

Southington Board of Education Meeting

Thursday, December 12, 2024 6:15 PM
John Weichsel Municipal Center Public Assembly Room
200 North Main Street
Southington, CT 06489



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE - OPERATIONS

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. Executive Session
 - a. Student Matters
 - b. Discussion of Attorney-Client Privileged Communication Regarding Process for Consideration of Transportation Bids
3. Reconvene Meeting - Regular Session 7:00 p.m.
4. Pledge of Allegiance
5. Approval of Minutes - November 14, 2024
6. Public Communications
 - a. Communications from Student Board Representatives
 - b. Communications from Board of Education
 - c. Communications from Administration
 - d. Communications from Public - Agenda Items Only
7. Committee Reports
 - a. Curriculum & Instruction Committee Meeting - November 15, 2024
 - b. Policy & Personnel Committee Meeting - November 26, 2024
 - c. Finance Committee Meeting - December 9, 2024
 1. Approval of Ag Sci Barn Project Civil Engineering and Architectural Services
 2. Approval of FY 24 Nonlapsing Funds
 3. Approval of High School West Gym Award of Basketball Hoops - Town Capital Funds
 4. Approval of McKinney-Vento Homeless Grant (New Competitive) - Three Year Grant
 5. Approval of Food Services Steamer at DePaolo Middle School
8. Superintendent's Report
 - a. Personnel Report
9. Old Business
 - a. Town Government Communications
 - b. Capital Improvement Plan - 2025-26 to 2029-30 - Second Reading
10. New Business
 - a. Approval of Out of State/Overnight Field Trips
 1. SHS CyberKnights Robotics Team - Houston, TX
 - b. Proposed 2025-2026 School Calendar - First Reading
 - c. Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024

- d. SHS - Accelerated Statistics - New Course Proposal - First Reading
 - e. Policy 3280 - Gifts, Grants and Bequests - Revised - First Reading
 - f. Policy 4118.51 - Use of AI in Classrooms (Staff) - NEW - First Reading
 - g. Policy 5121.3 - Academic Dishonesty - NEW - First Reading
 - h. Policy 5145.3 - Prohibition of Sex Discrimination, Including Sex-Based Harassment
- Revised - First Reading
 - i. Policy 6141.11 - Use of AI in Classrooms (Students) - NEW - First Reading
 - j. Middle School Scheduling Proposal Presentation
11. Public Communications
- a. Public
12. Adjournment

The minutes presented within the document provide a summary of the discussion that took place at the Board of Education meeting. For the complete discussion of the agenda items, please view the video of the Board meeting on our website at <https://www.southingtonschools.org>. These minutes are considered a draft until approved at the following regular Board of Education Meeting.

SOUTHINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION, SOUTHINGTON, CT

Regular Meeting

Committee of the Whole – Operations

November 14, 2024, at 6:30 PM

John Weichsel Municipal Center Public Assembly Room

200 North Main Street Southington, CT 06489

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Williams, Board Vice Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:45 p.m.

Board Members Present: Mr. Joseph Baczewski, Mr. Robert Brown, Mrs. Terri Carmody, Mr. David Derynoski, Mr. Jasper Williams.

Board Members Absent: Mr. Sean Carson, Mrs. Colleen Clark, Mr. Zaya Oshana, Mr. Cecil Whitehead.

2. Executive Session

MOTION made by Mr. Derynoski and seconded by Mr. Baczewski “Move to go into Executive Session, excluding the public and the press, for the purpose of discussing Student Matters, and upon conclusion reconvene to public session.”

Motion carried 5-0.

Superintendent, Mr. Madancy and Assistant Superintendent, Mr. Pepe were invited to join Executive session.

Mr. Whitehead arrived at 6:48 p.m.

Mr. Carson arrived at 6:53 p.m.

a. Student Matters

3. Reconvene Meeting - Regular Session 7:00 p.m.

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Board Members Present: Mr. Joseph Baczewski, Mr. Robert Brown, Mrs. Terri Carmody, Mr. Sean Carson, Mr. David Derynoski, Mr. Cecil Whitehead, Mr. Jasper Williams

Board Members Absent: Mrs. Colleen Clark, Mr. Zaya Oshana,

Cabinet Members Present: Mr. Steven Madancy, Superintendent of Schools; Mr. Frank Pepe, Assistant Superintendent; Mrs. Jennifer Mellitt, Director of Business & Finance

Student Board Representatives Present: Ms. Lauren Mellitt, Ms. Akary Win

4. Pledge of Allegiance

5. Approval of Minutes - October 24, 2024

MOTION made by Mr. Brown, seconded by Mr. Derynoski "Move to approve the regular BOE Meeting minutes of October 24, 2024." Motion carried 7-0

Attachments: (1)

6. Public Communications

a. Communications from Student Board Representatives:

Ms. Win gave the Student Report:

- Homecoming weekend was a huge success; major events included a pep rally, football game and homecoming dance.
- On November 14, 2024, report cards were sent home and parent conferences were scheduled during the evening.
- Vandalism has been an ongoing issue at the High School. Steps are being taken to actively address the issue.

Ms. Mellit gave the District Report:

- Thalberg Elementary School is in its final stages for their courtyard makeover. Thalberg would like to thank Patrick O'Keefe and his volunteer students from VO-AG for installing the turf in the courtyard.
- Kennedy Middle School held its annual Veterans Day Concert and Reception; they were well attended. Thank you to Mr. Brennan, Mr. Urso, Mr. White and Mr. Williams for speaking with the students about their service to our country.
- Kennedy Middle School will be one of Valentine the Clown's, Toy Express stops on December 6, 2024. Beginning November 18, 2024, students will start collecting toys for the toy drive. All donations must be dropped off by December 4, 2024.
- South End Elementary School's 5th Grade STEPS Ambassadors have been mentoring younger students. Students are focusing on better formation, better recognition, partner reading, and math fluency.
- Students at DePaolo Middle School participated in many activities for Veterans Day. Some students interviewed veterans while others wrote letters. The letters will be sent through Operation Gratitude to new recruits, active soldiers and wounded warriors. Some letters will also be sent to the VA Hospital in Newington, CT.
- DePaolo Middle School wrapped up its fall sports season. The Boys Cross Country Team placed 3rd at the State Meet.

- Students in the Animal Helpers Program had their first visit to LEAF where they learned about caring for new animals.
- DePaolo Middle School launched a new International Club to celebrate and explore the diverse cultures of our student body. Each month will focus on a new culture including its geography, history, food, and more.
- Members of DePaolo Unified Sports attended a leadership summit where they heard from a motivational speaker and participated in team building activities.

Ms. Win gave the Sports Report:

- The Girls Volleyball Team wrapped up their season on November 13, 2024.
- The Cross Country Team is celebrating its success of two of their teammates who will be advancing to the New England Championships.

b. Communications from Board of Education:

Mr. Brown acknowledged the people who ran Convocation. It was a change to have it this time of year instead of at the beginning of the school year. A special thanks to Mr. Pepe, Mr. Madancy, Mrs. Clark, the two teachers in the Social Studies Department, and the Teacher of the Year.

Mr. Williams spoke about the two Veterans Day events he was able to attend and speak at. It was a great experience and awesome to see the student engagement. Mr. Williams is very proud, our town and school district has these events for veterans. It is important to recognize veterans but also to inspire our youth. He briefly spoke about why he joined the service and the impact it had on his life.

Mr. Williams received an email from STEPS about conducting undercover compliance checks for tobacco and nicotine with the Southington Police Department. These took place on November 13, 2024. They went to 12 stores and 50% of those stores failed by selling to minors. He is happy to know STEPS and the Police Department are proactive, but it is also important parents understand and are aware of the risks that are out there.

c. Communications from Administration:

Mr. Madancy thanked Mr. Brown for his comments about Convocation and acknowledged Mr. Pepe for his hard work with the student interview that was presented. The theme for Convocation was “Immeasurable Impact.” The student interview was about one student’s experience in the district, K-12th grade, and the teachers who made an impact. Information was also given at Convocation about 211 calls, DCF referrals, mobile crisis units, emergency room visits, hospital/ambulance calls, etcetera. This data was given to thank employees because someone recognized there was a child in need and took action.

Mr. Madancy is working with two students who are Seniors at Southington High School; they are members of his Student Engagement Team. After losing the Record Journal, Mr. Madancy and his team have created an Instagram and Facebook page to get information out to the public. All administrators have access to a link to submit content to be posted. The content is reviewed by Mr. Madancy and then routed to the two students who post on social media. One of the students, Ms. Mellitt, presented the Instagram and Facebook page; they are identical in content. She also shared a reel of the new track at the High School. The websites will soon be live.

Mr. Baczewski commented on what an awesome opportunity this is for our high school students to get involved and see the different aspects social media has to offer as a launch into a career.

Attachments: (1)

- d. Communications from Public - Agenda Items Only:
No public comment.

7. Superintendent's Report

- a. Personnel Report:

MOTION made by Mrs. Carmody, seconded by Mr. Brown "Move to approve the Personnel Report as submitted by the Human Resource Department"

Motion carried 7-0.

Attachments: (1)

8. Old Business

- a. Town Government Communications:

Mr. Madancy shared that on November 13, 2024, the Board of Finance approved a transfer of funds. These were funds that were remaining from the paving project that occurred at the High School last summer. They are reallocated towards an RFP to develop the architectural and engineering specifications for the new tennis courts. Thank you to Kyle Fickel and Steve Risser for attending the meeting and answering questions.

- b. SHS - School of Rock - New Curriculum - Second Reading:

MOTION made by Mrs. Carmody, seconded by Mr. Brown "Move to approve SHS - School of Rock - New Curriculum as presented by the Curriculum and Instruction Committee" Motion carried 7-0.

Attachments: (1)

- c. Grade 8 Science - Unit 1: Genetics - New Unit - Second Reading:
MOTION made by Mrs. Carmody, seconded by Mr. Brown "Move to approve Grade 8 Science - Unit 1: Genetics - New Unit as presented by the Curriculum and Instruction Committee" Motion carried 7-0.
Attachments: (1)
- d. SHS - World Language Year 1, Unit 2: Families & Communities - Second Reading (French, Italian, Latin, Mandarin, Spanish):
MOTION made by Mrs. Carmody, seconded by Mr. Brown " Move to approve SHS - World Language Year 1, Unit 2: Families & Communities – Revised Curriculum as presented by the Curriculum and Instruction Committee" Motion carried 7-0.
Attachments: (1)
- e. SHS - World Language Year 2, Unit 2: Global Communities - Second Reading (French, Italian, Latin, Mandarin, Spanish):
MOTION made by Mrs. Carmody, seconded by Mr. Brown " Move to approve SHS - World Language Year 2, Unit 2: Global Communities - Revised Curriculum as presented by the Curriculum and Instruction Committee" Motion carried 7-0.
Attachments: (1)
- f. SHS - World Language Year 3, Unit 2: Global Communities - Second Reading (French, Italian, Latin, Mandarin, Spanish):
MOTION made by Mrs. Carmody, seconded by Mr. Brown " Move to approve SHS - World Language Year 3, Unit 2: Global Communities – Revised Curriculum as presented by the Curriculum and Instruction Committee" Motion carried 7-0.
Attachments: (1)
- g. SHS - World Language Year 4, Unit 2: Global Communities - Second Reading (French, Italian, Latin, Mandarin, Spanish):
MOTION made by Mrs. Carmody, seconded by Mr. Brown " Move to approve SHS - World Language Year 4, Unit 2: Global Communities – Revised Curriculum as presented by the Curriculum and Instruction Committee" Motion carried 7-0.
Attachments: (1)
- h. SHS - World Language Year 5, Unit 2: Global Communities - Second Reading (French, Latin American Studies, Spanish):
MOTION made by Mrs. Carmody, seconded by Mr. Brown " Move to approve SHS - World Language Year 5, Unit 2: Global Communities – Revised

Curriculum as presented by the Curriculum and Instruction Committee”
Motion carried 7-0.
Attachments: (1)

9. New Business

a. Capital Improvement Plan - 2025-26 to 2029-30 - First Reading:

b. District Data Presentation:

Mrs. Amy Zappone, Mrs. Alicia Naleway, and Mrs. Staphanie Lawlor gave a brief, summary overview of district data from last school year, 2023-2024. This presentation focused on looking at K-8 data. The State has an accountability index, which is a set of 12 indicators that school systems in Connecticut are assessed on. This presentation will focus on achievement, growth, and absenteeism. These indicators are tracked internally and then again across the State and how we are doing in comparison.

Academic Achievement – how well students are doing with achievement specifically in the areas of literacy, mathematics, as well as science. These are assessed by The Smarter Balanced assessments and Next Generation Science Standard assessment.

- Mrs. Lawlor presented a slide of the last three years of data, comparing Southington’s literacy overall data with the State’s overall data. All three years Southington’s average exceeded the State’s average. The 2023-2024 school year had the highest rates since post-Covid-19. Mrs. Lawlor also presented a slide indicating the progress of grades K-1. With the shift in core instruction, there were great gains in literacy on the Dibels Benchmark.
- Mrs. Naleway presented a slide with the last three years of data regarding math. Southington’s percentage of achievement for the 2023-2024 school year is the highest it has been in the last 7 years.
- Mrs. Zappone presented a slide with the last three years of data regarding science. This data also presents to be moving in the right direction. Adding science curriculum into grades K-8 has improved the data vertically, with the benchmark year of 8th grade really indicating the progress.

Academic Growth – growth is reported by the state in two ways:

1. The Growth Rate is the average percent of students who actually met their growth target. They either met it, or they did not meet it.
2. The Average Percent of Target Achieved by all students on average. This tells us how close students were to achieving their own growth target.

Data was present for ELA and Math. Slight increases have been made but are moving in the right direction.

Chronic Absenteeism - students being present in school and showing up for instruction is a big factor for improvement and success in the areas of achievement and growth. If a student is getting close to the Chronic Absentee point, mechanisms are put in place to have open communication with the parents. Post- Covid-19 there was an increase in absenteeism. Across the state and in district, efforts are being made to decrease absenteeism each year. The data shows Southington is currently at 11.5% and is trending down but ultimately the target would be to get to 5%.

Mrs. Zappone stated, even though the data shows some increases and some decreases, there is a lot of hard work being put in and there is still a lot of work to do for continuous improvement. An important factor in achievement and growth is that all students have access to high quality, grade level curriculum. Every course, every grade level, every content area is a continuous process and always under evaluation. Curriculum in combination with instructional minutes are important. There is a continuous loop of monitoring, reflecting, and adjusting. Professional learning is necessary for educators. All these moving parts are being worked on to impact students in a positive way.

Mr. Brown asked if all the subjects on the test are covered in the curriculum. Mrs. Zappone replied there were challenges with implementing all the units due to the length of the periods and the number of days in the year. Shifting middle school scheduling could be a benefit.

Mr. Brown commented he is watching a series called “Genius” and he quoted, “Everything that can be measured doesn’t count, and everything that counts can’t be measured.” He stated the arts are important and not everything can be measured with data. He wanted to caution; we should not be eliminating subjects that are not tested. Mrs. Zappone responded the State agrees with him and the State created an indicator called Arts Access. This is measured by the number of students who are enrolled in the courses.

Mrs. Carmody is very proud with what has been done with curriculum and how curriculum has been revised over the years to meet the students’ needs.

Mr. Derynoski inquired about where the numbers come from for the chronic absenteeism data. Mrs. Zappone said the data presented referred to all students, but she can follow up with more information.

Mr. Baczewski clarified, even with excused absences, once students hit the 18 days it is considered chronic absenteeism. Mrs. Zappone confirmed.

Mr. Baczewski is happy with the report presented and that the data is trending in the right direction. Additionally, he would like to see the data collected with students participating in extracurricular courses/activities.

Mr. Carson asked about the growth target. Mrs. Lawler explained every student is assigned a growth target. For accountability purposes, the State looks at the average percent of target achieved.

Mr. Madancy recognized the Board does a great job of understanding the data is “a snapshot in time.” The data presented is of students who are no longer in that grade and are no longer with that teacher. The data is used to show patterns and trends to make informed decisions of how to progress forward. Mr. Pepe explained the growth is based of the students initial score from one year to the next; it is not based on grade level.

Mr. Carson asked for data from the comparable and competitive district.
Mr. Madancy indicated the State has not updated that information since 2014.
Mr. Madancy was going to work on getting the most updated information.

Mr. Whitehead asked about placement of students in classes. Mr. Pepe explained the process of what students get placed with which teacher. Mr. Madancy agreed with Mr. Pepe, every teacher and student needs support and has room for growth.

Mr. Williams highlighted the continuous improvement slide of the presentation. The district has done a good job of maximizing instructional minutes. He also mentioned it is good that chronic absenteeism is going down. We have to continue to educate and remind parents about the importance of the correlation between performance and attendance.

Mr. Baczewski made a closing remark. He spoke about one of his friend’s presentations at work about parents paying for extracurricular help. The presentation advised there is about 42 billion dollars for athletic scholarships but there is over 1 trillion for academic scholarships. Good, bad, or indifferent, the unit at home is the most important teacher. We need to continue to engage them.

Attachments: (1)

10. Public Communications

- a. Public:
No public comment.

11. Adjournment

**MOTION: Made at 8:08p p.m. by Mr. Derynoski and seconded by Mr. Baczewski,
"Move to Adjourn." Motion carried unanimously by vote 7-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Justice Hudson", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Recording Secretary

Board of Education
Administrative Report
December 12, 2024



1. King Arthur Flour Grant Award
2. Tools for Schools on website
3. Google Analytics
4. McKinney Vento Grant



**Board of Education Southington, Connecticut
Curriculum & Instruction Committee Meeting
Technology Training Lab (Public Assembly Room)
Municipal Center, 200 North Main Street
Friday, November 15, 2024 – 9:30 a.m.**

Members Present: Committee Chair Jasper Williams, Bob Brown, Terri Carmody

Member Absent: N/A

Administration Present: Assistant Superintendent Frank Pepe, Director of Teaching and Learning Amy Zappone, Digital Learning Coordinator Rebecca Savelkoul, DePaolo Middle School Principal Chris Palmieri, John F. Kennedy Middle School Principal Sue Vitcavage.

School Staff Present: SHS Math Department Leader Marisa Kudla, SHS Math Assistant Department Leader Megan Kavanaugh, JAD Math Teacher Stephen Mierzejewski, JFK Science Teacher Brett Wojtkowski.

The meeting was called to order at 9:32 a.m. by Committee Chair Mr. Williams.

Marisa Kudla and Megan Kavanaugh presented a new course proposal: **Accelerated Statistics**, a full-year course offered to students who have successfully completed Algebra II. This course would cover the fundamental knowledge of statistics at an accelerated level, equipping students for college and career pathways that heavily rely on a background in statistics. Students who successfully complete the Accelerated Statistics course can still advance into the AP level Statistics course that is currently offered for college credit. The course would not incur additional costs to the board and would run with existing staff.

Amy Zappone presented the **Certificate of Global Engagement** on behalf of Tina Riccio as an informational item to the committee. The Connecticut Certificate of Global Engagement recognizes public high school graduates who have successfully completed a global education curriculum, including engagement in co-curricular activities and experiences that foster the development of global competencies. The State of Connecticut has approved Southington's application to bring this amazing opportunity to our high school students. The Certificate of Global Engagement and associated criteria will be added to the 2025-2026 program of students at Southington High School.

Board of Education

Colleen W. Clark, *Board Chairperson* - Jasper P. Williams, *Vice Chairperson* - Joseph Baczewski, *Secretary*
Robert S. Brown - Terri C. Carmody - Sean M. Carson - David J. Derynoski - Zaya G. Oshana - Cecil Whitehead



Steve Mierzejewski, Chris Palmieri, Rebecca Savelkoul, Sue Vitcavage, Brett Wojtkowski, and Amy Zappone presented a **Middle School Scheduling Proposal** that aims to increase instructional minutes in English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. The team shared the rationale for the schedule change that emerged from student achievement data coupled with factors related to the viability of curriculum implementation in the core subject areas. The proposed schedule increases academic minutes while maintaining various unified arts and world language offerings at the middle schools. A detailed presentation of this proposal will be presented later on the agenda this evening.

Committee members unanimously agreed to forward the above items to the full Board for review.

The meeting adjourned at 10:46 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amy Zappone
Director Of Teaching and Learning

Board of Education

Colleen W. Clark, *Board Chairperson* - Jasper P. Williams, *Vice Chairperson* - Joseph Baczewski, *Secretary*
Robert S. Brown - Terri C. Carmody - Sean M. Carson - David J. Derynoski - Zaya G. Oshana - Cecil Whitehead



Board of Education Southington, Connecticut
Policy & Personnel Committee Meeting Minutes
Superintendent's Conference Room
Municipal Center, 200 North Main Street
Tuesday, November 26, 2024 – 5:30 p.m.

Members Present: Joe Baczewski (Chair), Dave Derynoski, Zaya Oshana, Cecil Whitehead

Administration Present: Assistant Superintendent Frank Pepe, HR Manager Michelle Passamano, Digital Learning Coordinator Rebecca Savelkoul

Mr. Baczewski called the meeting to order at 5:30. Policies 3280, 4118.51, 5121.3, 6141.11 and Regulation 1326 were discussed because of the presence of AI within education. Policy 3280 underwent basic editing. However, the associated regulation was updated to offer a level of screening for gifts to ensure technologic compatibility. 4118.51 and 5121.3 were introduced since we currently do not have either. The committee charged Mr. Pepe and Mrs. Savelkoul to wordsmith the second paragraph of the Policy 5121.3 and will accept further comments during the first or second readings.

Mrs. Passamano explained she is finalizing an SPS Employee Handbook. Incorporated into this handbook are BOE policies. Throughout the process of developing the handbook she noticed that many policies and regulations within the 4000 series are outdated. She proposed the following.

1. BOE 4000 series currently has 42 policies. Her recommendation is to reduce to 24, by including the required and recommended from Shipman, and all other remaining policies will be incorporated into the employee handbook.
2. Current BOE policies have a section for certified and a separate section for non-certified. Her recommendation is to combine to be inclusive of all staff.
3. The employee handbook will include links to the BOE policies and district forms, as a reference for additional information.

This proposal was reviewed with a representative from Shipman and Goodwin, who stated that having policies shifted into a handbook is “best practice”. It allows the district to update procedures without having to change policy, when appropriate.

Mr. Pepe proposed replacing, in its entirety, Policy 5145.3 Sexual Harassment of Students with the proposed Policy 5145.3 (and associated regulations) Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment of

Board of Education



Students. This change will bring SPS in compliance with the new Federal Regulations which have been followed since August 1, 2024 as they were mandated.

Policy 6144 Controversial Issues along with a comparative sample were reviewed. After thorough discussion it was established that a blending of the two would be entertained. Mr. Pepe will bring a draft forward to the next meeting for consideration.

The meeting adjourned at 6:18.

Respectfully submitted,

Frank Pepe

Board of Education

Colleen W. Clark, *Board Chairperson* - Jasper P. Williams, *Vice Chairperson* - Joseph Baczewski, *Secretary*
Robert S. Brown - Terri C. Carmody - Sean M. Carson - David J. Derynoski - Zaya G. Oshana - Cecil Whitehead



Steven G. Madancy
Superintendent of Schools

Frank M. Pepe
Assistant Superintendent
of Schools

Jennifer S. Mellitt
Director of Business &
Finance

Peter J. Romano, Jr.
Director of Operations

Rebecca J. Cavallaro, EdD
Director of Pupil Services

Michelle Passamano
Human Resource Manager

Kyle R. Fickel
Accounting Manager

200 North Main St.
Southington, CT 06489

www.southingtonschools.org

OFFICE TELEPHONE
(860) 628-3200

HUMAN RESOURCE FAX
(860) 628-3211

GENERAL FAX
(860) 628-8056

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
Conference Room #2 Municipal Center
Monday, December 9, 2024, 6:00 p.m.

