds of experimentation with alcohol and drugs, reduce suicide rates, decrease contacts with the justice system, and promote better overall mental health. Children with one or more caring adults in their life are more likely to develop prosocial behaviors and become productive adults.

There are many children who have a caring positive relationship with an adult in their own home. Unfortunately, that's not always the case. Developing long-lasting relationships with caring adults can provide a buffer against negative influences and high-risk behaviors that children navigate on a daily basis. Even if a child has a positive caring relationship at home, having several caring adult relationships including relationships with adults outside their home only increases a child's potential for success in the future. One of the goals of the new Cardinal Period is to provide the time and opportunity for the development of positive relationships with caring adults at East High School.

A second goal of the new Cardinal Period is to promote the acquisition of soft skills. Soft skills are skills that apply across a wide variety of jobs and life situations. Desirable skills such as communication, organization, punctuality, creativity, teamwork, critical thinking, and adaptability are some of soft skills cited as being integral to workplace success. Students who transition successfully from high school to college or the workplace show an ability to manage their time, set goals, meet deadlines, get along with others, and deal with obstacles. Since people develop soft skills through socialization and interactions with others, the new Cardinal Period is the perfect place to incorporate soft skill development into the school day.

The third goal of the East High School Cardinal Period is to foster the development of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. These are additional skills that will help students achieve academic success, engage with others in a positive manner, improve their own health and wellness, and achieve their post-school outcomes.

We look forward to the new Cardinal Period at Pocono Mountain East High School during the 2022-23 school year and are truly excited about the anticipated benefits to our students. Cardinal Period will take place during the first 45 minutes of the day on 19 Wednesdays throughout the school year. Building positive relationships, developing soft skills, and acquiring additional skills to promote student health and wellness will have a positive impact on the climate and culture at East High School, making East High School an amazing place to learn!