

# John Lyman School

Regional School District 13

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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. The Integrated Day approach provides 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, 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

## **Educational Choice in Regional School District 13**

For the 2020-2021 school year, Brewster School will house students in grades PK-2. John Lyman School currently serves students in grades K-4. While both schools adhere to the same curriculum and utilize similar assessments, the best way to learn about Brewster and Lyman is to visit each school. Visiting helps you to better understand what makes each school unique and to make an informed decision about which school is best for your child.

Parents may visit the schools from January 6<sup>th</sup> through January 31<sup>st</sup> to observe classes and to discuss any specific questions or concerns. Visits are designed for adults and must be scheduled ahead of time. Appointments to visit can be made by calling the individual schools. Please contact John Lyman School at (860) 349-7240 or Brewster School at (860) 349-7227 to schedule a visit.

According to RSD13 Board of Education policy, the school decision must be made by February 1<sup>st</sup>. When the time comes, please contact the main office of the school where you wish to register. The school will then send you information and instructions for registration. Your school choice and registration must be completed in accordance with published timelines to guarantee your child's place in the school that you selected.

## **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 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.
- Children are encouraged to use a variety of learning styles to maximize academic potential.
- 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.



## **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**

The multi-age classroom is a unique characteristic of the Integrated Day approach at John Lyman School. After the kindergarten year, students stay with the same teacher for two years. Each class consists of children in two grade levels (1/2 and 3/4). Classes include a wide range of abilities and a balance of boys and girls.

The multi-age approach is designed to foster the individual personality and learning style of each student within the framework of the Region 13 curriculum. This grouping model enables children to develop and progress at their own rate. The structure naturally lends itself to opportunities for cooperative learning and produces a positive learning environment. A variety of whole group, small group, partner activities, and one-on-one instruction occurs throughout the day.

The goal of the Integrated Day approach is to develop students who have curious, inquisitive minds. Throughout the school day children are encouraged to ask their own questions and pursue answers. The child takes the role of initiator and is an active learner. Individual project work tailors this process to each child's particular needs and interests. Students work creatively and to their greatest capacity when given ownership over the direction of their learning. The teacher acts as both facilitator and instructor. Teachers set the stage to encourage students' natural curiosity and to aid students in solving problems or answering their own questions. Teachers share a common philosophy of how children learn. An important aspect of the teacher's role is to help students discover that there are many ways of arriving at conclusions or solutions.

Teachers provide opportunities for students to apply these skills in a variety of learning settings. A predictable daily schedule allows children to develop independence and responsibility for their learning. Students are learning to think for themselves and to view themselves as lifelong learners. Planning for instruction involves providing as many authentic learning experiences as

possible, including field trips, speakers, active involvement, play, and simulated discovery. Instruction begins with the premise that new learning should relate to some previous experience. Extended work periods are scheduled into the day to provide sufficient time for these meaningful connections to be made.

The social emotional learning curriculum is an integral part of our school. The classroom is a small community, representative of the larger world community. 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 explore 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 held approximately three times a month. It is a time for the entire school to come together. We celebrate our school community through song, classroom and individual student shares, and recognition of students' accomplishments. Students are encouraged and supported by their peers to have the confidence to share with our entire school community. Parents and family members are always welcome to attend. Our assembly has a dynamic and positive impact upon the school climate.



## 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:

Student Senate  
Literary Board  
Gardening Committee  
Trail Committee  
WJLS Student Broadcast Team  
ECHOs

Art Board  
Tech Crew  
Hello Chorus  
Go Far Committee  
Yearbook Committee  
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  
Literacy Classroom Tutors

Speech and Language  
Physical Therapy  
School Counseling  
Math Intervention  
Math Classroom Tutors