Board Members Present: Sean Carson, Chair, David Derynoski and Jasper Williams (arrived approximately 7:20).

Present from Administration: Jennifer Mellitt, Director of Business & Finance; Peter Romano, Director of Operations and Kyle Fickel, Accounting Manager

The Finance Committee meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

1. High School Agriculture Science and Technology (Ag Sci) Barn Project-Civil Engineering and Architecture Recommended Awards-ASTE Grant Funded:

Mrs. Mellitt reminded the committee about the June 27th BOE meeting when Mr. McLaughlin, Director of SHS Ag Sci program, presented a rendering of the proposed barn project on the Pleasant Street site next to DePaolo Middle School. This project will be funded by the ASTE grant. In order to move the project along, the services of a civil engineer and an architect are needed. A memo from Mr. Romano about the services needed was included in the packet to the Finance Committee. Information was presented to the committee about the quotes received for professional services.

A recommendation was made to award the quote for civil engineering to the lowest bidder, however Mr. Derynoski noted the preferred bidder ordinance should be considered since a local vendor provided a quote. The local vendor's quote was within the policy guidelines. The committee discussed and agreed to award the civil engineering to Cole Civil & Survey in Plantsville for \$14,400. Mr. Romano will contact the vendors with this information.

Mrs. Mellitt also reviewed the administration's recommendation for architectural services to Kenneth Boroson in the amount of \$19,300. The committee agreed.

2. Administration Recommended Uses of FY 24 Nonlapsing Funds:

Mr. Fickel provided a spending plan for the \$42,847 of unallocated FY 24 nonlapsing funds. The administration requested to allocate \$19,064 to a change order on the athletic track project (paving sidewalks in front of the home and visitor side bleachers); \$16,100 for the required PCB monitoring at the two middle schools

and 50% of the municipal center; and the balance of \$7,683 to be allocated to purchasing replacement automatic external defibrillators (AEDs) for older units in the district.

The committee discussed the disposal of the AED units and wondered if they could be extended by replacing the batteries or if they could be donated to a nonprofit group to be used. Mrs. Mellitt shared information about the useful life of an AED based on the manufacturers recommend life of a unit. Mr. Fickel will contact an AED vendor to inquire how retired AED can be disposed of or reused by other organizations.

The committee reached a consensus to approve the projects as presented.

- 3. High School West Gym – Award of Basketball Hoops- Town Capital Funds:**
Mr. Fickel reviewed two quotes to install four additional basketball hoops in the west gym at the high school. A memo from Mr. Risser, Athletic Director, shared how the additional hoops will benefit not only high school physical education classes but also allow youth leagues and unified sports to use the facilities.

The funding was approved by the Town as a capital account. The committee reached a consensus to approve the award to Hussey Advantage using the Sourcewell contract in the amount of \$43,150.

- 4. Approval of McKinney-Vento Homeless Grant (New Competitive) -Three-year grant:**

Mrs. Mellitt shared that the district applied for a competitive grant intended to support homeless students in the district. The district does not have matching funds for the grant, so the application was limited to under \$10,000. The district was selected for funding the amount of \$9,950 for a three-year period. An approval of the grant application by the Board of Education is required. The committee agreed.

- 5. Self-Insurance Preliminary Budget FY 2025-26:**

Mrs. Mellitt shared the budget approved by the Self Insurance committee on December 4th. The budget is based on an estimate Anthem budget of \$33,926,665 and the committee voted to approve the use of \$1,000,000 in reserves. The BOE's share of the self-insurance budget is 74% or \$24,365,732, an increase of \$3,010,464 over the current FY. Consistent with prior years, the self-insurance committee will continue to evaluate the FY26 budget at their meetings in January, February and March.

6. STELLAR Program Lease Renewal Five Year Term:

The STELLAR program's lease at North Main Street expired on 12/31/24, Mrs. Mellitt shared information on the proposed renewal included work to be done by the landlord on the unit if we can commit to a five-year renewal. The increase included a \$1.00/sf increase (from \$14.54 to \$15.54) in year 1 of the lease and a 3% increase in years 2-5. The five-year term would fit with the district's facility planning.

The committee discussed the proposal but agreed that more information was needed. Mrs. Mellitt will bring more information to the committee in January. The landlord is willing to extend the lease into January while an agreement is being negotiated.

7. Food Service Financial Update:

Mr. Fickel shared the new funding program whereby students eligible for free or reduced meals (based on family income levels) will receive breakfast and lunch at not cost. Students not eligible for free or reduced meals (fully pay students) pay for both breakfast and lunch meals this year. In the 2023-24 year, full pay students received breakfast meals at no cost. Mr. Fickel prepared a schedule showing current counts of meals served and provided historical counts from recent years along with the meal counts from 2018-19 which was the last full year before COVID.

The district is also seeing an increase in students with negative meal balances. As of 12/09/24 the negative meal debt was \$9,960. Mrs. Mellitt shared the collection methods currently being pursued to notify parents of the issue. The methods include emails, text messages, letters mailed home with the Free and Reduced meal applications and phone calls to families by the district's homeless liaison.

Mr. William joined the meeting during this discussion. The financial information was presented through the end of October with a net loss of \$5,742 for the two operating months this year.

8. Food Service Steamer Purchase at DePaolo Middle School:

Mr. Fickel presented the purchase of a replacement kitchen steamer at DePaolo Middle School in the amount of \$30,407 to Globe Equipment. The funding for the purchase is from the Food Service Operating account. The committee agreed.

9. Financial Update Board of Education Operating Budget:

Mrs. Mellitt shared information about a reduction in the Title I grant funding for the FY 2024-25 school year. The reduction is \$154,000 less than budgeted. The administration is taking measures to offset this shortfall through staff vacancies.

The Special Education Excess Cost projected revenue based on the December 1st filing was shared with the committee. Depending on the state's reimbursement percentage, the grant would provide approximately \$2,900,000 if funded at 60%.

The state is supposed to provide the expected reimbursement percentage by 12/31/24, however it is more likely to be published in January.

Electricity is still being evaluated as we wait for the new contract rates for supply to be reflected on our next invoices. An update will be presented after the invoices are received.

10. Miscellaneous:

Mr. Derynoski inquired about the Battery Storage project at the middle schools which had been presented in previous BOE meetings. Mr. Carson shared that the project had not been approved in the end.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Jennifer Mellitt
Director of Business & Finance



MEMO

TO: Finance Committee and Board of Education Members
DATE: December 10, 2024
RE: Revised Award for the Civil Engineering Services –
Ag Sci Barn Project

At the December 9th Finance Committee meeting, an award was recommended by the administration for civil engineering services (as noted on the attached memo). However, during the meeting Mr. Derynoski asked about the Preferred Bidder Ordinance and if the award should be offered to the local vendor at the lowest quoted price. Since the local bidder was within the 10% guidelines, the Finance Committee's award recommendation was revised for Cole Civil & Survey in Plantsville at the lower cost of \$14,400.

Mr. Romano confirmed today that Cole Civil & Survey will match the lower quoted price.



MEMO

TO: BOE Finance Committee
DATE: December 6, 2024
RE: Ag Sci Barn Project Award Recommendation for Civil Engineering and Architecture Services

At the June 27th BOE meeting, Mr. Owen McLaughlin, Director of Southington Regional Agriculture Program, presented information including a rendering of the barn to be constructed on the Pleasant Street farm property next to DePaolo Middle School. The project will be funded using the ASTE grant funds. The attached memo from Mr. Romano, Director of Operations, provides details on the services needed to construct the building on the Pleasant Street farm property. The administration recommends awarding the professional services related to the construction of the barn as follows:

- 1. Professional service quotes were requested by Mr. Romano using the informal competitive proposal process for civil engineering from the following companies:

Julianno Associates	Wallingford, CT	\$14,400
Cole Civil & Survey	Plantsville, CT	\$14,850
SLR Consulting	Cheshire, CT	\$26,600

The administration recommends awarding the civil engineering services to Julianno Associates in the amount of \$14,400 to be funded by the ASTE Grant.

- 2. Professional service quotes were requested by Mr. Romano using the informal competitive proposal process for architectural services from the following companies:

Kenneth Boroson	New Haven, CT	\$19,300
Silver Petrucelli & Associates	New London, CT	\$25,896
AE Design Group	Southington, CT	No Bid

The administration recommends awarding architectural services to Kenneth Boroson in the amount of \$19,300 to be funded by the ASTE Grant.



MEMO

TO: Board of Education, Finance Committee
DATE: 12/4/2024
RE: Administration Recommendation for Use of FY24 NonLapsing Funds

At the September 9th Finance Committee meeting, the FY 24 unexpended funds were deposited into a NonLapsing Fund with \$42,847 of unallocated funds. The administration recommends the following uses of those funds:

SHS Athletic Track Add Alternate, \$19,064

Southington Public Schools received Small-Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) grant in the summer of 2023 for the athletic track at the high school. During construction of the track, new sidewalks in front of both the home and visitors' bleachers were added for the additional requested amount.

2024-2025 PCB Monitoring, \$16,100

The middle schools and the municipal center are required to test for PCBs annually. These funds are recommended to pay for the testing in FY25.

Automated External Defibrillator (AED) replacements, \$7,683

Southington Public Schools has 26 AED units across the district. These funds will replace four units as part of our ongoing replacement cycle.

MEMO

TO: Board of Education, Finance Committee
DATE: 12/5/2024
RE: High School West Gym, Award of Basketball Hoops- Town Capital Funds

At the June 24, 2024, Town Council meeting, the Council approved an appropriation to the Board of Education which included funds for the installation of four basketball hoops in the west gym at Southington High School. This project will be funded using the Town of Southington Capital Funds.

Quotes were requested by Mr. Risser, our Athletic Director, in conjunction with the Purchasing Office using the cooperative purchases process for project material and labor costs from the following companies:

Hussey Advantage	North Berwick, ME	Sourcewell Contract #081523-HSC	\$43,150
Gametime Sports Construction	Madison, CT	State of CT Contract #18PSX0319	\$75,000

The administration recommends awarding the materials and installation services to Hussey Advantage in the amount of \$43,150 to be funded by the Town of Southington's Capital Account.



MEMO

TO: Kyle Fickel, Accounting Manager
DATE: 12/5/2024
RE: Rationale for the Addition of Four New Basketball Hoops, SHS West Gymnasium

In the West Gymnasium at Southington High School there are currently twelve basketball apparatuses which are all positioned in an East-West direction (including the two primary game baskets on the competition floor). The West Gymnasium does not have any side baskets pointed in a North-South direction hindering the ability to play more than one basketball game or other sports competitions simultaneously in this most important space for indoor interscholastic athletics at SHS.

The addition of the four (4) side baskets in the North-South position will also allow Physical Education classes at the high school to utilize the West Gym area for multiple basketball games and other activities being played simultaneously by using the existing space curtain divider presently located at mid-court in a North-South direction. The four (4) new baskets will also allow the SHS United Sports Basketball Special Olympics Program to host regional and state tournaments in the West Gymnasium with the advent of multiple playing court opportunities. The project will also provide for expanded utilization of the West Gymnasium for town youth sports contests and clinics.

Thank you for your time and support of this important project to expand our playing opportunities for SHS Blue Knights' Athletics and Physical Education students under the direction and supervision of their respective coaches and PE instructors; and for town youth sports at SHS.



MEMO

TO: Board of Education Finance Committee
DATE: December 9, 2024
RE: FY 2025 McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance (New Competitive) Grant approval

On September 23, 2024, the district submitted an application for the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance (New Competitive) Federal Grant. The district has been selected for funding for a three-year period ending September 30, 2027. The initial grant of \$9,950 runs from October 1, 2024-September 30, 2025. An annual report will be required in years two and three of the grant.

Per the grant application: “The goal of the funding is to facilitate the enrollment, attendance and success in school of homeless children and youth...to accomplish this mission, it is necessary to offer educational and related services to homeless children and youth to support the traditional classroom experience.”

In September 2024, the district has identified 20 students as homeless. Below is a summary of the approved budget amounts and uses of funds:

\$3,800.00	Funds for transportation to and from school activities, evening events for families and the family cost of field trips for students to attendance with their peers.
\$2,350.00	Funds for homeless students to attend local summer camp.
\$1,300.00	Funds to address immediate needs of clothing, food, gas and personal hygiene items to allow students to attend school.
\$1,200.00	Funds for school spirit wear and backpacks with school supplies for homeless students.
<u>\$1,300.00</u>	Funds to provide short term housing (hotel/motel stays) for those families experiencing homelessness.
\$9,950.00	Total Grant Awarded for October 1, 2024- September 30, 2025

Board of Education approval is required to finalize the competitive grant award. The administration requests approval of the grant application for the three-year award.

MEMO

TO: Board of Education, Finance Committee
DATE: 12/5/2024
RE: Food Service Steamer Purchase at DePaolo Middle School

The steamer used in the kitchen at DePaolo Middle School is not currently functioning and can no longer be repaired. The steamer is used to warm and cook vegetables much quicker at a consistent temperature, making them look, smell, and taste more appealing to students.

Two quotes were received for a Vulcan C24G10 Gas Convection Steamer. Included in these quotes were the cost of the unit, delivery, installation, and removal of the old steamer. One vendor is on the state of Connecticut contract; however, a second vendor provided a lower price for the same unit. We have used both vendors in the past with good service and products.

Globe Equipment	Bridgeport, CT	N/A	\$30,407
Singer Kittredge	Agawam, MA	State of CT Contract #21PSX0002	\$34,203

The administration recommends awarding the purchase of a Vulcan C24G10 Gas Convection Steamer for DePaolo Middle School to Globe Equipment Company in the amount of \$30,407.

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
SOUTHINGTON, CONNECTICUT**

Informational Only _____ Board Meeting Date December 2024

Decision Requested X Agenda Code 8 a

AGENDA REPORTING FORM

Agenda Topic: Personnel Report

Summary of Issue: This Personnel Report includes appointments, resignations, retirements, and transfers for certified and classified personnel for the 2024-2025 school year. This report includes activity for the month of November 2024.

Background: The human resource department provides the Board of Education with a monthly update of personnel additions/reductions/changes.

Alternative Strategies: _____

Cost (if applicable): N/A **Funding Source:** Board of Education

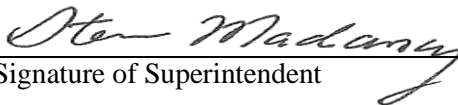
Beginning Date of Program or Project: N/A

Ending Date of Program or Project: N/A

Recommendation or Comment: Recommend that the Board of Education approve the Personnel Report as submitted by the human resource department.



Signature of Staff Member Submitting Report



Signature of Superintendent

Included:

Personnel Report

Agenda – December 2024

**Personnel Report
November 2024**

APPOINTMENTS

	NAME	POSITION	SCHOOL	FTE	EFFECTIVE	DEGREE	SALARY
CERT	Gromko, Jill	Special Education Teacher	FES	1.0	1-6-2025	MA	\$72,500
CLASS	Hollman, Rebecca	Paraeducator	FES	1.0	11-18-2024	N/A	\$18.86
CLASS	Kovac, Jenisse	Paraeducator	FES	1.0	12-2-2024	N/A	\$18.86
CERT	LaBov, Dominique	Business Teacher	SHS	1.0	1-2-2025	7 th	\$72,800
CLASS	Munoz, Joaquin	Crossing Guard	JAD	1.0	11-25-2024	N/A	\$19.97
CLASS	Nkata, Ezra	Custodian, PT	FES	0.49	11-12-2024	N/A	\$16.83
CLASS	Watrous, Jill	Paraeducator, CLC	HES	1.0	11-12-2024	N/A	\$20.50

RESIGNATIONS/RETIREMENTS

	NAME	POSITION	SCHOOL	EFFECTIVE	YRS	RET/RES
CLASS	Coppola, Richard	Custodian, FT	JFK	2-5-2025	17	RETIRE
CERT	DiCenzo, Claire	Kindergarten Teacher	TES	12-11-2024	16	RESIGN
CERT	DiGioia, Leah	Ag-Sci Teacher	SHS	11-19-2024	3 mo.	RESIGN
CLASS	Quarello, Rachel	Paraeducator, Pre-K	HES	10-23-2024	2 mo.	TERM
CLASS	Siegel'Hirleman, Alenna	Paraeducator, FT	HES	11-26-2024	3 mo.	RESIGN
CLASS	Smith, Kellie	ABA Therapist, SLC	HES	11-12-2024	1 mo.	RESIGN
CLASS	Sullivan, Kimberly	Paraeducator, PT	HES	11-8-2024	3	RESIGN
CLASS	Watrous, Jill	Paraeducator, FT	HES	11-20-2024	1 mo.	RESIGN

ASSIGNMENT CHANGE

	FROM (PREVIOUS ASSIGN)			TO (NEW ASSIGN)		
NAME	POSITION/SCHOOL	FTE	POSITION/SCHOOL	FTE	EFFECTIVE	
<i>None to report</i>						

TRANSFERS

	FROM (PREVIOUS ASSIGN)			TO (NEW ASSIGN)		
CERT NAME	POSITION/SCHOOL	FTE	POSITION/SCHOOL	FTE	EFFECTIVE	
<i>None to report</i>						

STIPENDS

COACHING

Resignations/Non-Renewals

None to report

Appointments

Boisvert, Michele	Head Coach – Softball	SHS	STIPEND
Castellone, Tyler	Head Coach – Boys Swimming & Diving	SHS	STIPEND
Fryer, Christopher	Assistant Coach – Boys Swimming	SHS	STIPEND
Lamson, Kelsey	Assistant Coach – Gymnastics	SHS	STIPEND
Muro, Roseann	Assistant Coach – Indoor Track	SHS	STIPEND

OTHER

Resignations/Non-Renewals

None to report

Appointments

Cristelli, Christine	Math Club Advisor	SHS	STIPEND
Goodenough, Larry	Sophomore Class Advisor	SHS	STIPEND

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
SOUTHINGTON, CONNECTICUT**

Informational Only _____ Board Meeting Date December 12, 2024

Decision Requested x Agenda Code 9 b.

AGENDA REPORTING FORM

Agenda Topic: Capital Improvement Plan 2025-26 to 2029-30 Second Reading

Summary of Issue: The proposed Capital Improvement Plan calls for \$82,018,420 in 2025-26 and \$188,767,833 over the next four years for a total of \$270,786,253

Background: The Board prepares an updated five-year Capital Improvement Plan each year. Our requests are then combined with the town into a long-term Capital Improvement Plan presentation.

Alternative Strategies: Modify Plan as proposed.

Cost (if applicable): _____ **Funding Source:** Capital Budget

Beginning Date of Program or Project: July 1, 2025

Ending Date of Program or Project: June 30, 2030

Recommendation or Comment: Move to approve the Capital Improvement Plan 2025-26 to 2029-30 as presented by the Administration.

Kyle Fickel

Signature of Staff Member Submitting Form

Oster Madansky

Signature of Superintendent of Schools



SOUTHINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**Capital Improvement Plan
Five-Year Projection
2025/26 to 2029/30**

**Southington Board of Education
Proposed Capital Improvement Projects
Five Year Plan - By Project**

Site	Project Type / Description	Year of Request	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	Total Request - Five Years
Air Conditioning- 5 Elementary Schools								
	HVAC Improvements to Hatton, Oshana, South End, Strong and Thalberg	2022/23					15,750,000	15,750,000
	Subtotal		-	-	-	-	15,750,000	15,750,000
Boiler Project								
SHS	Replace Boiler	2022/23		121,275				121,275
HES	Replace Boiler	2022/23				194,250		194,250
	Subtotal		-	121,275	-	194,250	-	315,525
Roofing Projects								
HES	Replace 1996 Roofing, 27,000SF; 2003 Roofing, 45,000SF	2017/18		2,354,401				2,354,401
SES	Replace 1993 Roofing, 26,500 SF; 2003 Roofing, 28,870SF	2021/22		2,009,931				2,009,931
SEES	Replace Roofing, 57,800 SF	Ongoing		691,488				691,488
TES	Replace 2002 Roofing, 62,068 SF	2021/22		2,253,068				2,253,068
	Subtotal		-	7,308,888	-	-	-	7,308,888
Vehicles								
DW	Ford F250 4WD Pickup Truck	2024/25	60,000					60,000
SPED	Ford T350 Passenger Van	2024/25	65,000					65,000
	Subtotal		125,000	-	-	-	-	125,000
SHS Athletic Facility Improvement Projects								
SHS	Replace Stadium Bleachers & Press Box, Phase II	2021/22	700,000					700,000
SHS	Replace Tennis Courts, Phases I & II	2021/22	793,420	793,420				1,586,840
	Subtotal		1,493,420	793,420	-	-	-	2,286,840
Subtotal Board of Education Capital Improvement Plan			1,618,420	8,223,583	-	194,250	15,750,000	25,786,253
School Construction Projects								
KES	Phase III Elementary Projects Kelley- Revised 22-23	2018/19	71,700,000					71,700,000
SEES	Phase III Elementary Projects South End	2024/25	8,700,000					8,700,000
DES	Phase III Elementary Projects Derynoski- Revised 22-23	2018/19			77,000,000			77,000,000
KSA	Karen Smith Academy- Revised 22-23	2021/22			15,900,000			15,900,000
FES	Phase III Elementary Projects Flanders- Revised 22-23	2018/19					71,700,000	71,700,000
Subtotal Phase III: Derynoski, Flanders & Kelley Building Projects			80,400,000	-	92,900,000	-	71,700,000	245,000,000
Grand Total Board of Education Capital Improvement Plan			82,018,420	8,223,583	92,900,000	194,250	87,450,000	270,786,253

TOWN OF SOUTHINGTON
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN
FISCAL YEAR 2025/26 THROUGH FISCAL YEAR 2029/30

DEPARTMENT:	BOARD OF EDUCATION	PROJECT TITLE:	AIR CONDITIONING - ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS
		FISCAL YEAR PROPOSED:	2029/30

DESCRIPTION:

The Administration requested pricing to improve the HVAC systems at five elementary schools. The schools and the approximate cost to improve the HVAC systems are listed below.

