



# JOHN LYMAN SCHOOL

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Thomas D. Ford, Principal**

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Welcome to John Lyman School!

John Lyman School is a child-centered community of learners that is dedicated to fostering a lifelong love of learning through active exploration of all curricular areas. Using elements of the Integrated Day approach, we provide a supportive, stimulating environment in which students learn to take responsibility for decision-making as well as for their own learning and behavior. As a former Higher Order Thinking (HOT) School through the state of Connecticut, John Lyman fosters an arts-integrated approach in a democratic setting that celebrates the voice of every child. We strongly believe that the arts can support and enhance all subject areas and help to create more meaningful learning opportunities for our students.

We take great pride in our outstanding and dedicated faculty. The Lyman staff always puts students first, and we are committed to helping your child succeed academically and socially. Our teachers work hard to foster open communication and to keep you informed about your child's progress. Likewise, we hope you will contact us when you have questions or concerns. Please do not hesitate to call or schedule an appointment with me at any time.

Our goal is to provide an outstanding educational experience for each child, and I hope you find this pamphlet informative and helpful.

Sincerely,

Thomas D. Ford  
Principal

## **Regional School District 13 Mission Statement**

Through engagement in authentic learning all Regional School District 13 students are empowered to thrive and contribute as global citizens.



### **The Integrated Day (ID) Approach**

The Integrated Day (ID) approach at John Lyman School is based on a child-centered, project-based, and arts-integrated philosophy. Here are our guiding principles:

- The ID approach provides a supportive and stimulating environment that encourages and guides the child in an active exploration of all curriculum areas.
- The ID approach promotes a holistic and integrated view of learning in which individualized, small group, and whole group instruction ensure that each child is met at his/her particular level of understanding.
- Children are encouraged to be active, involved learners, decision makers, risk takers, and problem solvers who set goals. They work with teachers and peers to pursue their individual academic, social, and emotional needs.
- Teachers design both “hands on” and experiential learning activities to guide the child in developing a meaningful understanding of what is being investigated and/or presented.
- The teacher is a facilitator for open-ended discussions and activities.
- All students are measured according to their own performance and progress using grade level benchmarks.



### **Integrated Day (ID) Theory into Practice**

Using a constructivist approach to teaching and learning, our teachers plan instruction to ensure that children will have opportunities to do the following:

- Use their own experiences to actively construct new knowledge which connects to and extends what they can already understand and do.
- Identify a problem and generate a variety of solutions.
- Learn in a variety of artistic and creative ways.
- Work both independently and cooperatively to accomplish goals.
- Develop into flexible thinkers who are able to adapt to a rapidly changing world.
- Become effective communicators.
- Learn responsibility and respect for themselves, their environment, and other people.
- Develop a sense of competence in their ability to positively affect the world around them.
- Develop academic skills which will prepare them for life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## The Integrated Day (ID) Approach in Action

Our goal is to develop students who have curious, inquisitive minds and to deliver the curriculum in a way that promotes **inquiry**. Children are natural questioners. It is part of their nature to wonder about the world and all that it contains. This belief frames the overall educational climate of the school and the individual classroom setting. We believe that students work creatively and to their greatest capacity when given ownership over the direction of their learning, so **student voice and choice** is an essential component of the philosophy. In this model, the teacher acts as both facilitator and instructor. Our teachers share a common philosophy of how children learn, and an important aspect of the teachers' role is to help students discover that there are many ways of arriving at conclusions or solutions.

Throughout the school day children are encouraged to ask their own questions and pursue answers, and the child takes the role of initiator and is an active learner. This is best exemplified in individual **project work** cycles on self-selected topics at different points during the school year. Project work allows students to have choice in their learning while enabling them to apply the inquiry and research skills that they are developing. The final projects take on many different forms, and it is gratifying to see the pride children take in designing how they want to share their learning.

A predictable daily schedule allows children to develop independence in learning and to take responsibility in developmentally appropriate ways. Students are learning to think for themselves and to view themselves as lifelong learners. **Plan Your Work** blocks give students an opportunity to make decisions about what they need to accomplish during a given period of time. Times and tasks vary by grade level and curricular needs, but Plan Your Work is designed to help students develop a sense of ownership and responsibility for their own learning. In addition, planning for instruction involves providing as much authentic experience and **integration** across content areas as possible. Field trips, speakers, active involvement, play and simulated discovery situations are examples. Instruction begins with the premise that new learning should relate to some previous experience.

The social emotional learning curriculum is also an integral part of our school. The classroom is a small community, representative of the larger world community. In addition to our social emotional learning curriculum, class meetings are held in each classroom. Students work together, share ideas and find creative answers to problems. Throughout the day, students are encouraged to reflect on their thinking, explore the problem solving process and share their findings. Students work together to establish rules and expectations by creating a classroom constitution. These constitutions incorporate Region 13's Core Ethical Values of respect, responsibility, honesty, kindness and courage.

A whole school assembly is generally held three times a month. It is a time for the entire school to come together. We celebrate our school community by singing together and sharing learning, artistic, and musical accomplishments. Students are encouraged and supported by

their peers and assemblies are hosted by students. Parents and community members are always welcome to attend. Weekly Assembly has a dynamic and positive impact upon our school climate.

Finally, the Integrated Day approach aligns effectively to the Higher Order Thinking (HOT) School approach. Please see below.





### Higher Order Thinking (HOT) School Approach



John Lyman School is a longstanding former member of the Higher Order Thinking (HOT) Schools network. The core components of the HOT Schools philosophy are **strong arts, arts integration, and democratic practice**.

**Strong Arts** reflects our belief that the arts are valuable academic subjects and a critical part of a child's educational experience. This investment in strong arts gives students the tools to communicate and learn through their strongest intelligences and to do so with confidence. This is also reflected in our discipline-based curriculum.

**Arts Integration** is another important aspect of the HOT Schools approach. Connecting the arts and academics makes learning easier by incorporating the visual arts, movement, music, and theater with curricular standards. For example, students may use music to practice patterns or counting in math or visual art to explore an author's purpose. At John Lyman School, arts integration is developed not only in the classroom, but also through work with resident teaching artists. All students work with an artist over a period of time to develop relationships between the artist's craft and important curricula. The philosophy of arts integration allows for students to become creative and flexible thinkers and teaching artist residencies are typically a highlight of a student's year.

**Democratic Practice** encourages our students to have voice inside and outside the classroom. Democratic practice is inherent in the Integrated Day approach and takes many forms at John Lyman School, including voluntary student boards, class constitutions, and our school senate. Students have a number of meaningful opportunities to get involved outside of the classroom, including the following:

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|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Student Senate              | Art Board          |
| Literary Board              | Tech Crew          |
| Gardening Committee         | Hello Chorus       |
| Trail Committee             | Go Far Committee   |
| WJLS Student Broadcast Team | Yearbook Committee |
| ECHOs                       | Rosa's Readers     |

## Curriculum

John Lyman School follows the Regional School District 13 curriculum, which is consistent across the district. Please see the district website for a more detailed description of curriculum implementation at each grade level.



## Support Services

John Lyman School offers a wide range of services to meet each child's individual needs. Programs and services are offered at each grade level (based on student need) and are consistent across the district.

Special Education  
Occupational Therapy  
ABA Services  
Reading Intervention

Speech and Language  
Physical Therapy  
School Counseling  
Math Intervention

