Eastchester, NY - One of the largest considerations in deciding where to do one’s WISE internship is the quality of mentorship that one will receive. Some choose to go to Lawrence Hospital and shadow experienced doctors and nurses, and some choose to go on ride-alongs with established officers at the Eastchester Police Department. Some however choose to learn by utilizing the wealth of knowledge and experience available right in the Eastchester School District, the district's hundreds of wonderful teachers.

This year, seniors were not permitted to do WISE in the elementary schools, however, several students have chosen to do their WISE internships under the guidance of teachers within the
middle and high schools. Eastchester Senior, Justin Tillinghast, is currently doing his internship in the middle school gymnasium with Ms. Hope. Tillinghast, who is attending Dean College in Massachusetts next year to major in exercise science, believes, “Student-teaching with Ms. Hope is very beneficial, as I intend to study physical education in college, and become a P.E. teacher in the future.” Senior Brian Wingertzahn, who is headed to SUNY Purchase next year, is currently student-teaching in the earth science lab under the guidance of Dr. Fermann. Wingertzahn notes, “I chose to do WISE with [Dr. Fermann], because I greatly enjoyed his class, and thoroughly enjoy learning about the Earth.”

For many students, choosing to do student-teaching within the school district serves as a bridge between high school, and the outside world. Students are able to leave their comfort zones and work hands on with younger students, while also remaining in a physically familiar environment. Tillinghast notes, “Going to school in Eastchester for over ten years, I am very familiar with the school and the teachers. Student-teaching allows me to pursue my interests, while still remaining in an environment which I am familiar with.” Wingertzahn adds, “As COVID limited WISE options outside of the school, [student-teaching] was a good option, as it is an easy commute from home, and it is pretty fun teaching classes in an environment which I’m already used to.”

Throughout the years, nearly every EUFSD student has had a senior student-teacher in at least one of their classes. As they are already very familiar with the expectations and requirements of student-teaching from past experience, they typically end up very satisfied with their WISE experience. Tillinghast notes, “I very much enjoy contributing to the Eastchester P.E. program. Growing up, I always had interns in my P.E. classes who were positive influences, and I wanted to do the same.” Wingertzahn humorously adds, “[student-teaching] definitely beats going into school for a traditional day of classes.”

Though Eastchester provides WISE placements at numerous exceptional external sites, doing WISE within the school district is nonetheless a very enriching experience. It provides an avenue for students to both give back to their community through education, and pursue their interests, all while remaining in a familiar environment.