School	Estimated Construction Cost
Hatton Elementary	\$ 3,822,500
Oshana Elementary (A)	\$ 1,213,500
South End Elementary	\$ 1,760,000
Strong Elementary	\$ 3,287,500
Thalberg Elementary	\$ 3,220,500
TOTAL	\$ 13,304,000
Estimated Architectural costs	\$ 1,000,000
Subtotal	\$ 14,304,000
Add 10% contingency	\$ 1,446,000
Total Estimate for all schools	\$ 15,750,000

PROJECT COST: 15,750,000

TOWN OF SOUTHINGTON
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN
FISCAL YEAR 2025/26 THROUGH FISCAL YEAR 2029/30

DEPARTMENT:	BOARD OF EDUCATION	PROJECT TITLE:	BOILER PROJECT
		FISCAL YEAR PROPOSED:	2026/27; 2028/29

DESCRIPTION:

2026/27
 SHS - This project would replace two (2) boilers for the Auditorium, DECA and CLP wings of the high school. The gas boilers are 600,000 BTUs each and supply hot water for the heat pumps in the those wings. The boilers were installed in 1998 and are in fair condition. SPS has been repairing sections on the boilers in the past six years due to leaks.
\$121,275

2028/29
 This Project would replace two (2) boilers at Hatton Elementary School, in accordance with the replacement schedule as advised by the Administration
\$194,250

PROJECT COST: 315,525

TOWN OF SOUTHLINGTON
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN
FISCAL YEAR 2025/26 THROUGH FISCAL YEAR 2029/30

DEPARTMENT: BOARD OF EDUCATION	PROJECT TITLE: ROOFING PROJECTS
	FISCAL YEAR PROPOSED: 2026/27

DESCRIPTION:

2026/27
HES - This project would replace the 1996 roofing, 27,000 SF and the 2003 roofing, 45000 SF.
\$2,354,401
SES - This project would replace the 1993 roofing, 26,500 SF and the 2003 roofing, 28,870 SF.
\$2,009,931
SEES- This roof has been repaired numerous times since installation. This project would repair the repaired roof, 57,800 SF.
\$691,488
TES - This project would replace the 2002 roofing, 62,068 SF.
\$2,253,068

PROJECT COST: 7,308,888

TOWN OF SOUTHTON
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN
FISCAL YEAR 2025/26 THROUGH FISCAL YEAR 2029/30

DEPARTMENT: BOARD OF EDUCATION	PROJECT TITLE: Vehicles
	FISCAL YEAR PROPOSED: 2025/26

DESCRIPTION:

2025/26
Maintenance Vehicle- Pickup Truck
New Ford F-250 SuperCab, 4WD Pickup Truck for Maintenance Department. Of the 16 fleet vehicles, the average age is 10.8 years old with more than 50% of those rated less than good.
\$60,000

2025/26
Special Education- Student Passenger Van
New Ford Passenger van for Special Education to replace 2012 Ford Econoline. In addition to its primary function with the STELLAR program, the van will be used to ensure compliance of student activity transition services across the district.
\$65,000

PROJECT COST: 125,000

**TOWN OF SOUTHLINGTON
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN
FISCAL YEAR 2025/26 THROUGH FISCAL YEAR 2029/30**

DEPARTMENT: BOARD OF EDUCATION	PROJECT TITLE: High School Athletic Facility Master Plan based on Kaestle Boos Study from December 2020 Revised September 2024
	FISCAL YEAR PROPOSED: 2025/26, 2026/27

DESCRIPTION:
2025/26, 2026/27
Athletic Facility Master Plan Improvements
Various Improvements to the Athletic Fields as outlined in the December 2020 Kaestle Boos Study in December 2020, revised in September 2024. This includes a 5% contingency for the entire project and add alternates, such as an additional parking lot for the athletic complex.

Project	Cost	Funding Year
Replace Stadium Bleachers and Press Box, Phase II	\$ 700,000	2025/26
Tennis Court Replacement Phase I	\$ 793,420	2025/26
Tennis Court Replacement Phase II	\$ 793,420	2026/27

PROJECT COST: 2,286,840

**TOWN OF SOUTHLINGTON
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN
FISCAL YEAR 2025/26 THROUGH FISCAL YEAR 2029/30**

DEPARTMENT:	BOARD OF EDUCATION	PROJECT TITLE:	SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS
		FISCAL YEAR PROPOSED:	2025/26, 2027/28, and 2029/30

DESCRIPTION:

**2025/26, 2027/28, and 2029/30
Phase III Elementary Projects**

Three elementary schools remain to be renovated as part of Phase III of the School Construction Projects. The Board of Education has been working with Colliers on a construction plan for each school. The below table shows estimated costs for each school, last updated in September 2024.

Location	Estimated Cost
Kelley Elementary School	\$ 71,700,000
South End Elementary School	\$ 8,700,000
Derynoski Elementary School	\$ 77,000,000
Karen Smith Academy	\$ 15,900,000
Flanders Elementary School	\$ 71,700,000
Total	\$ 245,000,000

Karen Smith Academy

The Board of Education is also developing a plan for constructing a new building for the Karen Smith Academy. The estimate was updated September 2024.

\$15,900,000

PROJECT COST: 245,000,000

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
SOUTHINGTON, CONNECTICUT**

Informational Only _____

Board Meeting Date December 12, 2025

Decision Requested X

Agenda Code 10 a.1.

AGENDA REPORTING FORM

Agenda Topic: Out of State: Approval of Out of State/Overnight Field Trip

Summary of Issue: The Board of Education must give approval for field trips that are over 200 miles in distance from Southington, trips to foreign countries, or overnight field trips. Presented here is the following trip:

- SHS – CyberKnights Robotics Team – Houston, TX
 - 4/15/25 - 4/20/25

Background: N/A

Alternative Strategies: N/A

Cost (if applicable): N/A **Funding Source:** _____

Beginning Date of Program or Project: N/A

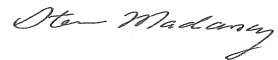
Ending Date of Program or Project: N/A

Recommendation or Comment: Move that the Board of Education approve the field trip request as presented by the administration.

Titles of Attachments:
1. Field Trip Application



Signature of Staff Member Submitting Report



Signature of Superintendent of Schools

**Southington High School
SHS CyberKnights**

Houston, TX

(4/15/25 – 4/20/25)

Application for Out-of-State/In-State/Overnight Field Trip

Submit to Director of Teaching and Learning

Date: Nov. 5, 2024

Out of State: Yes No

Miles Round Trip: 3600

Overnight: Yes No

Southington High School

CyberKnights Robotics Team

April 15-20, 2025

School

Class/Group

Date of Trip

Name and Address of Destination George Brown Convention Center 1001 Avenida de Las Americas, Houston, TX

Reasons for Field Trip FIRST Robotics Competition

Itinerary (attach if needed)

Departure Date/Time April 15, 2025 6:00 am

Return Date/Time April 20, 2025 10:00 pm

Type: Academic (15:1) Non-Academic (10:1) Abroad (8:1) Required Ratio (Student: Teacher/Chaperone)

of Students: 47 # of Teachers/Chaperones: 10 # of Buses: 1

Have definite arrangements been made at the field trip destination? Yes No

Have met with nurse to address student health needs.

Nurse's Signature Umecoral Co Date 11-20-24

TRIPS REQUIRING BOE APPROVAL ONLY: Have NOT met with the nurse. Will meet with the nurse to address student health needs when the student roster is complete. This meeting will take place approximately one-month prior to the scheduled trip.

Destination is handicap accessible: Yes No Lift Van Needed? Yes No

COST AND FINANCING

Source of Funds	Totals	Additional Notes
TOTAL Anticipated Cost of Trip	\$73,5000	
Board of Education Contribution	\$0	
Other	\$	
Fundraising Activity	(\$)	Ongoing Fundraising
BALANCE	\$	
Student Contribution		
Transportation	\$925	47 Students @ \$43,475
Entrance Fees, Room & Board	\$640	47 Students @ \$30,080
TOTAL Cost of Trip to Each Student	<u>\$1565</u>	<u>Students can fundraise towards trip</u>

SIGNATURES

Teacher Diana S Drechsler Diana S Drechsler Date Nov. 5, 2024

Dept. Head _____ Date _____

Principal [Signature] [Signature] Date 11/20/24

Comments _____

Director of Teaching & Learning: [Signature] Date 11/20/24 Approved Not Approved

Board of Education Approval*** YES NO Date _____

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
SOUTHINGTON, CONNECTICUT**

Informational Only Board Meeting Date December 12, 2024

Decision Requested _____ Agenda Code 10 b.

AGENDA REPORTING FORM

Agenda Topic: Proposed 2025-2026 School Calendar ~ First Reading

Summary of Issue: The attached school calendar is provided to the Board for their comments and recommendations.

Background: The calendar will be brought back to the Board for approval at the January 9, 2025 Board meeting.

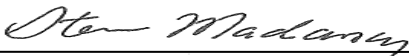
Alternative Strategies: _____

Cost (if applicable): N/A **Funding Source:** N/A

Beginning Date of Program or Project: _____

Ending Date of Program or Project: _____

Recommendation or Comment: Board members may wish to comment on the Proposed School Calendar for the 2025-2026 School Year.



Signature of Superintendent of Schools

Title of Attachment

1. Proposed School Calendar for the 2025-2026 School Year

2025-2026 CALENDAR *DRAFT - 12/9/2024*

August – 2 Days					September – 21 Days					October – 22 Days					November – 15 Days				
M	T	W	Th	F	M	T	W	Th	F	M	T	W	Th	F	M	T	W	Th	F
				1	(1)	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	3	PD	5	6	7
4	5	6	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	6	7	8	9	10	10	(11)	12	-13-	14
11	12	13	14	15	15	16	17	18	19	(13)	14	15	16	17	-17-	18	19	20	21
18	19	20	21	22	22	23	24	25	26	20	21	22	23	24	24	25	(26)	(27)	(28)
PD	PD	PD	*28*	29	29	30				27	28	29	30	31					
December – 17 Days					January – 19 Days					February – 18 Days					March – 22 Days				
M	T	W	Th	F	M	T	W	Th	F	M	T	W	Th	F	M	T	W	Th	F
1	2	3	4	5				(1)	(2)	2	3	4	5	6	2	3	4	5	6
8	-9-	10	-11-	12	5	6	7	8	9	9	10	11	12	13	9	10	11	12	13
15	16	17	18	19	12	13	14	15	16	(16)	(17)	18	19	20	16	-17-	18	-19-	20
22	23	(24)	(25)	(26)	(19)	20	21	22	23	23	24	25	26	27	23	24	25	26	27
(29)	(30)	(31)			26	27	28	29	30						30	31			
April – 16 Days					May – 20 Days					June – 9 Days					181 Instructional Days (186 Staff Days)				
M	T	W	Th	F	M	T	W	Th	F	M	T	W	Th	F					
		1	2	(3)					1	1	2	3	4	5	KEY Early Dismissal-All Schools K-12 - - Early Dismissal - Listed Schools () Holiday/Vacation – No School PD Workday/PD – No School for Students				
6	7	8	9	10	4	5	6	7	8	8	9	10	11	12					
(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	11	12	13	14	15	15	16	17	18	19					
20	21	22	23	24	18	19	20	21	22	22	23	24	25	26					
27	28	29	30		(25)	26	27	28	29	29	30								

8/28/2025 - *First Day of School for Students*

8/25/2025, 8/26/2025, 8/27/2025, 11/4/2025 – Staff Workdays/PD – No School for Students

Any unexpected school closings will be made up following the scheduled last day of school up to June 30, 2026. If additional weather-related days are needed beyond these days, we will begin with April 17, 2026 and move backward.

Early Dismissal All Schools /	Early Dismissal – Listed Schools - -	NO SCHOOL ()	
9/23/25	Southington High School	9/1/25	Labor Day
10/21/25	11/13/25 – SHS Conferences	10/13/25	Columbus Day
12/2/25		11/11/25	Veterans Day
12/23/25	JAD & JFK Middle Schools	11/26/25 - 11/28/25	Thanksgiving Recess
1/13/26	11/17/25 – M.S. Conferences	12/24/25 - 1/2/26	Holiday/Winter Recess
2/3/26		1/19/26	Martin Luther King Day
3/3/26		2/16/26 - 2/17/26	Presidents’ Day Recess
4/7/26	Elementary Schools – K-5	4/3/26	Good Friday
5/5/26	12/9/25 & 12/11/25 - Elem. Conf.	4/13/26 - 4/17/26	Spring Break
6/11/26-Tent. Last Day	3/17/26 & 3/19/26 - Elem. Conf.		
		5/25/2026	Memorial Day

Facility/School	Phone	Hours	Address	Special Observation Days
Board of Education	860-628-3202	7:30-4:30	200 N. Main St.	9/22/25 - 9/24/25* Rosh Hashanah
Southington High School	860-628-3229	7:37-2:15	720 Pleasant St.	10/1/25 - 10/2/25* Yom Kippur
Karen Smith Academy	860-628-3379	7:40-1:10	242 Main Street	10/6/25 - 10/13/25* Sukkot
Stellar Program	860-628-3200	8:00-2:00	51 North Main St.	10/20/25 Diwali
J. A. DePaolo Middle School	860-628-3260	8:05-2:40	385 Pleasant St.	1/6/26 Three Kings Day
J. F. Kennedy Middle School	860-628-3275	8:05-2:40	1071 South Main St.	Begins 2/17/26* Ramadan
Derynoski Elementary School	860-628-3286	8:55-3:25	240 Main St.	3/3/26 – 3/4/26* Holi
Flanders Elementary School	860-628-3372	8:35-3:05	100 Victoria Dr.	4/1/26 - 4/9/26* Passover
Hatton Elementary School	860-628-3377	8:35-3:05	50 Spring Lake Rd	
Kelley Elementary School	860-628-3310	8:55-3:25	501 Ridgewood Rd	*Holiday begins at sundown the evening of the first date specified.
Oshana Elementary School	860-628-3450	8:35-3:05	70 Church St.	Southington BOE Policy 5113 considers observance of a religious holiday an excused absence, and faculty will make appropriate accommodations for students affected by these and other special observation days.
South End Elementary School	860-628-3320	8:35-3:05	Maxwell Noble Dr.	
Strong Elementary School	860-628-3314	8:55-3:25	820 Marion Ave.	
Thalberg Elementary School	860-628-3370	8:35-3:05	145 Dunham St.	



SOUTHINGTON
Public Schools

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024



Superintendent's Annual Report

2023-2024

Southington Board of Education

Colleen W. Clark, Board Chairperson

Jasper P. Williams, Vice Chairperson

Joseph Baczewski, Secretary

Robert S. Brown

Terri C. Carmody

Sean M. Carson

David J. Derynoski

Zaya G. Oshana

Cecil Whitehead

Central Office Staff

Steven G. Madancy, Superintendent of Schools

Frank M. Pepe, Assistant Superintendent of Schools

Jennifer S. Mellitt, Director of Business & Finance

Rebecca J. Cavallaro, Director of Pupil Services

Peter J. Romano, Director of Operations

Michelle Passamano, Human Resource Manager

Jessica Poon, Information Systems Manager

Tyler Savage, Network Manager

Rebecca Savelkoul, Digital Learning Coordinator

Amy Zappone, Director of Teaching and Learning

Kyle Fickel, Accounting Manager

Superintendent's Annual Report

2023-2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Pages

Superintendent's Executive Summary	1
Curriculum & Instruction	2-5
Business Department	6-8
Operations Department	9-11
Human Resource Department	12-14
Pupil Personnel Services	15-18
Technology Department	19-24
School-Based Activities	25-64

Southington Public Schools

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024

SUPERINTENDENT'S EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Steven G. Madancy, Superintendent of Schools

This Annual Report highlights the collective dedication and impressive accomplishments of the Southington Public Schools' staff in their mission to provide exceptional learning opportunities for all students.

Our district remains firmly committed to two foundational priorities: ensuring safety and fostering learning.

Student success is consistently reflected in high graduation rates, strong college acceptance rates, and significant participation and achievement in AP and ECE courses. Our students' academic, athletics, arts, and STEM accolades further underscore their accomplishments. State-level assessments reveal continued growth and success across grade levels, with Southington students performing well compared to peers in similar districts and statewide.

To prepare students for the demands of the modern world, we remain focused on revising curriculum and assessments to align with the district's Vision of a Graduate, emphasizing critical 21st-century skills. Professional development for teachers has been integral to equipping students with consistent opportunities to engage with these essential skills, ensuring progress from kindergarten through high school. The high school spent considerable time and effort furthering their development of career pathways to help students explore career opportunities and pursue further if there was a specific area of interest. The focus at the elementary level was building district leadership capacity with the knowledge needed to implement a new reading curriculum for the 24-25 academic year with an explicit focus on the elements associated with the science of reading.

The Board of Education and district administration have maintained close partnerships with emergency management and town officials to enhance and sustain a secure learning environment. The Interagency Safety Committee remains a standout model across the state, fostering collaboration among local agencies. Priorities for the year included staff training, refining emergency response protocols, and facilities improvements to protect our students and staff.

The accomplishments and progress outlined in this report reflect all district staff's exceptional talent, dedication, and professionalism during the 2023-2024 academic year. Together, we continue to provide a strong foundation for the success and well-being of every student in Southington Public Schools.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Amy Zappone, Director of Teaching and Learning

Stephanie Lawlor, K-8 English Language Arts & K-5 Social Studies Coordinator

Alicia Naleway, K-8 Mathematics & K-5 Science Coordinator

K-8 English Language Arts

Southington Public Schools is committed to ensuring all students read successfully. During the 2023-2024 school year, the ELA coordinator and literacy coaches continued to study best practices aligned with the research behind the Science of Reading. This included engaging in professional learning opportunities offered by the Connecticut State Department of Education. The *Masterclass* is a statewide professional learning opportunity, co-created with the Connecticut Association of School Superintendents to build capacity around the Science of Reading (SOR). This year's professional learning series focused on the components of comprehensive K-3 literacy instruction. These components include phonics, phonemic awareness, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Southington had a team of administrators and literacy coaches attend this year-long Masterclass including the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, ELA Curriculum Coordinator, four elementary principals, and four literacy coaches. The learning gleaned from these sessions, in addition to other learning experiences, was shared with K-2 teachers and the entire elementary administrative team through monthly professional development.

The ELA Curriculum Coordinator and literacy coaches reviewed all programs on the Connecticut State Department of Education's Approved K-3 Reading Program list. The team narrowed down the selection to two programs and then engaged in another opportunity offered by the CSDE to help with the selection process. The HILL for Literacy provided guidance and a comprehensive review tool to aid in the selection process. The ELA Coordinator assembled a District Literacy Leadership Team, composed of twenty teachers and administrators to work with The HILL for Literacy. In the spring of 2024, the District Literacy Leadership Team brought Benchmark Advance to the Assistant Superintendent and Board of Education as the program of choice. Materials were purchased for grades K-2 using funds from a grant from the CSDE. All K-2 teachers received professional development on Benchmark Advance at the end of the 2023-2024 school year for an implementation start in the 2024-2025 school year.

Science of Reading professional learning began during the 2023-2024 school year for teachers in grades three through five. Shifts in practice continued in the areas of vocabulary and word study. A team of literacy specialists created word study lessons to support teachers in teaching morphology in the upper grades. Professional development in the Science of Reading will continue during the 2024-2025 school year to help teachers understand the pedagogical shifts needed for implementing a new ELA program.

Assessment measures were revised to reflect changes in practice that align with the Science of Reading. During the 2023-2024 school year, DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) 8th Edition was administered in grades K-5. DIBELS evaluates the five literacy skills necessary to become a successful reader. These skills are:

- **Phonemic Awareness:** Hearing and using sounds in spoken words
- **Alphabetic Principle:** Knowing the sounds of the letters and sounding out written words
- **Accurate and Fluent Reading:** Reading stories easily and quickly with few mistakes
- **Vocabulary:** Understanding and using a variety of words
- **Comprehension:** Understanding what is spoken or read

Professional development in the administration of DIBELS was provided throughout the year. The DIBELS assessment provides teachers with a good indication of how easy or difficult grade-level reading is for students. It provides teachers with specific skills that are areas of strength for students, as well as areas for growth. This information in conjunction with other data points will help teachers to make informed instructional decisions to keep students on track to become accurate and fluent readers.

The partnership with UCONN continued during the 2023-2024 school year and included work with the remaining six elementary schools. The ELA curriculum coordinator collaborated with the special education coordinators to partner with UCONN to support students in reading using the Data-Based Individualization (DBI) process. This partnership with UCONN engaged the administrators, special education teachers, and literacy specialists in using data to make decisions about intervention. A District DBI Team, which included a special education coordinator, two elementary principals, and two literacy specialists was formed. This team worked on a sustainability plan to continue the DBI process without intensive support from UCONN in the following years.

The middle school language arts department focused on using data to differentiate lessons and provide small-group instruction. Teachers were introduced to CommonLit, which is a comprehensive literacy program that provides benchmark assessments and standards-based data for teachers. CommonLit benchmark assessments were administered to students three times and gave teachers helpful information about how students were performing on key skills at their grade level. The assessments also provided teachers with skills students might need additional support with. CommonLit also provided teachers with tailored lessons to address skill deficits.

K-8 Mathematics

Over the 2023-2024 school year, teachers in grades K-5 implemented an updated version of Ready Classroom mathematics. These updates included adjusted learning sequences, incorporation of more math performance tasks (*Math in Action*), more integrated number sense daily, and the inclusion of language routines to help make sense of problems. In addition, grades 2-5 implemented *Fluency Flight*, a new mathematics fluency program by the makers of iReady. Fluency Flight helps to build fact fluency with games and activities that are personalized to the facts they are learning. Teachers continued to utilize iReady diagnostic data to track student achievement and growth. The elementary math team supported teachers in K-5 with professional development on the updates in Ready Classroom, analysis of Smarter Balanced math target data, as well as high-yield instructional

strategies such as problem-solving structures. The elementary math specialists in Grades K-5 engaged in coaching cycles, facilitated professional learning, and provided interventions to students in need of math support. The Bridges Intervention Program was formally implemented in the 2023-2024 school year to help support targeted intervention assessment and instruction.

The middle school mathematics department continued the implementation of the district's Illustrative Mathematics curriculum with a focus on incorporating high-yield instructional strategies from the book, *Building Thinking Classrooms*. Middle school math teachers tried vertical whiteboards and visibly random groups to help increase student autonomy, engagement, and discourse in math. Middle school math teachers utilized formative assessment to drive tier 1 differentiation in the classroom and small group work. The middle school math department continued to utilize iReady to track student data and growth. The department analyzed Smarter Balanced data and made instructional adjustments to the scope and sequence to address areas of focus. The two middle school math specialists continued to support teachers with instructional strategies, helped to facilitate the SRBI process, and provided interventions to students in need of math support.

K-8 Science

In elementary science, grades K-5 continued their implementation of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) units of study that focus on scientific inquiry through phenomena-based instruction. The kindergarten NGSS units were formally implemented this school year and kindergarten teachers participated in professional development throughout the year to support their implementation of the new units. Grade 5 students participated in the Connecticut Invention Convention which develops creative problem-solving and critical thinking skills through invention and entrepreneurship. Southington had 22 fifth-grade students who were state finalists at the Connecticut Invention Convention.

The district continued its strong partnership with Lewis Educational Agricultural Farm (LEAF) this year. Mark Ramsay worked collaboratively with the science department, students, and teachers at all elementary schools in grade 2 to plant school gardens. In addition, the district continued planning with YMCA Camp Sloper staff to support a fourth-grade field trip to the facility. All fourth-grade students engaged in a field trip at YMCA Camp Sloper that connected to their science curriculum unit, "Land and Water." In addition, grade 2 attended Sloper to explore the environment as it related to animal habitats.

The middle school science department continued implementing *Open Sci Ed* units across all three grades, with a goal of full *Open Sci Ed* implementation in the school year 2024-2025. Teachers in the department engaged in professional learning based on the book, "Building Thinking Classrooms," where they experimented using vertical whiteboards as a classroom strategy to promote student thinking. The department plans to implement vertical whiteboards as a tool to support inquiry-based teaching and learning in science.

K-8 Social Studies

The social studies curriculum coordinator reviewed the newly released Connecticut Social Studies Standards as new ELA programs were being reviewed. It was important to align topics in the social studies curriculum with the topics being taught in the knowledge-building portion of any ELA program being considered. *Benchmark Advance* was selected and has three units per grade level, aligned with the social studies topics in the areas of government and citizenship; history, culture and geography; and economics.

