

EASTPORT-SOUTH MANOR

Central School District

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JOSEPH A. STEIMEL
Superintendent of Schools

November 26, 2025

Dear Eastport-South Manor School Community,

As the beautiful days of autumn transition into the quiet anticipation of winter, we pause as a community to celebrate the cherished tradition of Thanksgiving. This time is much more than a long weekend; it is a vital opportunity for us to reflect on the blessings in our lives, appreciate the relationships that sustain us, and recommit ourselves to the values of kindness and mutual support. In the midst of our busy academic year, I encourage everyone—students, staff, and families—to take this moment to genuinely connect with loved ones and consider the true meaning of gratitude.

As you all know, the holiday we observe tomorrow has deep roots in our nation's history. Most commonly traced back to the 1621 harvest feast shared by the Plymouth colonists and the Wampanoag Nation, this day was originally an expression of thankfulness for survival and plenty. However, it was many years later, amid the Civil War, when President Abraham Lincoln officially designated the last Thursday in November as a National Day of Thanksgiving in 1863. This tradition was eventually formalized by Congress, establishing Thanksgiving as a federal holiday in 1941, ensuring its place as a consistent moment of national reflection.

As we gather around our tables, please also remember to hold in our hearts those who cannot be with their families. We extend our deepest gratitude to the military families in our community who face the profound sacrifice of separation, often with loved ones deployed far from home, safeguarding our freedoms. Similarly, we recognize and thank our dedicated first responders; police, fire, EMS, and hospital staff, who work tirelessly through the holiday to ensure our safety and well-being. Their commitment to service, even at the expense of their own time with family, embodies the highest form of community spirit.

I also want to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation for the extraordinary staff of the Eastport-South Manor Central School District. From our dedicated classroom teachers and insightful administrators to our essential support staff, bus drivers, custodians, and cafeteria workers, your daily commitment to our students is remarkable. Your tireless efforts, flexibility, and genuine care foster a supportive learning environment that allows every student to thrive. Thank you for making a lasting, positive difference in the lives of our young people every single day.

Finally, I want to thank every member of the Eastport-South Manor school community; our Board of Education, booster club and PTA/PTO volunteers, parents and guardians, for the overwhelming support you show our schools. Our strength lies in our unity, and it is the robust partnership between home and school that allows us to achieve excellence.

May your Thanksgiving be filled with warmth, peace, and joyous moments. I wish you and yours a safe and restful holiday weekend.

Sincerely,

Mr. Joseph A. Steimel
Superintendent of Schools

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Assistant Supt. for
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