Fifth-grade classes continued to participate in *Connecticut's Kid Governor* program. A student from Oshana Elementary School was elected Kid Governor for the state of Connecticut on November 21, 2023. The student's platform is, "Getting Fit 4 Fun," which addresses physical activity for students.

The middle school social studies department focused its efforts on exploring and unpacking the newly released K-12 Connecticut Social Studies Standards. Teachers examined the new standards and began exploring curriculum and resources to support their instruction. In addition, the department engaged in professional learning based on the book, "Building Thinking Classrooms," where they experimented using vertical whiteboards as a classroom strategy to promote student thinking. The department is excited to continue learning about instructional strategies that support inquiry and deep thinking in the social studies classroom.

9-12 Academic Departments

Southington High School's academic departments implemented high-quality instructional strategies in their first year of teaching in a block schedule. Teachers embraced innovative lesson design techniques to engage learners in longer instructional blocks. Each department utilized collaborative planning and professional learning time to pace and chunk lessons within the new schedule.

Department leaders and teachers across various departments, such as physical education, music, science, and mathematics brought forward multiple new or revised curriculum units to the Curriculum and Instruction Committee. Updating all curriculum at SHS continues to be a goal for all academic departments. Department leaders and their staff continued to work diligently over the school year on curriculum projects outlined in the district's curriculum renewal cycle.

Departments did exceptional work with prioritizing curriculum needs and identifying courses and experiences that align with the career pathways at SHS. Over the course of the year, several dual enrollment courses were added to the program of studies, along with various internal and external internships and work-based learning experiences for students. For the coming year, the goal is to continue expanding work-based learning offerings to students across all career pathways.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024

BUSINESS DEPARTMENT

Jennifer S. Mellitt, Director of Business & Finance

The Business Department accomplished the following during the 2023-2024 school year.

Financial Summary of FY 2023-2024

The 2023-24 approved operating budget was \$110,460,653. The approved budget included an employer municipal retirement contribution rate of 19.57% for our non-certified staff. After approval of the FY 2023-24 budget, the state reduced the required employer contribution rate to 15.85% resulting in availability in the municipal retirement budgeted amounts of approximately \$570,000. During October 2023, some funds were transferred to provide matching funds for the STEAP grant received from the state, the staff restructuring of the Technology Department, staffing for the Special Education TLC expansion, and cash funding for a new vehicle for the maintenance department among other uses.

The district closed the 2023-24 year with unexpended funds of \$251,097; however, some of the unexpended funds had been allocated to projects during the May budget reallocation process. Those projects included technology lab replacements, school furniture and equipment, contracted painting, and sidewalk and catch basin repairs. The remaining unexpended balance was \$142,847 or 0.13% of our operating budget.

Budget Development FY 2024-2025

During the 2023-2024 school year, the Board of Education's 2024-2025 operating budget was developed and initially presented to the Town of Southington's Board of Finance (BOF) at \$117,354,089 an increase of \$6,893,436 or 6.24%. The Board of Education's (BOE) budget included 19.16 FTEs in new personnel with a cost of \$1,561,790 and major projects and equipment of \$594,266. Health insurance continued to be a large driver of the requested increase at \$1,421,476.

The BOF approved a budget of \$116,815,689 which included a reduction to the required insurance contribution and a budget reduction of \$420,000. The final operating budget approved by the Town Council was \$115,960,489 representing a 4.98% increase. Although the approved budget was a 4.98% increase, the Town Council's approval included a budget reduction of \$500,000 along with additional reductions to the self-insurance fund contributions.

The total budget reductions of \$920,000 were mainly achieved by funding \$175,358 in projects and equipment with FY 2023-24 funds, removing medical benefits for the new personnel, magnet school reductions based on the state legislative actions, reduction of one bus route, along with other reductions. Although reductions were made by the various boards during the budget process, the approved budget included 18.86 FTEs in new personnel.

The budget process also included a request for funding of one-time projects and equipment for HVAC inspections, repairs to the high school gym flooring, and various other projects. The Town Council approved funds of \$241,334 to allow the Board of Education to accomplish these projects.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – Business Department

Unexpended Funds Account

A legislative change to the CT General Statute 10-248a allows the Board of Education to approve the deposit of unexpended operating budget funds, up to the statutory limit, into a non-lapsing account rather than the Town's Board of Finance. The June 24th Town Council meeting approved a new process for the Board of Education to work directly with the Town's Finance Director to establish the non-lapsing account. The funds can be used for educational purposes only and the expenditures shall be authorized by the local Board of Education.

The FY 24 non-lapsing account was approved in the amount of \$251,097 with approved projects totaling \$108,250. During September 2024, two additional projects were allocated to allow funds to be used for the upcoming districtwide transportation RFP and continued work on the elementary projects.

Office of the Director of Business and Finance

The Business Office was busy with the staff transition of the Food Service Director, the Accounting Manager and the Administrative Assistant who all started at the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year.

The volume of grants increased with ARPA Summer Mental Health, ARPA Right to Read, ARPA Dual Credit Expansion, IDEA Transition Support Activities, IDEA Paraeducator Training, PEGPETIA, and the Title III Immigrant grant.

The district continued using the ARP ESSER, ARP Homeless HCY, and ARP IDEA grants to address learning loss and to address the mental health needs of the students. The district has continued to maximize resources to meet the needs of students and staff while being mindful of the fiscal cliff these temporary funds created.

Purchasing Office

A new Accounting Manager was hired in September 2023. Under his leadership, the Purchasing Department worked diligently on bids and RFPs for the redesign of entryways at two schools, improvements to the back parking lot at the Karen Smith Academy, roofing at the high school, and the high school track renovation. The high school track was mainly funded by a Small Town Economic Assistance Program ("STEAP") grant of \$500,000.

Payroll Office:

The Payroll Office continued their implementation of the new Time and Attendance System which is fully integrated with our Absence Management system and our payroll processing system.

The staff are being cross-trained to expand the knowledge base of the payroll and benefits staff. The Payroll Supervisor continues to work in conjunction with the Human Resources Manager and the Information Systems Manager to integrate the new Frontline Central system with our existing systems.

The state of CT established a program to assist paraeducators with their high deductible health plan deductible in the Fall of 2023. Southington received over \$196,000 to deposit into paraeducator health savings accounts.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – Business Department

Food Services

The 2023-2024 school year brought another new program to help provide free meals to students in school. The program established by the State of Connecticut was funded through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). The program (State Transition Assistance for Breakfast and Lunch Expenses “STABLE”) provided free breakfast for all students and free lunches for students eligible for reduced-priced meals. Students not eligible for free or reduced meals began paying for lunches all year for the first time since the pandemic. Like many districts across the state, this funding structure led to students accruing a negative meal balance. Despite collection efforts, the district ended the year with over \$10,000 in negative student meal debt. The state of CT allowed Food Service operations to use the excess operating funds to write off the negative debt at the conclusion of the 2023-24 school year.

A new Food Service Director was hired in August 2023 after the retirement of our long-time director. Staffing continues to be difficult for kitchen personnel. The kitchen personnel hours returned to a more normal operation due to the lower lunch meal counts.

In March 2024, the state of CT conducted an Administrative Review of our Food Service department with minimal corrective actions noted. The state review staff were impressed with the quality of the documentation packet provided for review and with the rapport the kitchen staff has with our students at the three locations reviewed.

Southington Food Service received a National School Lunch Program Equipment Assistant grant from the Connecticut State Department of Education to purchase a double convection oven for the high school kitchen for \$38,143.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024

OPERATIONS

Peter Romano, Director of Operations

The Operations Office has accomplished the following items during the 2023-2024 school year:

Construction and Building System Improvements

- The Southington High School partial roof replacement project architectural plans and specifications were approved by the state. The roofing portion of the project was awarded to Silkton Roofing. At the close of the school year, they began the removal of the existing roof and replacement with a 30-year warranted roof system on the main building. The roofing portion of the project is anticipated to be completed before the start of the school year. The designer for the photovoltaic system portion of the work was awarded. The photovoltaic system will be bid and installed during the 2024-2025 fiscal year.
- The elementary school's main entrances received security improvements. The interior vestibule doors now remain electronically locked. Visitors may communicate with the office via video system and a secured pass-through window.
- Construction began on a new vestibule entry addition at the main entrance for SHS. The new entrance will create a secured vestibule and a separate room for the security staff to communicate with visitors.
- LED field lights were installed on the SHS Girls Varsity Softball field.
- Security cameras, switches, and network infrastructure were upgraded, and devices were added at SHS with grant funding from the State of CT.
- A new LED field light system was installed at the all-purpose turf field at SHS. The LED lights with the "ball tracker system" were retrofitted on the existing poles. The pole that was located in front of the bleachers on the home side was relocated and replaced with a new pole behind the bleachers.
- Roof observations were performed at all schools on a bi-monthly basis. This provides data for improvement on strategies to ensure the reliable, long-term performance and extension of the life cycle of roofs district-wide.
- Replacement of the 6-lane running track around the all-purpose field at SHS began at the close of the school year. Work will continue through the summer and is anticipated to be completed in mid-September. Funding for the project was primarily through a state grant.
- The phone systems at Hatton, Strong, and Thalberg Elementary Schools were replaced with the Mitel phone systems that are currently used at the majority of schools and at the Central Office.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – Operations Department

Transportation

- Similar to the previous year, our contract vendor, NBT, had difficulties with maintaining adequate staffing to support the needs of the district. This was typical of transportation vendors in CT school districts. We worked closely with NBT and our other vendors to maintain adequate transportation services for the regular and special education programs. Transportation was provided again this summer for the enrichment and the extended school year programs.

Energy Conservation

- Energy Management System (EMS): With ten of the district's schools on the web-based dashboard, we continued to monitor systems and programmed them for optimum efficiency and health of the buildings.

Reporting

- Radon Testing Programs – Air quality testing for Radon was performed as per EPA and state guidelines for ongoing testing in the schools. Radon testing is required at all schools on a three-year cycle.
- During the summer break, we worked with vendors to test fire sprinklers, fire alarms, generators, fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, and kitchen hoods at all schools. All systems passed, and the results have been shared with the SFD.

Health and Safety

- Operations, in conjunction with the Southington Police and Fire Departments, coordinated and participated in monthly emergency drills and fire drills at all schools, districtwide.
- Operations was the chairperson for the Districtwide Safety Committee which met quarterly. Representation from all unions meet to discuss safety concerns that staff may have as they relate to the district as a whole.
- Additional 2-way radios were received, programmed, and deployed to schools.
- Polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) testing was conducted at J.A. DePaolo Middle School, J. F. Kennedy Middle School, and the John Weichsel Municipal Center. The test results have been substantially lower than EPA guidelines for action, with many areas registering a non-detected result. We continue to collaborate with our environmental attorney to seek relief from this testing.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – Operations Department

Administrative Enhancements

- The Operations Department oversaw and maintained the online process created for reporting district-wide fire and safety drills. Drills are reported annually to the CT State Division of Energy Management and Homeland Security.
- The Operations Department continues to build on its electronic infrastructure. Operations work closely with all the schools in the district. The transition to electronic documentation for the department has allowed for greater efficiencies and information sharing throughout the district. A considerable amount of work has been moved to the Google Doc format including sheets and forms for transportation tracking logs, transportation requests and complaints, snow removal vendors and events, lawn maintenance vendors, and custodian scheduling.

District-wide and Town Collaboration

- Shared Resources: The Operations Department continued its' ongoing collaboration with the town to complete repairs, service calls, and projects at town buildings, as needed. We performed work at SPD, Animal Control, SFD, Highway Department, and at the Town Hall.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024

HUMAN RESOURCE DEPARTMENT

Michelle Passamano, Human Resource Manager

The focus of the Human Resource Department during the 2023-2024 fiscal year was to update essential human resource documents, continue exploring and acting on recruiting and hiring efficiencies, and support all Southington Public Schools employees.

Human Resource Information Systems

Frontline Solution: Central

As a continuation of the 2022-2023 fiscal year, efficiencies remained a priority. Working in conjunction with the technology department, there was collaboration in implementing Frontline Central. This human resource information system solution connects the application system with onboarding for new employees. This program provides a one-stop location for all employees to review personal information, view available sick, personal, and vacation time, and complete forms to update payroll and personal records. Highlights associated with this program include:

- a. All onboarding/offboarding forms are sent to employees through Frontline Central and stored within the system, providing district departments with immediate access to employee information.
- b. New hires receive reminders of items needed for completion of onboarding.
- c. Upon completion of forms, they go through a workflow and are sent to the appropriate department(s) for review and processing.
- d. Existing employees have access to forms to update existing information.
- e. Annual reminders are filtered through Frontline Central including balloon check options, open enrollment, and demographic updates.
- f. Annual mandated trainings were sent to all staff to ensure completion prior to the start of the 2024-2025 school year. Confirmation of completion ensures the district is compliant with State of Connecticut requirements.

Frontline Central will sync with the existing school district employee database that is managed through Alio. The human resource, payroll, and technology departments continued their collaboration and reviewed and updated fields, job codes, classifications, and how information is stored so all systems and terminology are consistent amongst all departments.

The district was asked to host a full-day training session for all Frontline users in Connecticut. This was held on February 7, 2024. There were 8 representatives from Frontline and 51 participants from surrounding towns. This was an incredible opportunity to network and learn more about the benefits and efficiencies that are available through Frontline Solutions.

LiveScan Fingerprinting

A requirement for all new hires is to get fingerprinted for background checks. In the past, new hires were scheduling appointments at the Southington Police Department. Often, there was a delay in completion, as appointment times were limited. This year, the human resource department was trained and certified to offer fingerprinting in the office. Therefore, when new hires arrive for their onboarding appointment, the fingerprinting is done onsite, preventing a delay between scheduling appointments with the police department and new staff starting their positions.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – Human Resources Department

Job Description Review

In conjunction with the appropriate departments and administrators, the human resource department updated and brought forward multiple job descriptions. This work will continue in the 2024-2025 school year.

Terms of Employment

All non-union employees are provided with terms of employment upon hire. Such documents were updated and include job-specific benefits such as health insurance, retirement, sick/personal/vacation time, and observed holidays.

Bargaining Unit Negotiations

The human resource department participated in the negotiation process for two contracts:

1. NILU Administrative Assistants and Food Service Workers
2. AFSCME Nurses

Southington Public Schools Employee Handbook

Bargaining unit contracts and terms of employment dictate a large portion of procedures for Southington Public Schools employees. What was missing was an employee handbook that provided additional information that was not covered within those documents. The handbook was completed and is being distributed to all staff, through Frontline Central, in October 2024. Some of the areas addressed include *Equal Opportunity and Diversity, Non-Discrimination, Conflict of Interest, Employee Relationships, Workplace Safety, Workplace Guidelines, Time Off/Leaves of Absence, Employee Benefits, FMLA, and an Acknowledgment and Receipt of Handbook.*

Training for HR Department

1. Legal Updates: School Law (August 2023)
2. Connecticut Association of School Personnel Administrators (October 2023, March 2024, May 2024)
3. Legal Update for the Public Sector 2023 (May 2024)
4. Frontline Central: Implementation of New Program Software (ongoing throughout the year)

Southington Public Schools Career Fair

The human resource department coordinated a job fair in January 2024. The fair was held in the public assembly room at the John Weichsel Municipal Center. The event was well-attended with over 90 jobseekers. Administrators attended and were available to provide information about upcoming and current opportunities. On-the-spot interviews were offered for anyone interested in getting a jump start on the process. Available to all attendees was technical assistance and guidance on submitting their online application.

Health & Wellness Program

This year proved to be a huge success for our health and wellness program. The human resource department developed guidelines, procedures, and survey templates that were introduced to the committee. Surveys provided feedback to the committee to help guide the direction of the committee. Some of the offerings included walking challenges, breathwork, stress relief, healthy recipes, yoga, pickleball, kickboxing, and Zumba.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – Human Resources Department

Increasing Educator Diversity Plan

A legislative mandate was introduced in July 2023 stating that each local and regional board of education shall submit an increasing educator diversity plan. The human resource department led a committee of six to develop this plan and submit it by the deadline date of March 15, 2024.

Ongoing Work

In fiscal year 2023-2024, the department continued its efforts to transform the office and implement new programs and opportunities to provide exceptional services to all employees. Through networking, ongoing training, research, and listening to feedback, the department will continue to seek ways to provide the best resources possible for all employees.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024

PUPIL PERSONNEL SERVICES

Rebecca J. Cavallaro, Ed.D., Director of Pupil Personnel Services

The leadership team continues to work collaboratively to ensure staffing and services are meeting the needs of students and their families while looking at all facets of the district to ensure efficiency. Areas of focus for the Special Education Department for the 2023-2024 school year were:

Program Development for Inclusive Settings: The Pupil Personnel Services leadership team continued to focus efforts on providing high-quality in-district programming for students with more intensive educational needs who might otherwise be outplaced. The department continued to work and refine programming needs throughout the year based on the growing and changing populations of students within Southington. Program name changes and expansion of district programs were an ongoing focus and are summarized as follows.

- Specialized Learning Center (SLC) is a self-contained program that is designed to serve students who have been identified as having autism spectrum disorders. This program grew to three classrooms for the 23-24 school year to accommodate the anticipated 22 students for that year. This year the program has continued to grow, with an anticipated 26 students for the 24-25 school year. SLC continues to maintain and enhance its ability to provide a high level of programming for students with autism. Following the consultation with CREC that was utilized during its formative years, the SLC program utilizes the Colorado Department of Education Autism Program Quality Indicators to assess programming and set goals for enhancement.
- Comprehensive Learning Center (CLC), located at JFK, was also identified by the leadership team as needing to expand to create increased services for the growing population of learners that require additional structure and support due to their significant developmental delays and challenges. This program continues to adjust based on student needs and will be receiving the first group of students from the SLC program this fall.
- STELLAR, located in Southington, CT at 51 North Main Street, is the district's community-based transitional program designed for students with various developmental disabilities. We continued to expand our scope of student support as we welcomed a student with significant physical needs last school year. The staff collaborated with state agencies and contracted support to increase the opportunities for students in our program.
- Therapeutic Learning Center (TLC) has undergone revamping in programming and staffing thanks to the efforts of the Pupil Personnel Services leadership team. This program provides school-based clinical intervention services to students at Southington High School at risk of education outplacement. The team has worked to reestablish this program utilizing district clinical staff in favor of a

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – Pupil Services Department

consultative model to support this population of students and continue to build capacity within the program.

- Therapeutic Learning Center (TLC) at the elementary level has grown from two classrooms to three classrooms to meet the growing needs of students. Two of the classrooms were consolidated at one school to minimize disruption during transitions from the primary to intermediate grades.

Assistive Technology: The department continued to use an inventory database this school year to track and monitor student devices provided by the district.

State and Federal Compliance: The Pupil Personnel Services (PPS) Department maintained compliance with the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) and its implementing regulations and the Connecticut State Statutes and Regulations for Special Education. The Connecticut State Department of Education reports annually on state and district progress on 14 performance indicators in special education. Southington's most recent District Annual Performance Report indicated that Southington was a district classified as "Meets Requirements" in all areas except the performance indicator focusing on suspensions and expulsions. As a remedy, the District is required to complete a self-report to regain compliance with this indicator. This rating, based on the indicators, was determined by ongoing data collection, Special Education Data Application Collection (SEDAC) reports, and numerous other state monitoring reports.

Community and Parent Partnerships: Continuing collaboration with parents, community stakeholders, and local/state agencies is essential to ensure that students with disabilities have choices and opportunities in the community and the Southington school district. Those partnerships included the Lewis Educational Agricultural Farm (LEAF), Southington Parks and Recreation programs, Emotional Intelligence (EI) presentations for several groups, Community Mental Health Stakeholders Committee, Student Attendance and Truancy Committee, Southington's Town-wide Effort to Promote Success (STEPS), the Southington YMCA, Southington Early Childhood Collaborative (ECCS), and Southington Youth Services. With the shift to Connecticut's Special Education Data System, CT-SEDS, steps have been put into place to ensure that parents have the information needed to navigate these changes. The Director of Pupil Personnel Services initiated the parent introduction to CT-SEDS with a letter from which future communications will follow.

Special Education Advisory Council: The Director of Pupil Personnel Services engaged in professional development and learning through monthly meetings with the Farmington Valley Directors as well as the Connecticut Council of Administrators of Special Education (ConnCASE). The updates provided to districts from the state were valuable in providing ongoing support and direction to the department and Southington Public Schools in special education.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – Pupil Services Department

School Readiness and Prevention: The Preschool Program continued to be successful in meeting the needs of the district's youngest learners with the added increased level of school psychologist support and on-site preschool facilitator. The Family Resource Center (FRC) and the partnership with Birth-to-Three agencies continued to provide support and resources for the youngest students and their families. The Integrated Preschool Program expanded to include a PK5 classroom to meet the special education needs of children who do not turn 5 by the new age of kindergarten eligibility. The superintendent of schools is utilizing the preschool program as an option for parents whose child is not provided early kindergarten entry, if desired for community peer placement, at no cost.

Elementary School Level: The four in-district classrooms for students with significant emotional/behavioral issues and significant developmental/cognitive concerns continued to be a great asset in providing a continuum of services for elementary students. The K-5 special education teachers received professional development on the use of DIBELS for progress monitoring with plans for future professional development that will focus on mClass in alignment with the district's shift in benchmark and progress monitoring for students. The special education teachers received professional development on making adaptation changes to instruction and programming based on student data. They also received professional development in the Science of Reading. Professional development for the upcoming school year will include learning the district's new reading curriculum, Benchmark. The district entered into a partnership with the UCONN Neag School of Education and all eight elementary schools to bring Data-Based Individualization to Southington to increase literacy achievement. The DBI model will be utilized district-wide to inform SRBI practices.

The district has added a full-time Speech/Language Pathologist Assistant to the SLP department to meet the growing needs of students.

Middle School Level: The Reading Academy at J. F. Kennedy Middle School continued to be very successful this year, meeting the needs of middle school students with Dyslexia. This intense literacy program (scientifically research-based) meets the needs of students who have significant reading disabilities including Dyslexia. The CLC program, formerly EASE, at J. F. Kennedy Middle School and the TLC program, formerly TEAM, at J. A. DePaolo Middle School provided structure and resources for students with significant developmental delays and students with significant social/emotional challenges.

The three district programs at the Middle School level - Reading Academy, CLC, and TLC all continue to grow in support of students. Both CLC and TLC have increased in student population and a new school psychologist has joined the TLC team. Both Middle Schools are partnering with the UCONN Department of Psychiatry on the TEAMSS study involving transition supports for incoming grade 6 students to support students as they acclimate to the structure and size of the Middle School.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – Pupil Services Department

High School Level: The PPS Department continued to plan for professional development regarding the PPT (Planning and Placement Team) process, best practices in creating IEPs (Individual Education Plans), and maximizing resources based on student's needs. In addition, the special education teachers alongside their general education counterparts participated in professional development on how to maximize instruction and engagement in the block schedule, including differentiation strategies to help all learners experience success. In collaboration with the team at SHS, the PPS Department has worked to continue to revise programming and services to meet the needs of our students; the Comprehensive Learning Center (CLC) and the Therapeutic Learning Center (TLC) provide structure and resources for students with significant developmental delays and students with significant social/emotional challenges. The "Flash Friends" program for CLC was expanded into a full-year course, CLC Artshop. In addition, the music department created a co-taught class with the special education department, CLC Music, to provide more elective opportunities for our unique learners.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024

TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT

Jessica Poon, Information Systems Manager

Tyler Savage, Network Manager

Rebecca Savelkoul, Digital Learning Coordinator

Goals

As we continue navigating the post-pandemic public school environment staff and students are still adjusting. An area that continues to be key is the increased opportunities technology can provide staff and students. The following are the goals set by the Technology Department to maximize the investment in Technology and enhance the learning experience:

- Increase the dependability of the network.
- Increase data security for staff and students.
- Improved efficiencies of systems, both within the department and the district as a whole.
- Increase awareness and capacity to utilize current district technology.
- Increase the depth of knowledge for all members of the Technology Department to effectively support the district.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of all technology tools through the following questions:
 - Does this increase the efficiency of our teachers, which frees them to do impactful teaching and learning with students?
 - Does this create deeper learning opportunities for students, opening up access to information and people that would not be possible without the technology?

Operational Enhancements

The 2023-2024 school year was full of district-wide projects, new equipment, and ongoing long-term planning. The following were the major technology initiatives accomplished:

Network Improvements

We know that reliable access to online services is a major concern for teaching and learning. A goal of the department is to work towards 100% uptime. In 2023-2024, we replaced 151 WiFi access points to provide more reliable and faster internet speeds. In addition, 54 network switches were replaced with more robust hardware, allowing us to reduce the overall number from 86. We also removed or upgraded legacy Windows Servers to ensure we are receiving the latest security updates.

Security

To enhance security and compliance with the Cyber Security Insurance requirements, we bolstered our advanced antivirus utilities. This provides real-time updates on potential viruses and proactive blocking of ransomware attacks. The firewall was enhanced to improve network security and close vulnerable gaps. We partnered with a company called KnowBe4 to expand our email filtering to prevent targeted Phishing attacks and provide training to staff on email

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – Technology Department

security. Finally, we implemented critical roadblocks to prevent the sharing of critical staff and student data with malicious parties.

Cameras

The security and camera systems were outdated. During 2023-2024, the Technology Department worked with Operations to deploy over 60 new cameras to SHS. Additionally, we replaced the server hardware to allow for higher-quality Video. Finally, we are now collaborating with the Southington Police Department to obtain live video in the event of an incident.

Hardware

The 2023-2024 school year was year three of a five-year replacement plan to allow us to stay current on hardware, software, network, and other vital components of our infrastructure. This included the deployment of over 150 Viewsonics, assuring consistent projection access for the teaching staff. The Technology Department was awarded grant funds that allowed us to catch up in the replacement cycle for staff and devices, which was interrupted by the pandemic. Just over 200 new MacBooks and Windows Laptops were deployed to staff. Just over 1,500 new Chromebooks were deployed to students, and 4,480 repairs were completed on student Chromebooks. We also refreshed three Computer labs (65 Computers) at SHS to provide students with the latest technologies that are industry-specific and cannot be accessed via their student-issued Chromebooks.

Department Efficiencies

We have finalized a restructure of the department to provide more consistent coverage to all buildings. We are committed to department knowledge shares, which increases the capacity of all team members and allows the staff to be able to assist staff immediately.

The department continues to explore more cost-effective vendors, products, and services that still deliver a high-quality experience for staff and students. Examples of this include the migration to self-managed monitoring and upgrades, conversion to Viewsonic interactive displays in classrooms, and the switch to Windows devices.

Student Information Systems

PowerSchool consistently pushes out new updates and features that help teachers and administrative staff stay on top of the day-to-day information to keep students safe and on track. The Technology Department worked to update or generate user guides to provide administrative staff with the information needed regarding their students, staff, and schedules.

With the implementation of block schedules at the high school, many existing reports needed to be adjusted to suit the needs of the administrative staff. New reports and processes were also put

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – Technology Department

in place to ensure staff were able to determine staff duties and lunch waves as these are not built as a part of the students' schedules in April.

Adjustments to the middle school schedules required creative thinking and collaboration between the middle school scheduling team, the Technology Department, and the Curriculum and Instruction team. Students went from going to their health class every six days for a whole year, to a structured cohort that provided two trimesters of PE and one trimester of health. These adjustments had to be made within the system so that the scheduler could cohort the health and PE sections. This cohort strategy can now be implemented with other courses as needed.

With potential changes to the middle school master schedules, the Technology Department assisted with generating several schedule samples and loaded students into sections. This provided the administration with information regarding FTE and class size impacts.

Many of our purchased tools and resources use PowerSchool as the initial source of information to generate rosters and accounts. Additional syncs that were added include but are not limited to, bus data and school lunch. With a transition from Naviance to Maia, about 16 years of historical data was exported from Naviance and imported into Maia. To improve Accountability Index Data points for the district, additional data verification steps were added to ensure all data points are reported accurately to the state.

SPS Website

The last website redesign for the district was in 2017. The Technology Department collaborated with Finalsite and evaluated every aspect of the website to ensure a smooth experience for the end user. Ongoing conversations with the Superintendent ensured that the vision for the district was displayed. Once the initial template of the website was determined, additional collaboration with the Library Media Specialists started to customize each of the school's sub-sites. The Technology Department also worked with Image Marketing to develop a district logo and rolled it out in conjunction with the new website design.

Enrollment Express

Our new student registration process transitioned from using Enrollment to Enrollment Express, both of which are partner products of PowerSchool. Transitioning to Enrollment Express as an add-on to PowerSchool brings all forms and information under the PowerSchool umbrella, rather than maintaining an external system. That same account works while they complete their new registration forms and will continue to be utilized through their child's time within the district. The district registrar and the Technology Department worked to ensure a smooth process for the district registrar, office staff, nursing staff, and parents.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – Technology Department

The Technology Department also coordinated the update of current student information through the “Returning Student Registration” forms. This allowed families to update any demographic information on their students, update health information, and sign off on yearly agreements.

CT-SEDS

With the transition away from Frontline’s IEP Direct and 504 Direct, the Technology Department facilitated the export of all historical student documents out of Frontline and uploaded them into CT-SEDS to ensure they were archived into the student’s record. One of the improvements of this system was the ability to set up a parent demographic sync, which sends parent information from PowerSchool to CT-SEDS on a nightly basis. Another improvement was that the Technology Department was able to collaborate with the State Office and the Office of Pupil Personnel Services to provide all administrators and regular education staff a way of viewing student IEPs or 504s online as needed. This is now a direct sync from CT-SEDS to PowerSchool and attaches a copy of a student’s IEP to their record in PowerSchool.

Staff Information Systems

Weidenhammer, the company that owns Alio, our financial software, migrated to a fully web-based platform called LINQ. While many of the screens in LINQ remain the same, a lot of the back-end functionality has changed. The Technology Department collaborated with the Payroll and Purchasing departments, to test LINQ to ensure all major processes worked smoothly before fully migrating to the production side of LINQ. This project has been ongoing through the 2023-2024 school year but will fully live in the fall of 2024. A major advantage of this change is that end users no longer need the Technology Department to physically touch their laptops to allow access to the program.

Another major collaborative effort was between the Technology Department and the Human Resources Department. Regular meetings ensured a smooth implementation of Frontline Central. This conversion required many separate information databases to be cleaned up and imported into Frontline. One of the first improvements is the dissemination and tracking of the Annual Mandated Training for all staff. Another improvement is the delivery of New Hire packets to facilitate the initial onboarding of staff to happen electronically.

Ongoing meetings between the Technology Department and the Payroll Department facilitated enhancements Absence Management and Time & Attendance were generated as needed.

To streamline department processes, the Technology Department is working with ClassLink to create an automated process for creating staff accounts. The configuration of OneSync (a ClassLink product that is already used for creating student accounts), started in December. Meetings continue with the vendor to establish the configuration needed and implementation is planned for November 2024.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – Technology Department

Professional Development

During the school year, professional development sessions were offered to the Administrative Assistant group. Topics included Frontline Central, ParentSquare, and LINQ. As new administrative assistants were hired, or upon request, individual training sessions were offered to assist staff in learning new or additional skills that would help them to complete any task/job that was asked of them.

Instructional Enhancements

Instruction Management Tools

There were no new software packages added for instruction management. Professional development focused on how our current resources can be used to create more efficiency, deepen learning, and drive personalized instruction. Software packages such as ClassLink, GoGuardian, ParentSquare, and Lyman Data Warehouse are examples of tools that put the technology in the hands of teachers, parents, and students in a more effective way.

Curriculum Tools

ELA added a new software package for benchmark assessments in grades K-5, which provides more accurate data to classroom teachers. The Technology Department worked in collaboration with the Curriculum and Instruction team to set up and implement this software, as well as offering training sessions for the other instructional programs that directly support our adopted curriculum. Examples include iReady, Explore Learning, CommonLit, Newsela, Mystery Science, Adobe, and Make Music.

Instructional Support Tools

Some tools are designed to be content-agnostic, where the purpose is to enhance instruction regardless of the subject being taught. We continue to refine this list based on teacher and student usage, impact on learning, ease of implementation, educational needs of students, and technology developments. This includes collaboration with Teachers and Coordinators in Special Education to support students with assistive technology needs. Examples of the software used in this area include Canvas, Classroom, EdPuzzle, BrainPop, WeVideo, Padlet, ProQuest, and Kami.

Student Help Desk

The Technology Department collaborated with Southington High School to develop a Student Help Desk internship. This internship provides students interested in the Science, Technology Engineering, and Mathematics career cluster an opportunity to engage in relevant field experience. Students work with the Technology Department and the SHS Library to hone their skills and apply them to the technology needs of their peers.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – Technology Department

Technology Celebrations

The collaboration between the Technology Department and other departments, such as Human Resources, Operations, Curriculum and Instruction, Pupil Personnel Services, and Food Service has increased dramatically. This was largely driven by the increased expectations to leverage the technology in ways that made all departments more efficient. Projects such as the new Help Desk System, ClassLink, Absence Management, and Time & Attendance have made internal systems more streamlined.

The department was awarded various grants, including E-Rate, the Emergency Connectivity Fund, and a state Pegpetia grant. These grants enabled us to recover the staff and student device replacement cycle, improve the quality of the audio/visual equipment in the classrooms by installing Viewsonic interactives, and refresh aging network hardware.

Technology Ongoing Work

The Technology Leadership team recognizes the importance various technologies play in facilitating the classroom learning experience. The Technology Department is committed to collaborating with district leadership and staff to identify technology needs that promote teaching and learning, while also balancing the financial burden with rapidly advancing technology.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024

Southington High School

Richard Aroian, Principal

Enhancements

Transition to Block Scheduling: In the 2023-2024 academic year, Southington High School transitioned from a traditional eight-period schedule, with each period lasting 46 minutes, to a block schedule consisting of four 88-minute periods per day. This shift required extensive professional development for our staff. Building and department leaders concentrated on curriculum and professional development activities all year, aimed at enhancing student engagement. Surveys taken by teachers at the end of the year overwhelmingly supported this move and the positive impact block scheduling had on student progress.

Refinement of Career Pathways: Another key focus was the refinement of our Career Pathways program. Efforts were made to align the Program of Studies, Career Fair, Freshman Orientation, and other activities with our Pathways program, which provided a clear visual representation of the post-graduation experience for students. The high school received a grant-funded Career Pathways Liaison position to further support the student-centered focus. Mrs. Teresa Brooks, our Business teacher and DECA advisor took the position and will lead our move towards more credit-bearing and internship opportunities for students.

Development of the Teaching Assistant Program: The inaugural year of the Teaching Assistant program was successfully concluded. Over 40 juniors and seniors earned credits by assisting in courses with underclassmen. The program falls under the umbrella of our Career Pathways Liaison. These students engaged in regular communication with teachers, reinforced classroom expectations, supported student growth, and developed and presented lessons. Plans are underway to expand this internship program to impact all Pathways.

Expansion of Dual Enrollment Opportunities: The school was awarded the Dual Credit Expansion Grant (ARPA), which facilitated the expansion of Early College Experience (ECE) offerings. This grant enabled an increase in dual enrollment opportunities through enhanced partnerships with the University of Bridgeport, Central Connecticut State University, and Southern Connecticut State University. Many departments expanded their ECE and elective offerings, reflecting a broader range of dual enrollment and certification opportunities for students. Every opportunity for students to earn college credits during their years at Southington High School is a win for everyone.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – Southington High School

Vision Statements

Many of our departments are drafting their vision statements to guide their continued evolution. Under the leadership of Tony Loomis (Our Health/PE Department Leader) that department has developed the following guiding principles:

Vision Statement: *What we do...*

SHS graduates are committed to the pursuit of healthy and active skills to achieve lifelong physical, intellectual, emotional, and social wellness.

Mission Statement: *How we do it...*

The SHS HPE Department will engage all students in meaningful experiences to promote the development of health-enhancing behaviors through a challenging yet safe learning environment that emphasizes the importance of relationships and inspires students to seek lifelong wellness.

Technology Upgrades: In line with our commitment to a 21st Century vision, dozens of ViewSonic interactive displays were installed in classrooms. Over 80% of classrooms are now equipped with these advanced screens, which offer brighter, clearer visuals compared to the previous Smart Boards, and at a lower cost. We have now fully enhanced the technology in eleven of our fourteen departments through the installation of ViewSonic technology.

This comprehensive set of initiatives highlights Southington High School's dedication to enhancing educational experiences, student engagement, and technological integration.

Standardized Curricular Goals: During the 2023-2024 school year, all our departments successfully created learning goals with common learning targets and success criteria for each of the core classes. Several departments have begun identifying and utilizing standardized assessments to generate common data points. Our English Department now uses the CommonLit suite of assessments throughout the year to measure student reading ability. The Social Studies Department uses Newsela, the Science Department uses NGSS data, and the World Language Department uses the state Standards of Bilingual Literacy for the same purpose.

Celebrations

Teacher of the Year: Mrs. Patricia Pettit, the Department Leader for the district's Multi-Lingual Department was honored with the Southington Teacher of the Year Award. We are very proud of Patty as she completed her transition from an English teacher to the point person addressing the needs of our rapidly growing multi-lingual student population.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – Southington High School

Certificate of Global Engagement

The Connecticut Department of Education announced that Southington High School is qualified to present the Certificate of Global Engagement to our students. The conditions of this certificate acknowledge students who have completed three years of coursework in a world language, four additional credits in courses of a global nature, and three years of extracurricular activities with an international focus. Students must also submit an action project to address a global problem. The global project requirement bears a striking resemblance to our Citizenship in Action project which we implemented six years ago. As graduates of a comprehensive high school, many of our students will now be eligible for this recognition.

Music: It was another tremendously successful year for our Southington High School music programs. Under the leadership of Sara Ossias and Harrison Stuppler, our Blue Knights Marching Band was the Division 4 Connecticut State champions and possibly even more impressive, finished second at the National competition. Our winter varsity Color Guard won the scholastic A MAC championship and our JV Color Guard was awarded the scholastic AAA championship.

Athletics: Our newly renovated Lady Knights' softball field made its debut this year as the team reached the state semi-finals. Our football and baseball teams also made the state semi-finals. Our Girls' Volleyball team made it to the state finals. Individually, senior basketball player Ryan Hammarlund reached the 1000 career point mark. Junior basketball player Lily Cooper is only 50 points short of the magic 1000-point mark. She should reach that milestone early in her senior year.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024

KAREN SMITH ACADEMY

Jess Levin, Director

Thirteen KSA students earned their Southington High School Diploma in 2024. The Sophomore and Junior classes were significantly larger with fifteen and sixteen students respectively.

KSA staff and administration continued the ongoing work with our middle schools and high schools to ensure that the student referral process was seamless and working to support students in need of KSA. The communication and teamwork were tangible, and evident, and produced positive results for students.

KSA administration is continuing the work of curricular alignment with SHS and working with district instructional support staff on assessment, performance tasks, and the use of supplemental technology that supports the NGSS standards and framework. KSA is also trying to create more hands-on opportunities for students and hopefully, KSA students will be able to take advantage of the Career Pathways framework at SHS.

KSA is moving to a block schedule in the 24-25 school year. KSA is excited about the instructional opportunities this will give our teachers and a flexible learning model that will help students be successful. KSA is also offering Mandarin as the World Language option at KSA.

Attendance rates continue to improve at KSA, and chronic absenteeism is on the decline. This is attributed to consistent parent communication and clear, consistent messages to students about the importance of coming to school.

Our continued work will focus on the development of relevant, cohesive, meaningful assessments for KSA students and the continued evolution of our transition program for potential graduating Seniors, as well as new enrichment opportunities for all students during the FLEX block of our school day.

KSA welcomes three new staff members, Matt Ehmka will be teaching Art at KSA, Colleen Murphy will be teaching Health and PE and Xun Zheng will be teaching Chinese.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024

JOSEPH A. DEPAOLO MIDDLE SCHOOL

Chris Palmieri, Principal

Broad Based Enhancements

DePaolo continued technology integration into the curriculum across all subjects. Teachers utilized the district's online learning platform, Canvas. ParentSquare was utilized as the main source of communication between school and families. The math progress monitoring program, iReady, was utilized for the second time this school year. A shift from STAR Reading to CommonLit was utilized for English Language Arts progress monitoring. CommonLit is a comprehensive literacy program with thousands of reading lessons, a full-year ELA curriculum, benchmark assessments, and standards-based data for teachers.

An additional special education teacher was added to the staff to meet the growing needs of students.

Grade 8 Spanish was connected to the three eighth-grade teams to further enhance the middle school teaming philosophy.

The TEAM Program was officially changed to the Therapeutic Learning Center (TLC). TLC is designed to provide students with a safe, predictable, and structured setting that will optimize their learning potential and focus on building the appropriate social and pragmatic skills necessary for success in the general education setting.

A math night was held on November 15, 2023. This allowed parents to preview some of the lessons that students experience daily as part of the Illustrative Mathematics curriculum.

All teachers fully utilized the State of CT Special Education data system, CT-SEDS.

Celebrations

DePaolo recognizes students in numerous ways. Aside from each team selecting a "Student of the Month," they also offer a variety of positive reinforcements for all students throughout the year. "Patriot Pride In Practice" is another way to recognize students for their positive behavior. Teachers nominate students for exceeding expectations in numerous areas according to behavioral norms established by "Patriot Pride." In addition, DePaolo hosted Principals' Breakfasts six times this year where families were invited to hear words of praise shared by teachers. Staff Shining Stars continued this year as a way to recognize staff that go above and beyond to assist their professional colleagues.

DePaolo Boys' Soccer Team celebrated an undefeated season. A banner recognizing this accomplishment hangs in the school gymnasium.

DePaolo held several fundraisers and themed events throughout the year. Over 200 DePaolo Students volunteered their time in the school booth at the Apple Harvest Festival to raise funds for Pediatric Cancer research. Students raised \$4,250 that was donated to Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation over the two weekends of the Festival. Students also volunteered to ring the bell for the Salvation Army during the holiday season. Unity Day, which occurred on October 18, 2023, brought the school community together to show unity for kindness, acceptance, and inclusion and to send a visible message that no child should ever experience bullying. A toiletry drive was conducted in November and all items were donated to the Veteran's home in Rocky Hill. DePaolo's annual pajama day fundraiser to raise money for the Connecticut Children's Medical Center cancer unit occurred in December. DePaolo donated \$2,240 for this event. DePaolo also raised over

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – Joseph A. DePaolo Middle School

\$2,000 for YMCA Camp Sloper at the annual Sloper Plunge. The school community organized a challenge to collect canned food to assist Community Services and donated 925 cans.

Aside from traditional concerts offered by music students, members of the band, chorus, and orchestra performed at several community events. DePaolo (in partnership with Kennedy Middle School) also produced the Broadway musical “Sister Act” in April.

Students in seventh and eighth grade were inducted in a ceremony into the National Junior Honor Society held on December 4, 2023. This was the first induction ceremony held since before the pandemic.

The second annual “Poetry and Prose” evening was held in June.

DePaolo recognized 79 students at the eighth-grade annual awards night in June.

In June, a class day and a class night for 8th-grade students were held in celebration of the students’ three years in middle school.

Ongoing Work

Social Justice work continued this year. DePaolo’s lobby display was updated. After polling all DePaolo students, flags were purchased to represent the countries where all current students were born. DePaolo also celebrated many different families with a “Taste of Culture” event which was held in February. The PTO sponsored a program for all students on April 26, 2024, put on by the Zuzu Acrobats. This was an exciting assembly that shared about the vibrant African culture, including teaching some Swahili phrases, to our students.

Emotional Intelligence activities were offered throughout the school year. Aside from implementing RULER strategies outlined by the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence, teachers found ways to ensure the emotional well-being of their students. Research has shown that healthy emotional regulation has an impact of less stress, better health, and positive relationships. A school-wide Charter was created to build a positive emotional climate by documenting how everyone would like to feel while in the school.

Over 200 students were involved in DePaolo’s Leadership Program. After being trained in communication, team building, and leadership, all students were selected from a variety of clubs and activities in the school and the community. Some of the community activities included DePaolo students volunteering at Zion Nursery School, the Calendar House, and Hatton Elementary School. The Animal Helpers cared for eggs that hatched several baby chicks in April 2024. The students then moved the chickens to the new chicken coop that was funded through a grant received from the Main Street Foundation and the Southington Education Foundation.

During the 23-24 school year, DePaolo continued to offer Advisory lessons to all students. Advisory teachers and groups remain the same from year to year as another way to foster strong relationships. Thirteen lessons were delivered to the students over the year. The lesson topics included team building, gratitude to others, bullying prevention, goal setting, life skills and career exploration, communication, and further development of their emotional vocabulary to support the Emotional Intelligence initiative.

Teachers across all academic and unified arts departments focused on instructional strategies that support responsive teaching. Following each professional learning session on responsive teaching, teachers in each department integrated newly learned strategies and tools into their curriculum and assessments.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – Joseph A. DePaolo Middle School

During April and May students in Textiles & Culinary Arts worked on various community service projects to benefit Veterans Are Heros Forever from Wolcott, CT. Students made and then provided over sixty hand-sewn and stuffed pillows along with cookies and other refreshments for an event that was held at DePaolo on June 1, 2024.

Additional academic support was offered every day during the school day for students to have the opportunity to receive additional support from various teachers. This time, called CORE (Creative Opportunities for Reinforcement and Enrichment) was used to strengthen student learning, especially related to our Language Arts and Math curriculum. Below are some of the benefits of this reallocated time:

- Provided additional activities for students to strengthen math skills as well as reading and/or writing fluency.
- Designated time for teachers to create individualized learning plans for each student to support growth and achievement in math.
- Created opportunities for Language Arts teachers to conference individually with students and check in on progress.
- Allowed teachers to help students who may be struggling with a particular topic (especially if students were not able to stay after school for extra help).
- Provided time for teachers to strengthen organizational and executive functioning skills with students.
- The specified time for students to get caught up on missing graded classwork after absences.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024

JOHN F. KENNEDY MIDDLE SCHOOL

Susanne Vitcavage, Principal

Enhancements

The KBlock intervention/enrichment block continued to provide an opportunity for students to extend their learning outside of regularly scheduled class time. Tiered instruction in literacy and math, extra learning support to students with individualized educational plans, and Advisory lessons were delivered during KBlock. The greatest advantage of KBlock allowed students who received tier two instruction in literacy and math or extra learning support for students with individualized educational plans an opportunity to do so during KBlock in place of having to drop another class to receive such intervention.

Numerous extra-curricular clubs, activities, and sports continued to provide students with many opportunities after school. After-school activities were well attended. Students were able to develop a club of their liking if such a club did not already exist.

In October, Mr. John Halligan presented a powerful presentation, Ryan's Story, to students sharing his own family's heartbreaking story of bullying/cyberbullying. He spoke to students about how to recognize signs of teenage suicide and how to get help when needed. In December, Mrs. Megan Albanese, STEPS Prevention Coordinator, presented a lesson to eighth graders on the dangers of vaping. In January, SPS Sgt. Brian Leppard and Mrs. Albanese presented to students about online safety and the impact social media has on students' emotional well-being.

Coach Khandis Miller, a JFK para educator, reinstated Unified Sports at JFK. With grant funding from CAS, practices and competitions were held during the winter season with over twenty students participating, which led them to competitions in New Britain, Berlin, and Meriden.

In May, for the second year, several JFK students attended the annual Student-Manufacturer Connection Fair at the State Capital. Students met with manufacturers to learn about high-tech careers. Many local manufacturing companies were represented and provided hands-on activities and displays to introduce students to various career paths.

As modeled in Building Thinking Classrooms, the use of vertical whiteboards in math classes at JFK was universal. Students worked together to solve and discuss math problems collaboratively, which made it easier to see and understand the steps involved.

Students earned Kennedy Ka\$h for displaying the tenets of Eagle Excellence (be safe, be responsible, be respectful). Dairy Queen of Southington and Mike Defeo of Coke Northeast partnered with JFK to provide incentives for students who earned Kennedy Ka\$h. Many JFK families and several local businesses also supported JFK with donations for enrichment activities and school awards and recognition, including Eagle Excellence and Student of the Month, throughout the year.

JFK parent, Bridgeport Police Officer Diala Roberts, presented a generous donation to JFK on behalf of the Bridgeport Police Department. For the second year, she sold Autism Awareness patches and donated a portion of the proceeds to JFK. The donation was shared with members of the special education department at JFK for the purchase of classroom materials.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – John F. Kennedy Middle School

JFK's Instagram page (JFKMS06479) continued to provide snapshots of numerous school events during the school year, celebrating many everyday and special events at JFK.

Celebrations

A well-attended Open House set the pace for a school year filled with many exciting highlights.

October highlights included a successful run at the Apple Harvest Road Race by JFK Cross Country team members. JFK Peer Advocates attended a STEPS training event at Camp Sloper. The first Advisory lesson focused on teamwork. On Unity Day, students and staff dressed in orange to prevent bullying while promoting kindness, acceptance, and inclusion.

The volleyball team raised over \$500 at their annual Dig Pink match against JAD. All proceeds were donated to breast cancer research. JFK Supported several local organizations throughout the year including Bread for Life, Youth Services, Southington's Food Pantry, and the Prudence Crandall Center, among others.

Sixth grader Ryan King was a featured guest on the Tamron Hall Show in New York City for his ingenious invention (as a fifth grader) that helps parents safely lay their babies in a Pack and Play.

In November, eighth-grade students participated in the Grit'N Wit challenge which included a variety of physical and mental team-building activities. This full-day competitive event was well received by students and is slated to become an annual event at JFK.

Our local veterans, Steve Pintarich, Wayne White, Dave Brennan, and Lou Urso, shared their stories of their service to our country with all students. The annual Veteran's Day concert and celebration was a success. JFK students invited veterans to attend this appreciation event with them. The JFK band, orchestra, and chorus performed, and a reception was held in the media center. Mr. Ryan Hartt, social studies teacher and brother of a veteran, emceed this special event.

The Eagle Engineers, JFK's FIRST Robotics team, advanced to the state finals after securing the highest score in a match and earning the Champions Award. The Champions Award, the most prestigious award of the competition, celebrates a team that embodies the FIRST Lego League Challenge experience, by fully embracing the core values while achieving excellence and innovation in robot performance, robot design, and the Innovation Project.

In December, The Eagle Engineers received The Judges' Award at the state finals competition. The award was given to the team that excelled in all areas of the competition, including core values, the Innovation Project, robot design, and match score, but also had something "extra" that judges felt the team deserved to be recognized for. This was an amazing accomplishment, especially with the tough competition and stricter judging criteria. There were over 140 First Lego League teams in the state and the top 48 were at the finals. Only fifteen awards were given during the competition.

JFK students raised over \$650 for patients at Connecticut Children's Medical Center by participating in the annual PJ Day for a Cause.

Music filled the air at JFK during December. Concerts were well attended and highlighted the musical talent our students possess. Festive morning entertainment during the Twelve Days of Holiday Fun brightened up the halls as the students entered school each morning.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – John F. Kennedy Middle School

In January, Reverend Sharon Holt and the First Baptist Church of Southington honored eighth grader Lyla Gilbert as the recipient of the church's Martin Luther King, Jr. Award.

Deputy Fire Chief Glenn Dube presented a lesson on heat transfer to sixth graders and reviewed safety skills with students in the event of a fire.

In February, some eighth graders were randomly chosen to participate in the NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress) exam.

In conjunction with Calendar House, the annual Intergenerational Valentine's Day dance was held. This collaborative event brought many senior citizens and NJHS and chorus members together for an afternoon of dancing, pizza, and fun.

In March, JFK was selected to participate in Quinnipiac University's Big Event. Current Quinnipiac and alumni students performed a community service activity at JFK and freshened up the halls of the counseling area with new paint.

Sixth grader Elijah Pelletier was awarded 2nd place in the Elks Lodge writing contest that he entered in September. The topic was the Bill of Rights and What it Means to You.

In April, several students were recognized at a Board of Education meeting for receiving honors for their Connecticut Invention Convention submissions.

In May, local veteran Steve Pintarich was recognized at JFK by the State Department of Education for his contributions to JFK and the Southington community in educating students about Veterans Day, Memorial Day, and so much more. Mrs. Amy Perry, a social studies teacher, had submitted Mr. Pintarich's name and accomplishments to the state for consideration of the award. May 13, 2024, was officially declared Steve Pintarich Day in Southington.

Dominik Milewski and Kaden Beaudoin won first and second place honors, respectively, for their submitted patriotism essays in the American Legion essay contest. They were recognized publicly at the American Legion by the American Legion Kiltonic Post 72 Ladies Auxiliary.

Ongoing Work

Continued implementation of JFK's three-year SRBI plan focused on providing teachers with effective tools and strategies to strengthen differentiation and tier-one instruction in all areas. During team meetings, teachers collaboratively reviewed data to determine student needs as a priority for intervention during KBlock time. Teams met weekly to discuss and monitor student progress. Professional development in the areas of differentiation and responsive teaching was provided for all teachers.

One of the most valuable changes made at JFK was isolating math and literacy SRBI meetings. Instead of meeting once a week to discuss both math and literacy with SRBI teams as had been done for so many years in the past, each team met two weeks with admin each month, one week with a specific focus on math and the other with a specific focus on literacy.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – John F. Kennedy Middle School

The Vision of the Graduate continued to be a focus at JFK. Teachers made a conscious effort to integrate the Four Cs (communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity) into all content areas, necessary skills for postgraduate success. The Vision of the Graduate is posted in each academic area and around JFK's halls.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024

WALTER A. DERYNOSKI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Jan Verderame, Principal

School Accomplishments

The 2023-2024 school year at Walter A. Derynoski Elementary School was filled with learning and excitement. The Derynoski Community came together with our monthly family fun nights sponsored by the PTO. Families enjoyed watching movies and playing bingo together along with many other fun events. Along with our nightly events, students enjoyed a monthly whole-school celebration. These events included making a craft, watching a movie, playing a trivia game, and enjoying a beach day. It was a bonding experience that students and staff looked forward to each month. The school continued with their One School, One Book Event with this year's title being "The World According to Humphrey." Students read or listened to their teachers/administrators read to them each night. The classes answered questions about the book and the winning classes enjoyed a visit from Hank, our guinea pig. Each student had the opportunity to take their class "stuffed Humphrey" home and journal what their family did with him.

In the academic areas, Derynoski classroom teachers integrated strategies and best practices in instruction to align with the "science of reading." Teachers built their capacity in the new DIBELS Assessment throughout the year. They learned how to administer and analyze the data with this new assessment. Teachers focused on building students' foundational skills using discrete, explicit instruction. Integration of decodable texts were used to support the generalization of these foundational skills. Teachers in kindergarten through fifth grade planned and executed small group lessons based on data received from assessments to meet all students' needs. Small groups were seen in both reading and math. Math stations were integrated into the classrooms to target math concepts. A continued instructional focus included enhancing both communication and collaboration to align with the Vision of a Graduate. The classroom teacher targeted the 4 C's (critical thinking, communication, creativity, and collaboration) in multiple ways in the classroom to support student's independence and higher-level thinking skills. Social-emotional learning continued to be an important component of learning using the RULER Program. With the continued implementation of the RULER Program, students continued to grow their emotional intelligence. To establish positive classroom communities, individual classroom charters were developed by students and teachers. Lessons provided students with the skills to recognize, understand, label, express, and regulate emotions. Each week the counseling and physical education staff shared strategies to support the social and emotional well-being of staff and students through Mindfulness Mondays, Tranquil Tuesdays, and Wellness Wednesdays. The School Safety Plan was updated and reviewed with all staff. First responders were present at both fire, secure school, and lockdown drills to provide feedback and attended committee meetings in the building. Teachers planned a strategy for Lockdown situations in classrooms and in other areas of the building.

This year Derynoski incorporated a new Positive Behavior Program to target Responsive Classroom concepts and align with the RULER Program. Posters were placed in every area of the school using the school charter vocabulary stating the expectations in various settings. Students were able to earn "Dragon Hugs" for noted positive behaviors during the school day.

Superintendent’s Annual Report 2023-2024 – Derynoski Elementary School

Students could “cash in” their hugs for various incentives. Derynoski families were presented with this new program during Open House in the fall.

The Derynoski PTO continued to support students and staff through the funding of materials and providing volunteers for the many events they planned for the school community. This year the PTO continued their support for our staff with a special monthly recognition. Due to the success of fundraising this year, the PTO was able to provide the school with scholastic news for all students in all grade levels along with supporting classroom furniture, field trips, recess equipment, books, and other classroom materials.

Celebrations/Diversity

Our 5th grade students honored our local veterans in a ceremony in the auditorium for Veteran’s Day which ended with each class completing the “white table” ceremony. Students spearheaded many fundraisers this year to support the greater community. Derynoski sponsored scholarships for the YMCA along with providing families in need with financial support for summer camp. Derynoski had a large Polar Plunge Team and raised over \$1,500. Derynoski students were recognized as *Heroes Among Us* for their charitable work. Examples of this work included students who in lieu of birthday presents made donations to a charity or would spearhead a lemonade stand to raise money for Bread for Life. Students grew their hair long to cut it to donate to Locks for Love. Derynoski Boys & Girl Scouts donated their time to make the school grounds beautiful with a Saturday and evening clean-up day.

A focus on cultural awareness continued this year with diversity workshops led by Mr. Paul Vivian and Dr. Audley Donaldson for third and fifth-grade students. These workshops provided students with practical experiences to examine diversity in everyday life. The STEPS/Emotional Intelligence and Positive Behavior Programs continued to promote our positive school culture where kindness and acceptance were the expectation. Our STEPS leadership program had over sixty students who continued to share target assets and strategies to promote inclusion at Derynoski. Various activities were completed in each classroom to align with our STEPS and RULER Program.

Kindergarten

The kindergarten team began their own research and learning with the Science of Reading. The team researched and successfully piloted the University of Florida Phonics Program, UFLI to build students' foundational skills. The data collected in phonics revealed amazing results as measured on the DIBELS Assessment. Our school has the highest percentage of students “above benchmark” compared to district results. This explicit, systematic approach to phonics aligned with the Science of Reading and common core standards. Students incorporated these skills in all areas of the curriculum specifically writing, to make the shift as seamless as possible. Students also made great gains in math. Differentiated, small group work in Math and ELA allowed the team to address the specific needs of the kindergarten learners. Through partner and small group work, students learned how to collaborate and communicate during lessons. This experience in lessons contributed to their increased academic achievement. The kindergarten team had a great year!

Grade 1

The adjusted reading and writing workshop curriculum was followed with fidelity. The first grade embraced the challenge of blending the previous English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum with the new materials to better align with the Science of Reading. This year first grade attended multiple professional development trainings on incorporating the Science of Reading into the current ELA curriculum. The team is excited about the new ELA curriculum for the fall that will incorporate the science of reading. Another component that the first-grade team received professional development on was integrating decodable texts. The teachers incorporated the decodable texts along with leveled texts in small groups and shared reading to generalize the discrete skills taught in the classroom. Small group reading instruction using mostly decodable texts was a big shift from leveled reading instruction. With this shift in instructional practice, the first grade team has noted a significant increase in students' growth from previous years.

Writing instruction included narrative, informational writing, as well as opinion genres. Students worked hard to edit and revise their work. Grammar was a focus with students having them understand the structure of a sentence. Every day the students were involved in explicit instruction and activities that allowed them to work with partners and small groups as well as teacher-guided small group instruction to reinforce the skills taught. Phonological Awareness assessments were used to measure growth throughout the year.

The Ready Math curriculum continued to be implemented incorporating math stations to individualize student needs. The math groups were differentiated to meet the needs of all unique learners with a focus on problem-solving, collaboration, communication, and critical thinking.

Grade 2

This year the second grade team has implemented the Science of Reading core concepts into literacy instruction and small groups. Decodable text materials have been put to use during iBlock and Reader's Workshop. The team has used the "looking through a mirror or window" idea to connect reader's with daily read-alouds. Patterns of Power lessons as well as modified Teacher's College phonics lessons were explicitly taught in both whole group and small flex groups to support reading and writing growth throughout the year.

The second-grade team has implemented modified Reader's and Writer's Workshop lessons that have been more aligned with the Science of Reading. In the area of writing, students wrote for different audiences and created a variety of writing such as personal narrative stories, and informational pieces including reports, opinion, brochures, and newsletters. The Math Workshop model was followed with differentiated stations and i-Ready pathway lessons.

The science units were implemented. These units consisted of learning sequences that aligned with the NGSS and engaged students in inquiry, engineering design, and problem-solving.

Superintendent’s Annual Report 2023-2024 – Derynoski Elementary School

Students began their days with morning meetings with a focus on Emotional Intelligence lessons, Mentor texts and everyday examples that were read and discussed to help students navigate through social situations during their school day.

Grade 3

The third-grade team continued rigorous small-group instruction this year. Elements of the Science of Reading have driven the planning of small reading groups while maintaining a focus on Units of Study skills as well. Small group instruction occurs daily during writing and math. Data analysis from both formative and summative assessments drive the team’s planning and instruction.

In the language arts area, the third-grade team continued to grow following multiple in-service workshops. Teachers became facilitators of both Reading and Writing Workshop, while also integrating the core skills measured by the DIBELS assessment. Professional development in more skill-based reading skills was the focus which included syllabication/decoding and fluency was integrated into our small group and whole group instruction. In addition, the team continued vocabulary instruction and homegrown lessons for phonics. Students were enthusiastic participants in Word Love lessons and Word Study Lessons. Kelly Lavery provided coaching and co-teaching opportunities (in large and small groups) for all teachers to select what best fits their needs and the needs of their students. In addition to composing texts in the genres of narrative, informational, and opinion writing, teachers provided the opportunity for students to publish and present texts in various modes, including handwriting, Google Docs, Google slideshows, and speeches.

In Math, the teachers started the year reflecting on data and adjusted classroom instruction to increase student success. The team continued to implement the Math Workshop model while integrating the iReady resources. Through training with the specialists and data analysis, teachers revisited the “Three Reads” process to use during math mini-lessons. Adjustments in math workshop stations were implemented to create more targeted skills groups, based on the iReady Diagnostic and Smarter Balanced results.

The third-grade team continued to implement our three science units this year. In addition, teachers added the NGSS standards that are measured on the Smarter Balanced Assessments to lessons. To support this, students took IABs that aligned with each unit as a whole and in small groups. This work encouraged exploration and the use of the 4C’s to foster student growth.

Staff communication with families continues to be a focus with the third-grade team. All third-grade teachers were using Parent Square. Newsletters, Padlets, videos, and photos to help keep families informed and engaged with the learning community.

Grade 4

This year the fourth grade team began to implement the Science of Reading practices into daily instruction. Teachers continued to enhance their skills within the literacy block through the support of literacy coaches, literacy specialists, and professional development. The fourth-grade team explicitly targeted small groups based on DIBELS data and utilized Amplify resources to support students in the areas of decoding, fluency, literal comprehension, higher-order comprehension, and written responses. All classrooms incorporated the Word Love program, which supplemented the reading units and gave students opportunities to acquire knowledge of unknown words. A new word study program was embedded to target phonics skills and enhance decoding practices. All classrooms utilized the iBlock instructional period to target written response work utilizing a variety of resources including technology. Teachers also assessed student progress using learning progressions and having students provide self and peer feedback. Grand conversations were implemented into the balanced literacy block allowing students an opportunity for collaboration, critical thinking, and communication. Within the classrooms, students were highly engaged with a variety of hands-on science experiments that allowed students to effectively explore abstract concepts with a tactile approach. This led to a collaborative learning environment where students created hypotheses, took risks, and analyzed their outcomes together. Student discourse was prevalent throughout the units as they investigated a variety of topics including biomimicry, energy, and erosion. This year in Social Studies, students began by learning some important map skills and then went on to explore four out of the five major regions of the United States including the Southeast, Midwest, Southwest, and the West. In each of these units, students learned about the major geographical features of the region and were able to identify them using maps, globes, models, computer programs, and texts. Students also studied the different governing bodies, the major historical events, and the economics of each region. Within the units, students used critical thinking to identify the main ideas of historical information and compare past and present situations. By the end of all the units, students understood the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democratic society. Students also understood how different items made in these regions are produced. This year in math, students expanded their knowledge of multi-digit multiplication and division, along with fractions and decimals. Students demonstrated critical thinking and problem-solving skills as they collaborated during math centers. These centers provided ample opportunities for students to work together and practice current skills, revisit previously learned concepts, and challenge each other's thinking. Furthermore, students consistently worked on their iReady pathway, which differentiates instruction to meet student's individual needs. To support our student's emotional well-being, students continued to practice self-regulation strategies as we embarked on another year of implementing the RULER program. All classes began each day with a Morning Meeting to build the classroom community and relationships among peers. During this time, students engaged in conversations, problem-solved, and shared ideas with their peers. Mood Meters and Strategy Walls hung in all of our 4th-grade classrooms. A designated area for our Cozy Corner was provided in all classrooms, giving students a safe space to take a break. Fourth grade had a great year of learning and growing!

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – Derynoski Elementary School

Grade 5

Grade 5 teachers received coaching from literacy coaches, and nearly all of our professional development revolved around small-group instruction in language arts. The team integrated this extensive training into daily instruction, including iBlock and language arts. Wordlove, Word Study, and phonics were also integrated into language arts instruction. The fifth grade team taught the language arts curriculum with fidelity and embraced the integration of concepts from the Science of Reading. Students read and analyzed narrative, informational, and fantasy texts. Identification of themes, main idea, and cause and effect were some of the target learning strategies for these genres. Integration of the learning progressions and opportunities for self-assessment facilitated student ownership of learning. The team worked closely with the literacy coach in reviewing best practices for groups, student discourse, and critical thinking. In writing, narrative, fantasy, research, opinion, and memoirs were some of the areas of focus. In the math area, data collected from the iReady program, pathways, and other formative assessments, were analyzed to plan and execute differentiated instruction, including stationwork. Students communicated and collaborated within math centers via partnerships. Students enjoyed continued inquiry-based science lessons aligning with the NGSS model, with updated space systems and separate Invention Convention Units. Students developed their inventions for the Invention Convention and many of Derynoski's students went to the state and national levels. Social Studies began with The Kid Governor program and culminated with students participating in the statewide election. We added a field trip to the Old State House that reviewed all of the Kid Governor lessons. The developmental asset building blocks of the STEPS program could be seen throughout our classrooms. The RULER Program was implemented with fidelity and enhanced our STEPS program. The C3 STEPS program took place in the fall and was taught by Officer Verab from the Southington Police Department.

Library-Media

Over the 2023-2024 school year, the Derynoski Library has continued to be a thriving hub of knowledge, fostering a love for reading and exploration among the students. Here's a review of its success:

Diverse Collection: One of the hallmarks of the Derynoski Library is the diverse collection of books. From classic tales to contemporary literature, the shelves are stocked with a wide array of genres, catering to the varied interests and reading levels of the Derynoski student body. Whether a child seeks adventure in fantasy, historical fiction, or has an interest in non-fiction, there's a book waiting to spark his or her curiosity.

Digital Citizenship: One of the key highlights of this year's library initiatives has been teaching all students to be good digital citizens. We have noted positive changes in students' behavior and

Superintendent’s Annual Report 2023-2024 – Derynoski Elementary School

attitude towards online activities. Through engaging lessons from Common Sense Media, students have learned responsibility and awareness is associated with digital platforms.

Research & Information Literacy: In today's rapidly evolving world, the ability to navigate vast amounts of information and discern reliable sources is an essential skill for success in any field. By introducing these skills at the elementary level, we are equipping our students with the tools they need to thrive. All students learned how to research a topic of interest. The 4th and 5th-grade students presented their information through a “Living Wax Museum”.

Innovative Designing: The Derynoski students have been actively engaged in coding activities, and their enthusiasm and aptitude for this field have been truly remarkable. Students had the opportunity to code Dash and Dot Robots. Students also participated in “Hour of Code” while using Code.org.

Ongoing Work & School Improvement

Derynoski’s work next year will focus on the continued alignment with the science of reading in all grade levels. With the new Benchmark Literacy Program, a focus will include building the teachers' capacity in kindergarten, first and second grade in this new initiative. Explicit coaching by the Literacy District Team will support this goal. A continued focus on differentiated, small-group instruction in all grade levels will occur to increase student achievement. Coaching in the Math area will focus on the intermediate grade levels to incorporate rigorous strategies to increase student achievement. The third year of the three-year SRBI plan will be implemented with adjustments incorporated from the DBI training that the district received last school year. The integration of the 4 C’s (Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Communication, and Creativity) will be enhanced in the classrooms to ensure higher-level learning in all content areas. To increase classroom community and overall school climate, incorporating the combined STEPS and RULER programs into daily lessons will be a focus. Safety protocols will continue to be a consistent message for all staff. Training will occur before school with follow-up throughout the school year.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024

FLANDERS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Katie T. Guerrette, Principal

School Accomplishments

Flanders Elementary School has consistently provided students with a safe, supportive environment for learning and personal growth. Flanders celebrated its 19th Annual Veterans Day Ceremony with an in-person event, inviting family members who have served in our armed forces. The school celebrated our national heroes with a beautiful ceremony filled with student performances, songs, and poems. Social-emotional learning remains a daily priority in every classroom, with students utilizing the RULER approach and Mood Meter to identify and understand emotions in themselves and others. The classroom charters further support this by setting clear expectations for how we want to feel in school. Flanders also hosted its Second Annual Flanders Flash Color Dash, a fun-filled event combining fitness and fundraising for the Flanders PTO. Funds raised at this event allow the Flanders PTO to provide all students and staff with two Flanders Spiritwear T-shirts during the year, provide in-school cultural events, reduce the cost of field trips for our students and families, and provide many after-school fun PTO events for families! In addition, Flanders School extends its supportive flair to the broader community through various fundraising efforts such as the Annual SOUPer Bowl Food Drive for Bread for Life, Pajama Day for the Connecticut Children's Foundation, and the Sloper Plunge for YMCA Camp Sloper. Flanders Elementary is deeply committed to fostering both academic excellence and social-emotional growth for all its students.

Celebrations

Flanders School held the seventh annual *One School, One Book* with the whole community reading Friendship According to Humphrey by Betty G. Birney. This shared literacy experience was a wonderful way to build the home-school connection and promote family literacy. Throughout the event, families were assigned chapters to read, trivia questions were posed at school, and students were entered into weekly raffles to win books and prizes. We especially enjoyed having our very own Humphrey the Hamster living in the Flanders Office! The Flanders PTO continued to support the school and make Flanders a wonderful place for students and staff. The PTO generously sponsored a cultural arts program this year with Rob Surette - Hero Art, where we watched him create masterpieces through speed painting while storytelling about the historical significance of the subject! Thanks to the PTO's generosity, we were also able to add a new painting of Abraham Lincoln to our Hero Art Collection!

Kindergarten

Kindergarten students worked on becoming strong readers and writers this school year. Students engaged in phonological awareness activities to build a strong foundation in their literacy skills. An important focus in phonics helped support students in their decoding and encoding skills. They applied this new knowledge to their everyday reading and writing. In math, kindergarteners were challenged during math stations where they learned to add and subtract fluently through

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – Flanders Elementary School

five and build number sense. Students learned to navigate relationships, solve conflicts with their peers throughout the day, and build independence. Students learned to use the mood meter to plot their feelings daily.

Grade 1

First-grade students had a wonderful year of growth. First graders strengthened their decoding and encoding skills by becoming both word detectives and word builders in reading and phonics. Students deepened their understanding of place value and learned various addition and subtraction strategies by practicing word problems and engaging in hands-on learning through math centers. Students had many discussions about emotions and feelings through read-alouds and the use of the Mood Meter. The first graders also had an exciting field trip to the Beardsley Zoo where students observed many different animals and their habitats.

Grade 2

Second grade had a busy year! Students wrote for a variety of purposes and audiences and enjoyed writing poetry to express what is important to them. Students became experts on reading fluency and comprehension strategies. Reading series books was a highlight to study character development. Math focused on adding and subtracting three-digit numbers and measurement. Second graders enjoyed our Science Units that focus on the states of matter, beaver habitats, and plant needs. The students were very excited to go on a field trip to Camp Sloper where they applied what they had learned in the Science curriculum through hands-on activities. Second graders became proficient at using the Mood Meter daily to support self-regulation and would check in and share their feelings in both morning meetings and closing circles.

Grade 3

Third graders explored the changing Earth through fossils in the Grand Canyon and spent a day at the Connecticut Historical Society and Museum learning about life in colonial Connecticut, Connecticut's industry, Famous Nutmeggers, and the legend of the Charter Oak. In literacy, the focus was to foster a love of reading through fiction, character development, and learning to enjoy informational texts. Third graders were empowered to voice opinions through persuasive writing and entertained them with creative narratives. Math skills were strengthened in multiplication, fractions, and rounding. Overall, third grade was transformative as students gained knowledge in geography, literacy, writing, and mathematics, developing confidence and critical thinking skills for the future.

Grade 4

Fourth-grade students had a wonderful year of school. Students explored our Land and Water Unit, focusing on the Oso Landslide. Students created stream tables to test out their hypothesis and found the cause! Through Writer's Workshop, students wrote for a variety of purposes in multiple genres, including opinion, informational, and narrative. In Reader's Workshop, students focused on fiction, identifying character traits and how those traits are tried and true. In math,

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – Flanders Elementary School

students used math centers to push their thinking and used iReady to support their mathematical needs. Students continued to expand on social-emotional learning with The Mood Meter, Second Step, and class discussions.

Grade 5

Fifth-grade students embraced a variety of enriching learning experiences this year. They explored government through participation in the CT Kid Governor program and brought history to life by creating a Colonial America Living Museum. Students explored science utilizing the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Through participation in the CT Invention Convention, students learned problem identification, problem-solving, entrepreneurship, and creativity skills. Our community is proud to share that one of our students even qualified for the National Level of Invention Convention. Reader's and Writer's Workshop fostered meaningful discussions that expanded their grasp of the ELA curriculum, while a visit to Mystic Aquarium gave them the chance to apply their skills in argument and advocacy in a real-world context. Math learning came to life through the workshop model and engaging centers, making the curriculum relevant and practical. Additionally, through the STEPS and C3 programs, students strengthened classroom relationships by practicing empathy, problem-solving, and learning to be upstanders.

Ongoing Work and School Improvement

Flanders will maintain its commitment to a continuous growth model, using data-driven decision-making in both academic and social-emotional learning to tailor instruction and opportunities that meet the needs of every student. The school's focus on small group, differentiated instruction in language arts and mathematics has proven highly successful in addressing individual student needs, and these effective practices will continue moving forward. Flanders also remains dedicated to fostering a safe, respectful, and positive learning environment, where kindness and hard work are core values.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024

WILLIAM H. HATTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Robert Garry, Principal

School Information

Hatton Elementary School remained committed to excellence in teaching and learning this year. The school theme was “Happy New Year” and encouraged students and teachers to focus on setting ambitious personal learning goals and creating action plans to achieve them. Our Opening Day festivities included a DJ, confetti, a countdown, and a ball drop before every class entered the building on the red carpet to the cheers of families and staff. The “New Year” theme remained alive all year as teachers worked with their students to set goals, monitor learning progress, and implement small steps to impact positive changes. Regular goal-setting conferences also increased students’ ownership of their learning.

The past year provided rich professional learning experiences for our staff. Classroom teachers engaged in ongoing professional development throughout the year with reading and numeracy specialists as well as onsite coaching to enhance their teaching practices. Teachers partnered with our math specialist to closely examine student data to develop instructional groups in and across classrooms, as well as incorporate instructional strategies from Building Thinking Classrooms. Professional development, modeling, and coaching work helped enhance our teachers’ math practices. Student engagement and collaboration increased through the use of vertical whiteboards, and random partnerships increased opportunities for our students to share their understanding with all peers. Teachers also partnered with our literacy specialists and coaches to deepen their understanding of the Science of Reading and incorporate research-based practices into their work with our students. The results across all grade levels were excellent, and we plan to build on these strengths in the year to come.

The Hatton staff maintains a focus on total involvement and continuous improvement. Teachers are members of one or more teams that focus on school improvement, data teams, SRBI, and Emotional Intelligence, and our membership includes both teachers and support staff. The Hatton SRBI team met regularly to review student achievement data and assist teachers in providing both intervention and acceleration for their students. We also worked with faculty from UCONN on a project called DBI (Data-based Individualization) as part of the Intensive Intervention Implementation Initiative. The work strengthened our data analysis and intervention practices and had positive impacts on students at every grade level.

In addition to encouraging teacher leadership, Hatton students were engaged in leadership development opportunities through the STEPS team and leadership assemblies, and participation with CT Association of Schools Leadership and Celebration of the Arts Conferences. The Hatton staff remains dedicated to supporting town initiatives including STEPS and the annual YMCA Polar Plunge, and our entire school community rallied behind students and staff members who had been impacted by challenging medical diagnoses.

One of our core strengths is our school learning community. The Hatton PTO continued to support the entire school community through enrichment activities, cultural arts programs, and a variety of family night events including book fairs, arts enrichment programs, bingo night, pizza

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – Hatton Elementary School

cooking nights with the principal, monthly movie nights, an ice cream social and a pasta supper. The PTO supported literacy across the school through purchases for classroom libraries as well as keeping the book vending machine in our media center stocked with high-interest books for our students. The book vending machine remains a powerful incentive to recognize the positive efforts of our students each week. The PTO also purchased flexible seating for all classrooms, sponsored an outdoor reading garden, and provided a variety of school assemblies for all students. This dedicated group of parents continues to look for ways to improve the school experience for every student at Hatton. Regular connections and communication with families are an integral part of the work at Hatton. Families are engaged as partners in their student's learning and are provided opportunities to enhance student learning at home.

Celebrations

A highlight of this school year was the continuation of our One School, One Book project in coordination with our PTO. A copy of Mr. Popper's Penguins was provided for every family and a school-wide reveal was planned for the project roll-out. The roll-out celebration included a visit from Mystic Aquarium staff and a live penguin. Every student enjoyed a close-up visit with our guest penguin at an interactive assembly. Nightly activities consisted of virtual staff and local celebrity readers, trivia contests, in-school activities in all classrooms, and a cultural arts project day for all classes aligned to the theme of the book. The PTO sponsored a movie night for all families as a finale for the activity. While the Hatton Community benefited from this work, the project was also shared with other elementary schools as they too worked to incorporate one school - one book activity into their schools.

The Hatton Friday Phone Call was once again a favorite highlight for students and families. This weekly phone call to families by the school principal occurred right in the classroom to celebrate the success of an individual student. Students are recognized with tangible rewards that include a special gold coin to purchase their book from the Book Vending Machine in our library. Friday Phone Calls served as a great motivator for the students and remained a meaningful way to recognize and reinforce positive contributions to the school community. The continued positive impact of these calls reduced discipline issues and improved school culture. This practice has also been shared successfully with other Southington schools. Over 750 calls were made this year to the delight of Hatton families.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – Hatton Elementary School

Kindergarten

The kindergarten classes took an exciting and informative field trip in the Fall to Indian Rock Reserve. Students learned about the orchards and how apples grow. They also learned how to make apple cider and even tried it! The hayride was the highlight of this trip. The kindergarten classes participated with STEPS, which headed a school-wide “Warm Your Neighbor” project, collecting soup, oatmeal & hot cocoa for community organizations, including the Southington food pantry. Cards with greetings from Hatton School were also distributed with these items. The year concluded with students performing in a Flag Day and Graduation Program for their families. Kindergarten students also participated in a school-wide Field Day celebration in which they worked on team-building skills.

Grade 1

This year our team was in the cohort that began the second year of using both the Ready Classroom math resource and the Units of Study in Phonics. The First-Grade team worked with the math specialists to refine practices and differentiate for students. The first-grade team also collaborated closely with the Literacy Coach to implement the phonics units of study and begin unpacking the small group resource. In science, all three classes were able to incubate eggs to hatch chickens in the spring. It was highly engaging for the classes to see the process including candling the eggs to monitor development, all the way through to hatching. The development of the chicks and how they rapidly changed over three weeks also prompted great observations and discourse with the students. Each classroom also worked hard to build classroom community through the development of students' Emotional Intelligence created a class charter and used the mood meter daily. Each classroom was able to hold a Meet the Authors celebration to bring families in and share their student's writing from the whole year.

Grade 2

This year was very successful in second grade. The team benefitted from professional development on new math and reading strategies, and the changes in practices had positive impacts on our students. Building Thinking Classrooms provided enhanced learning opportunities for our students and increased both engagement and student discourse. We implemented the 3-station rotation and double-dipping strategies to enhance the learning experience for all students by grouping across all three classes during intervention blocks. All students met growth goals and our grade 2 team math achievement was among the highest in the district. This year we were also introduced to a new Phonics curriculum that included on-site coaching and several full-day PD sessions where the team was able to review data to better inform instructional strategies. The professional learning was invaluable, and as a team, all agreed that this program improves students' encoding and decoding skills tremendously. Students were encouraged to take charge of their learning by collaborating with their Rug Clubs. The team was very happy to engage with parents during conferences to set and review learning goals for their children and to come in to read to the students during Read Across America week.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – Hatton Elementary School

Grade 3

Third-grade students created maps of Connecticut to show the variety of skills associated with geography. Students also learned about Connecticut's government, economy, and its famous citizens. In science, students worked on inquiry-based units covering the topics of matter, forces, and heredity. They also worked to improve not only narrative stories but also informational writing skills, on top of learning how to craft an effective opinion piece. In math, the students increased their understanding of basic computation and tackled new concepts like multiplication, division, basic algebra, area, perimeter, and measurement. Finally, in reading the students worked to improve their responses to various texts in all areas, and teachers worked to incorporate close reads to boost comprehension skills. The grade three students showed flexibility, adaptivity, and perseverance during this challenging year.

Grade 4

Students were excited to visit YMCA Camp Sloper for hands-on science lessons. These lessons aligned with the erosion unit in our science curriculum. Students read and researched multiple texts focusing on the American Revolution and went on to write their own chapter books on the subject. In Math, students participated in centers to enhance learning and engagement while working through the new i-Ready resource "My Path" to assist with the reinforcement of past skills and concepts. In Social Studies students studied the various regions of the United States with a focus on geography, economy, and history of our country. Students also spent time this year focusing on their emotional intelligence by developing a class charter, and through various mini lessons based on the mood meter.

Grade 5

Grade 5 students participated in emotional intelligence activities throughout the year such as mood meter work, and even yoga. The 5th-grade classes also benefited from Diversity training workshops as well as two presentations through STEPS. Students were eager to participate in middle school transition days; Asset Day at Camp Sloper and a tour of DePaolo/JFK. In the classroom, Reptile Day, the Macy's Day parade, and Alma Thomas paintings were just three examples of project-based learning, STEM activities, and the arts. In addition, grade five students were STEPS leaders and Unified Sports coaches. Our students participated in multiple concerts this year, including chorus, band, and orchestra. We concluded the year with a field trip to the CT Science Center that included a day of exciting hands-on learning experiences. Our grade five students enjoyed a return to our traditional year-end celebrations as they transitioned to middle school as sixth graders. This was a meaningful culminating activity for the students and their families.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024

URBIN T. KELLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Marilyn Kahl, Principal

ENHANCEMENTS

Integration of the fundamentals of The Science of Reading was once again the focus for teachers in grades K-2 this school year. All teachers continued to broaden their understanding and implementation of Tier I SRBI Interventions in literacy and mathematics. This included the utilization of a daily intervention block to support students' academic needs. Check-ins on the Mood Meter and the development of classroom charters supported the continued dedication to Emotional Intelligence. The SRBI leadership team created an online database to monitor student progress and worked with classroom teachers to design instruction to meet targeted areas. Kelley School's principal, special education teachers, and literacy specialist worked all year with members of UConn's NEAG School of Education on implementing Data-Based Individualization (DBI) strategies and tools to better meet the needs of Kelley School students. The implementation of DIBELS Assessments provided teachers with in-depth knowledge of students' strengths and areas for improvement in phonological awareness, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension.

CELEBRATIONS

A dedicated Parent Teacher Organization supported the staff and students in many ways throughout the school year. The Kelley Elementary School PTO provided funds for field trips, in-school cultural events, carpets for classrooms, books for class libraries, and 5th-grade Recognition and Class Day at YMCA Camp Sloper. PTO-sponsored events were held throughout the year, including a Welcome Back Picnic, a town-wide Scavenger Hunt for families, Scholastic Book Fairs, a Holiday Fair, and Kelley School Field Day. The PTO also sponsored the KES Kindness Club and Art Club. Fifth-grade STEPS Ambassadors once again served as outstanding role models for all Kelley School students. They ran monthly Town Meetings educating all other students on the Asset of the Month and how to integrate assets into their daily lives. The Ambassadors also coordinated the Thanksgiving food drive benefiting Bread for Life and the annual "Soup-er Bowl" can/food drive benefiting Southington Community Services. Diversity workshops, under the direction of Mr. Paul Vivian and Dr. Reverend Audley Donaldson, were presented to third and fifth-grade students throughout the year. These engaging workshops focused discussions on important topics, including stereotypes, bullying, acceptance, and inclusion. Kelley School's Unified Sports Team once again provided students of all abilities the opportunity to work together in an athletic environment under the direction of Kelley Staff members who volunteer their time to this amazing program. This year also saw the return of Kelley School's Drama Club. Third, fourth, and fifth-grade students rehearsed for months and had two outstanding performances of *Frozen Jr.*

ONGOING WORK

Teachers in Grades K-2 will begin implementing the Benchmark Advanced Literacy program and will continue building their knowledge of the Science of Reading. Intermediate teachers in grades 3-5 will be exploring *Building Thinking Classrooms* in mathematics. Professional learning about the Science of Reading will also be provided to them. Continued integration of Data-Based Individualization (DBI) with current practices in SRBI will be a focus of the

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – Kelley Elementary School

intervention support and analysis of student progress in literacy. Staff and students will also begin implementing the newly created STEPS/Emotional Intelligence curriculum into their morning meeting.

KINDERGARTEN

Kelley School's youngest learners benefited from a combination of structured play, centers-based instruction, and the continued focus on the workshop model in reading, writing, and mathematics. Teachers continued to train on the understanding of The Science of Reading (SOR) and implement structured lessons in phonological awareness. Extensive use of decodable texts supplemented the explicit instruction. Teachers collaborated to further advance their knowledge in the area of SOR to help meet the needs of their students. With the implementation of the SOR, students demonstrated significant growth in reading. Use of the iReady Pathway for individualized support and practice of math skills taught complemented math instruction daily. Students went on a field trip to Indian Rock Nature Preserve in the fall and had Curious Creatures come to Kelley School in the Spring to support our science units of study.

GRADE 1

Phonics, Readers' and Writers' Workshop instruction and success were driven by the Lucy Calkins Units of Study and resources. The first-grade team met for professional development with the literacy coaches throughout the year with a focus on deeper learning related to the Science of Reading. Workshops included a focus on the implementation of new decodable texts, including Daffodil Hill Press, Jump Rope Readers, and Flyleaf. Small group instruction was driven by DIBELS and other phonological awareness assessments. Decodables were used in place of leveled readers for all groups. Students continued to work in "Rug Clubs" and were able to participate in partnerships and small groups. The implementation of the updated Ready Classroom provided further differentiation of instruction and student work in mathematics. The children completed 45 minutes per week on "My Path" to maintain and strengthen their understanding of the skills taught. Math centers were used to enhance the curriculum and target specific student needs. Support from math specialists and results from the diagnostic assessments and unit tests throughout the year enhanced teacher understanding of this resource to maximize student growth. The end of the year culminated with the first grade annual Mother's Day program, a field trip to the Beardsley Zoo, and the chicks hatching as part of a science unit of study.

SECOND GRADE

Literacy instruction in grade 2 continued to be driven by the implementation of units of study in the Readers' and Writers' Workshop, including the phonics program. Professional learning sessions with the district literacy coach focused on the use of decodable texts to help strengthen students' phonics skills, as well as continued learning related to the Science of Reading. Building Blocks videos were used to support phonics instruction. New this year was the DIBELS assessment to measure and assess students' acquisition of literacy skills. Professional Development was provided to support the facilitation of this assessment and how it related to

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – Kelley Elementary School

student performance and classroom instruction. Students used a program on the computer this year called Boost to help reinforce reading skills. The implementation of Math Workshop continued to have a positive impact on students' mathematics achievement in second grade. Math centers provided differentiated and engaging activities for students, with lessons aligned to the grade level curriculum and CCSS. In addition, students spent a minimum of 45 minutes on their I-Ready Pathway. This year I-Ready added Fluency Flight to its program to help strengthen students' math fluency for speed and accuracy. The implementation of I-Block allowed for differentiation, small group work, or 1-1 guided practice each day in reading, writing, or math. Science continued to provide many opportunities for problem-solving and hands-on learning. The approach to science is engineering-based and broken down into 3 units, The 4th Little Pig, Beavers, and the Koa Tree. The students enjoyed the hands-on activities that went along with each unit, and it allowed for all students to communicate & work together collaboratively. Second graders had a field trip to YMCA Camp Sloper, assisted LEAF in planting the raised bed gardens at Kelley, and had an enjoyable presentation about the history of Southington with a docent from the Barnes Museum this Spring.

THIRD GRADE

The continuation of Math Workshop in third grade had a positive impact on students' mathematics achievement over the school year. Differentiated student groups met at least twice a week allowing teachers to provide support or enrichment for students based on analysis of assessment data. The iReady Mathematics Pathway online program allowed students to work at their independent level for practice and reinforcement of skills taught during math instruction. Fluency Flight also provided students a platform to practice and develop proficiency with their math facts. Students engaged in higher-level discovery through the science curriculum. Third grade also made a shift to focus more on the Science of Reading, implementing explicit phonics lessons. These lessons provided direct instruction on a variety of phonics skills. Students did well with implementing what was taught into their work.

FOURTH GRADE

Readers Workshop consisted of units of study centered around characters, themes, and perspectives. In Writer's Workshop students focused on narratives, opinion essays, and informational essays. Fourth graders took a trip to YMCA Camp Sloper for hands-on experiences involving erosion that aligned with the Land and Water unit in science. Some of the activities included building a dam to save a village and completing a scavenger hunt on the trails. Students were also introduced to the idea of biomimicry-that humans mimic nature in their designs. They compared and contrasted energy transfer in the natural and designed worlds focusing on how electric currents, light, and sound are received and perceived by both. At the end of the unit, students identified how an existing device mimics the natural world and provided one way they could make the device better using biomimicry. In Social Studies, the year ended with a final state float project where students demonstrated their understanding of the US regions. A field trip to Mystic Seaport also provided students the opportunity to take a step back in time and experience life in Colonial New England.

FIFTH GRADE

Fifth graders again benefited from departmentalized instruction this year. Students switched classes for math and reading instruction. This provided consistency of instruction in these areas, as well as preparing students for the middle school class model. Science, social studies, and writing were co-taught by the grade-level teachers this year. This allowed for the opportunity to mix classes for group projects. Every student participated in the Invention Convention, with several students reaching the state level of competition for their creative inventions. A field trip to Boston's Freedom Trail in the fall enhanced the study of American History in Social Studies throughout the year. Teachers facilitated student-led parent conferences that allowed students to take ownership of their learning and share their progress with their adults. Many students were part of our instrumental program, while the entire 5th grade participated in our Choral program. Students also participated in the STEPS middle school transition days in the Spring as well as completing the C3 program with SPD Officer Grigerek.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024

ZAYA A. OSHANA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Josephine Rogala, Principal

Zaya A. Oshana Elementary School had a successful 2023-24 school year focusing on professional development to support improvement in academic growth and achievement while continuing to maintain safety and positive family engagement throughout the school year. Our collaborative approach to early intervention strengthened our tiered response in both reading, math, and behavior, while opportunities for teacher-led vertical learning walks contributed to a proactive and professional school climate. Our work with DBI through our partnership with UCONN strengthened our ability to analyze data while monitoring and adapting our intervention decisions to improve reading and math outcomes for all students. Along with the district literacy team and administration, teachers implemented new reading assessments, including DIBELS, and worked together to analyze data through the new platform, mClass. The Oshana PTO sponsored many family and student events including our annual Ice Cream Kick Social, Halloween Family Night, Bingo Night, Scholastic Book Fairs, Holiday Bazaar, an author's visit, and a laser light show showcasing Black History. Monthly PTO meetings and STEPS school assemblies were held highlighting developmental assets and emotional intelligence. The Oshana drama club performed Seussical Jr to sold-out audiences in all three performances while 4th and 5th students participated in Robotics Club and Math Olympiads. Our annual school-wide Art Show exhibit held in June showcased art represented by all students in kindergarten through fifth grade.

Kindergarten

Students engaged in multi-disciplinary learning throughout the school year. Examples included a field trip to Indian Rock Nature Preserve, observations of butterfly and ladybug life cycles, investigations of sinking and floating through shipbuilding in science, and pumpkin and apple curriculum theme-based learning stations. Parent engagement activities were held throughout the school year such as Friday Mystery Readers, parent-led learning stations, blanket-making for Southington Community Services, and curriculum-centered events. Teachers collaborated with the literacy specialist and tutor to restructure reading groups, which led to high academic achievement in reading by year's end.

Grade 1

Teachers engaged in ongoing professional development with the literacy coach focusing on instructional shifts based on the science of reading. First-grade students engaged in multiple hands-on investigative learning activities including observing shadows in determining shifting patterns of the sun, studying life cycles and hatched baby chicks, filling a pumpkin with trash and burying it, only to dig it up on Earth Day to see what happened. First graders also engaged in diverse books, learning about different holiday traditions, investigated how to use their shadows

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – Oshana Elementary School

to determine the shifting pattern of the sun, created sound makers to study how vibrations create sounds, and made a field guide showing how animals adapted to changing seasons. First graders also attended a field trip with 'High Touch, High Tech' to learn about the interrelationship between sound and vibrations.

Grade 2

Second-grade students and teachers hosted the annual school food drive to help support the Southington Community Services food pantry after learning about communities in social studies. Students learned about their hometown of Southington and hosted a visit from the Barnes Museum. In addition, second graders researched animals and created posters using Poster My Wall in media skills, discovered how animals and plants depend on one another through a hands-on field trip to Camp Sloper, and planted vegetable and fruit plants in the school garden in collaboration with LEAF and Mark Ramsey. Parents were invited into classrooms throughout March as Mystery Readers and for special events during the school year. Teachers engaged in ongoing professional development with the literacy coach to implement shifts in curriculum based on the science of reading.

Grade 3

Teachers collaborated with literacy and math specialists through coaching cycles focusing on leveling up student talk and critical thinking. Third graders participated in diversity lessons led by consultants Mr. Paul Vivian and Rev. Dr. Audley Donaldson celebrating the uniqueness of each family. Students worked collaboratively to research extreme weather and then designed and built models representing ways to protect our school. Third graders also researched animals and created animal slideshows which they presented to their classmates, and observed the life cycles of butterflies. During a field trip to Indian Nature Preserve, students learned about the lives of indigenous people.

Grade 4

Fourth-grade students participated in an annual science field trip to Camp Sloper to research erosion in the fall. While learning about the American Revolution, students chose an event and then wrote and published an essay about what they learned. Teachers worked with the literacy and math coaches focusing on leveling up student talk to foster collaboration and critical thinking. Students engaged in multiple enrichment opportunities, including a project that involved starting a school store where students learned the different aspects of starting a business.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – Oshana Elementary School

Grade 5

Teachers engaged in ongoing collaboration with the math and literacy specialists to level up student talk in the areas of math and reading while analyzing data to create flexible groupings. Fifth graders participated in the CT Kid Governor program, which ultimately produced the second CT Kid Governor winner at Oshana School. Students were able to visit the Old Connecticut State House to take part in the 2024 CT Kid Governor Inauguration ceremony and support their classmate. Additionally, students and teachers collaborated with parents to make blankets for Southington Community Services, visited residents at The Summit during Halloween, participated in diversity workshops with Paul and Audley, researched and designed projects for the annual Invention Convention, learned about Early Colonization and the Revolutionary War during their field trip to Newport, Rhode Island, and facilitated student-led conferences for parents in the spring.

Ongoing Work/School Improvement

During the 24-25 school year, Oshana staff will focus on implementing the new language arts program with literacy coaching support in grades kindergarten through second grade while teachers in grades third through fifth will implement strategies that build critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and creativity through Thinking, Building, Classrooms in math. Improvement to MTSS systems will also be a focus while continuing to build capacity around the Vision of a Graduate and provide opportunities for students to demonstrate the six competencies across all content areas.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024

SOUTH END ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Rita Sterns, Principal

Enhancements

The 2023-24 school year was successful for both students and staff at South End Elementary School. South End School continues to focus on creating a safe school climate for all students and staff. Social and emotional well-being was stressed from the start of the school year. This year our Social Worker pushed into kindergarten classrooms using the Second Step curriculum to present lessons highlighting social and emotional learning. South End celebrates Classroom Charter Champs monthly during schoolwide Town Meetings centered on Caring School Climate, Safety, Achievement, Motivation, Positive Peer Influence, Self-Esteem, and Reading for Pleasure. Each grade level this year chose an asset and presented it, with the help of our 5th-grade STEPS ambassadors.

Celebrations

The South End PTO continues to support students and teachers with their time and financial generosity. This included field trips, in-house and in the community, cultural arts opportunities, classroom books from the Scholastic Book Fair, and a captivating field day for all students. In September and October, South End participated in One Book, One School, reading the novel, *Finding Gobi*. Staff volunteered to read and record chapters so families could experience an audio option. The PTO brought the author, and his canine star of the book, Gobi, to South End for a culminating presentation. It was an incredible day for our students and staff. Continued efforts to promote cultural awareness were a focus once again this year. Paul Vivian and Audley Donaldson returned to South End to provide diversity training to third and fifth-grade students. Conversation topics included breaking stereotypes, diversity, bullying, and acceptance. Read Across America week saw South End host a schoolwide Book Swap. Students at each grade level donated their gently used books. In April, the South End Drama Club performed three sold-out performances of *The Little Mermaid*. This is the 20th drama production that South End has performed. Our SEES Polar Plunge fundraising was led by a staff raffle and raised over \$1200 to benefit Camp Sloper. A Volunteer Tea was held in May to thank the many parent/grandparent volunteers who donated their time to our students. Teachers donated breakfast items and all students decorated thank you cards. South End brought back an Open House Art Show in May that featured artwork created by each student. Also in May, our second graders presented their Patriotic Program to families, local veterans, and active military members. Students performed patriotic songs under the direction of our music teacher and created Patriotic bookmarks to share with active duty and retired military personnel.

Superintendent’s Annual Report 2023-2024 – South End Elementary School

Kindergarten

Kindergarten teachers continued their work with district coaches in both literacy and mathematics. Literacy work was focused on phonics and the use of decodable texts. Engaging Math stations were utilized to introduce and reinforce concepts to our students. The Science of Reading continues to be the focus of classroom instruction and student performance. Kindergarten also continued exploring many Science topics this year. High Touch, High Tech, an interactive in-house science program was presented to our students.

Grade 1

First-grade teachers continued meeting with literacy specialists for professional development as the implementation of the Science of Reading was woven into daily reading lessons, small group instruction, and phonics lessons. They have continued their work with decodable text, using Jump Rope Readers. A Jump Rope Reader celebration was held in May as our first graders read to a special person. Ready Mathematics was implemented in classrooms and strengthened the differentiation of instruction. Students continued setting personal goals using *My Path* to work on strengthening previously taught skills. Math centers and push-in support from our math specialists and tutor also provided additional reinforcement. Students continued exploring the concept of research which encouraged communication and collaboration with peers. The after-school Lego Robotics Club continued to be offered to first graders and participation has doubled.

Grade 2

Units of study in Reader’s and Writer’s Workshop continued to be the driving force of our literacy instruction. A continued emphasis on small group instruction aimed at strengthening phonic skills was a main focus. Professional learning with district literacy coaches enhanced and strengthened our teachers’ work. The Math Workshop model, math centers, and IBlock time continue to provide students with differentiated lessons and instruction. Students continued with individual skill strengthening using the i-Ready Pathway to target growth. Second graders again visited Camp Sloper to explore animal habitats and the Roaring Brook Nature Center. They again worked with the LEAF program to plant a school garden and ended their year with an ‘egg drop’ from an SFD ladder truck. Students designed a carrier to protect an egg from a 100-foot drop using the properties of physics.

Grade 3

Work continued in Readers and Writers workshops, with a renewed shift to small group instruction. District Literacy coaches continue to provide professional development and coaching opportunities to strengthen instructional practice. Shifts in the delivery of instruction include a focus on vocabulary utilizing Word Love. Data and assessment continue to drive instruction, particularly in math. Students use the Three Reads Strategy, diving into context, mathematical concepts, and inquiry as guides. Our students continue to set personal goals using *My Path* to reinforce individual skills. As part of their science curriculum, classes visited Roaring Brook

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – South End Elementary School

Nature Preserve. Mr. Paul Vivian and Rev. Dr. Audley Donaldson continue to meet with our students to share diversity lessons.

Grade 4

Reader's Workshop topics focused on historical fiction with a focus on the American Revolution. Teachers also focused on small groups, using differentiated instruction based on diagnostic results. In the Writer's Workshop, our students wrote personal narratives, opinion essays, and informational pieces based on high-interest topics. Word Love and Patterns of Power strengthened writing skills. The Math Workshop model was again utilized as well as differentiated math centers to reinforce skills. Our math specialist was instrumental in small group instruction during IBlock as we continued to reinforce our SRBI interventions. Students visited the Connecticut Science Center and Camp Sloper to study the effects of erosion.

Grade 5

Fifth grade had a successful year which emphasized transitioning to middle school. Teachers worked on developing student independence and responsibility in multiple areas. Many students led their parent-teacher conferences and took ownership of their learning by utilizing self-assessment skills. The workshop model continued to be the format in reading and writing, though small group instruction was also a focus this year. Coaches continued to push into classrooms and support teachers' instructional practice.

i-Ready, My Pathway was used as a self-measuring tool in math and students worked at their own pace and level to strengthen skills and set goals. Our STEPS Ambassadors volunteered in kindergarten, first, and second-grade classrooms supporting students in literacy and numeracy. 5th-grade volunteers also led town meetings, working with younger grades on specific assets. All students participated in the Invention Convention with one student reaching the state level. Students also had the opportunity to participate in the CT Kid Governor program. Our fifth graders continued with the C3 program, working with Officer Fisher of the SPD.

Ongoing Work/School Improvement

South End continues to work at creating a positive school climate where all students thrive and families feel welcomed and included. Social and emotional work continues throughout our day in classrooms at each level. The Science of Reading continues to drive our literacy instruction and guides our teachers to deliver the best, research-based, instruction to our students. Our work with UCONN using DBI will continue to strengthen our SRBI-tiered intervention. The work that was done this year with UCONN will lead us in September as we restructure our SRBI processes. Data-driven instruction will guide our literacy and numeracy specialists in providing tiered instruction. Analyzing, and using data to drive instruction continues to be a priority as we work with iReady math diagnostic testing in math, and DIBELS in reading. The four C's continue to be an area of focus as teachers work for integration in all content areas.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024

WILLIAM M. STRONG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Melissa Barbuto, Principal

Enhancements

The 2023/2024 school year was another year full of amazing accomplishments at William M. Strong Elementary School! This year Strong School continued to focus on cultivating a positive school climate. In order to foster a positive school climate, which promotes the learning and well-being of the school community, the entire school implemented components of the Responsive Classroom approach, expanded the implementation of Emotional Intelligence to all students and parents, and encouraged a Growth Mindset for all students and staff through monthly whole school activities and presentations led by staff and students. Academic growth and achievement were a focus for all students as well. Intervention support and enrichment was provided in all content areas based on student needs. Due to this, students made significant academic and social/emotional growth.

Celebrations

The PTO continued to be dedicated to supporting the Strong School community through cultural arts programs, enrichment activities, after school clubs, fundraisers, and family night events. These included book fairs, a reading under the stars event, karate club, robotics club, yoga club, family movie night, Yard Goats game and an APEX fundraiser. Throughout the year, the PTO also provided staff with materials for their classrooms and recess equipment. In collaboration with the PTO, Strong School successfully participated in the "One School, One Book" program. One School, One Book provided the opportunity for all families at Strong School to experience the same book at the same time, Finding Gobi. It concluded with a visit from Gobi himself and the author of the book.

Work around Emotional Intelligence continued to expand and thrive this year with the implementation of Student Self Awareness Leaders. Student Self Awareness Leaders led the school in recognizing, labeling, and regulating their emotions daily. Each month, students voted for a Charter Champion within their classroom to recognize and celebrate someone who "lived" the Charter each day. Charter Champions were recognized monthly through whole school meetings and family newsletters. Furthermore, throughout the year, several staff meetings were designated to focus on self-care for staff to strengthen their own emotional well-being.

Continued efforts to enhance cultural awareness among students were taken. Paul Vivian and Audley Donaldson returned to Strong School to provide third and fifth graders with diversity training. Classroom libraries were expanded to include diverse text to provide students with books that are both lenses and mirrors into themselves and others.

Kindergarten through fifth grade teachers continued to incorporate key components of the Responsive Classroom Approach into their classrooms in order to build a positive community. In addition to Morning Meeting, all teachers implemented key components of Emotional Intelligence through the creation of classroom Charters, checking in on the Mood Meter, creating strategy walls and implementing conflict resolution lessons, all of which had a positive impact on student's social and emotional growth.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – Strong Elementary School

All kindergarten through fifth grade teachers implemented the Ready Classroom math program in conjunction with MyPath and workshop stations in order to differentiate instruction. Along with this implementation, all teachers received coaching from the math specialist to deepen their understanding of the math curriculum and math instructional practices.

All kindergarten through second grade teachers integrated the science of reading practices into their instruction.

Staff continued to deepen their understanding and implementation of communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity across all content areas to support Southington Public School's Vision of a Graduate.

Staff focused on individual student growth through the implementation of a multi-tiered system of supports and data-based individualization. Through this process, students' progress was closely monitored to ensure they were receiving the appropriate interventions and services. Adaptations to each student's individual plan were made as needed, based on an in-depth data analysis.

Ongoing Work

Teacher professional learning will expand during the 2024-2025 school year with the implementation of a new reading program for kindergarten through second grade and a focus on integrating the science of reading practices for all third through fifth grade teachers. Teacher professional learning will also expand in the area of math for all third through fifth grade teachers with the integration of Building Thinking Classroom practices.

As the school continues to work on creating a positive school climate, during the 2024-2025 school year, staff will implement the new STEPS Asset Building Classrooms Program. This program is rooted in STEPS Asset Building Classrooms and has taken shape to combine the emotional intelligence concepts that Southington Public Schools has been practicing in its classrooms. Student and parent leadership teams will be expanded upon in order to embed this approach into the community. Teachers will also continue to utilize the Responsive Classroom component "Morning Meeting" as a structure to implement Emotional Intelligence and build a positive school community.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024

R. E. THALBERG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Erin Natrass, Principal

School Accomplishments

The 2023-2024 school year at R.E. Thalberg Elementary School was filled with learning and excitement. Thalberg teachers focused on professional learning to develop strategies and best practices to align with the science of reading. Building-based professional learning centered on building oracy in the classroom, phonics and phonemic awareness skills as well as building vocabulary and comprehension skills. This work aligned with the ongoing focus of the Vision of a Graduate. Across all subject areas, an inquiry-based approach is utilized to target the 4C's (critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity).

Additionally, all teachers continued to reflect and refine their classroom-based, tiered instruction through collaboration with literacy and numeracy specialists. A team of specialists and special educators collaborated with the UCONN Neag School of Education to refine SRBI practices through Data Based Individualization: Intensive Intervention which heavily focused on adaptations to improve student outcomes.

Focusing on the whole child, Thalberg continued to prioritize social and emotional awareness for all students. Each class developed a class charter to prioritize expectations and utilized the mood meter to help students identify and regulate their emotions. The Eagles Nest space was created by counseling staff which provided a sensory-based space for students to process their emotions to be ready to learn.

A positive behavioral approach was used consistently throughout the building. Shining Eagle awards were presented for special accomplishments throughout the year. Each month, Charter Champions were celebrated at a schoolwide assembly where students were recognized for living their class charter and being positive role models within their class.

This year, a focus on cultural awareness continued with diversity workshops in grades three and five. Mr. Paul Vivian and Dr. Audley Donaldson provided students with a safe environment to examine diversity experienced in everyday interactions.

Thalberg School welcomed seniors from AmeriCorps's RSVP Reads program to the school weekly to read with primary-grade students. This community partnership provided students with valuable, individual reading practice with former educators who volunteered to support students.

Celebrations

Thalberg School proudly highlights student abilities throughout the year. All students demonstrated their artistic talents at the first annual Thalberg Art Show. A wide variety of pieces were displayed, and families were invited to visit the show during the evening. The Lunar New Year with a whole-school parade. Each grade level worked on a piece of art to celebrate and the art pieces were demonstrated during the parade. Percussion students learned music to go

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – Thalberg Elementary School

along with the celebration for the school to enjoy. Thalberg School celebrated Flag Day with a whole-school ceremony in June. Three members of the American Legion came to enjoy songs, poems, and Flag Day facts presented by each grade level. Additionally, the Veteran's demonstrated the proper flag folding technique along with an explanation of the meaning of each fold.

The Thalberg PTO provided many enhancements to Thalberg School this year. Families were invited to take part in family nights, a trunk or treat event, a book fair ice cream social, and a spring dance. Each event brought families together, creating a strong school community.

The PTO organized a fun run fundraiser which allowed for them to sponsor a performance by famous speed painter, Rob Surette. The students marveled at his talent and the school community enjoyed one of his pieces that now hangs in the cafetorium of Thalberg School. Funds raised by the PTO allowed for significant improvements to the annual field day. Students enjoyed a full day of exciting activities that encouraged teamwork and provided a great day for students to celebrate the end of the school year.

Kindergarten

Thalberg School's youngest learners benefited from a play-based structure to the kindergarten day. Students had authentic opportunities to develop social skills in a safe and comfortable environment. Teachers collaborated with literacy coaches to implement essential components of the science of reading to develop their literacy skills. Math centers remained a priority in building number sense. Differentiated activities targeted specific power standards to support growth for all students. Students had the opportunity to visit Indian Rock to tour the farm as part of the 'living things' science unit.

Grade 1

Integration of oracy and building phonics skills continued to be a focus in grade 1. Teachers collaborated with the district coach to ensure their small group instruction targeted the necessary skills using effective strategies. Hands-on practice of mathematical power standards provided students with opportunities to build foundational skills. Students visited Flaming Farm to go along with their science curriculum. Once again, Thalberg's first graders had a hands-on learning experience in observing the life cycle of chicks.

Grade 2

Small literacy groups targeted skills necessary for grade 2 students based on the Dibels assessment data. Teachers collaborated with literacy coaches and specialists to refine their practice and implement effective strategies in decoding and comprehension. Math centers were implemented to build student mastery of skills based on iReady benchmark data. MyPath was utilized with fidelity to target individual needs. Staff from the Barnes Museum visited grade 2 students for a hands-on social studies experience. Grade 2 students participated in a bus tour of Southington and a field trip to Lake Compounce to support their learning about the Southington community.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2023-2024 – Thalberg Elementary School

Grade 3

Small group instruction remained a priority in grade 3 to target skills based on Dibels assessment data. Flexible grouping allowed teachers to focus on decoding skills along with vocabulary and comprehension development. A combination of whole and small group instruction targeted power standards in math to build foundational skills. Students visited the State Capitol building in Hartford for a first-hand learning experience about our government. Students began their instrumental journey learning to read music by playing the recorder, culminating with a concert for families. All grade 3 students demonstrated creativity by participating in Caine's Arcade.

Grade 4

Strong instructional strategies continued to be used in both whole and small groups to build reading comprehension skills. Teachers implemented math workshops facilitating differentiated centers to target student need based on iReady assessment data. Fourth-grade students participated in the Hartford Marathon Final Mile in the fall to build endurance. Students practiced vocal and instrumental music throughout the year culminating with concerts for families to enjoy.

Grade 5

Thalberg students culminated their elementary years with a variety of exciting experiences. All students merged their creativity with instruction on the scientific method to participate in the Invention Convention. Students engaged in hands-on learning about Colonial America on a field trip to Sturbridge Village. Students continued to build academic stamina and rise to rigorous challenges across all subjects in preparation for the transition to middle school. Fifth-grade students brought the whole school community together by celebrating the STEPS assets throughout the year.

Ongoing Work

Thalberg staff will continue to focus on implementing an updated curriculum with a focus on the integration of the science of reading. Teachers will participate in professional learning for Building Thinking Classrooms to enhance the ability of students to think critically in mathematics. During the 2024-25 school year, Thalberg staff will engage in new learning to deepen the effectiveness of intervention and the SRBI process.

Thalberg School will be collaborating with the STEPS coalition and the Emotional Intelligence Leadership Team. Staff will implement lessons that merge components of RULER with the STEPS assets.

PROPOSED COURSE/PROGRAM CHANGE FORM

Southington Public Schools Southington, Connecticut

School: Southington High School

Department: Math

Please check appropriate item:

New Course:

Revised Course:

Course Title: Statistics ACC

1. **Proposed Change** – Please give a brief description of proposed new course or revision to existing course.

New course - The new course would be an accelerated level of statistics. This course will cover the fundamental knowledge of statistics that would be built upon at the AP level. The students in Statistics ACC would gain exposure to critical statistics topics to set them up for success in either a first year college Statistics course or in AP Statistics. Students would be able to take both the accelerated level and then the AP level.

2. **Rationale** – What is the purpose of the proposed new course or course change? To what extent will it benefit the students?

We currently offer Statistics at the AP level. We have a large population of students who wish to take statistics for experience prior to entering college. Many students are required to take a statistics course as part of most college majors. We also have students that complete Algebra 2 or Pre-Calculus with minimal year long course options. This would benefit students who wish to take a full year course but are not ready for Calculus, do not wish to take Calculus, want exposure to another mathematical field, or struggle with traditional mathematics courses and would benefit from a different type of mathematics course. This course provides a strong academic option for students who are looking to attend a 4-year school but may not be looking to major in STEM fields. Students can enroll in Statistics ACC concurrently with Pre-calculus or Calculus.

3. **Target Population** – Which group of students will be directly affected (grade level, academic level)?

Students that have successfully completed Algebra 2 ACC or Pre-Calculus will be eligible to take ACC statistics. Students who successfully complete Algebra 2 ACA would also be considered with teacher recommendation. This course would be geared towards 11th and 12th grade students.

PROPOSED COURSE/PROGRAM CHANGE FORM

4. **Evaluation** – How do you plan to assess the implementation of the proposed new course or the course change?

Statistics ACC will have a combination of projects, performance tasks, and assessments throughout the units to evaluate student learning.

Statistics ACC will be evaluated based on student enrollment - running a minimum of 1 section.

5. **Cost** – What are the anticipated costs for staff, textbooks, materials, other?

None - existing staff will teach the course and textbooks/materials are already available at the school.

	YEAR		
	I	II	III
Staff	\$	\$	\$
Textbooks	\$	\$	\$
Materials	\$	\$	\$
Other	\$	\$	\$
TOTAL	\$	\$	\$

Comments: _____

Principal:

Approved



Denied



Signature



**BOARD OF EDUCATION
SOUTHINGTON, CONNECTICUT**

Informational Only _____ X _____ Board Meeting Date December 12, 2024

Decision Requested _____ Agenda Code 10 e.

AGENDA REPORTING FORM

Agenda Topic: Policy 3280 – Gifts, Grants and Requests - First Reading.

Summary of Issue: The Policy & Personnel Committee has reviewed Policy 3280 – Gifts, Grants and Requests.

Background: The Policy and Personnel Committee reviews policies with the administration to ensure they are current and appropriate.

Alternative Strategies: N/A

Cost (if applicable): N/A **Funding Source:** N/A

Beginning Date of Program or Project: N/A

Ending Date of Program or Project: N/A

Recommendation or Comment: The Board of Education Policy & Personnel Committee is bringing the draft Policy 3280 to the full Board for a First Reading.

Titles of Attachments:

1. DRAFT Policy 3280



Signature of Staff Member Submitting Report



Signature of Superintendent of Schools

Policy 3280
Gifts, Grants and Bequests
– Revised Policy
Draft

Series 3000: Business and Non-Instructional Operations**Business****Gifts, Grants and Bequests**

The Board of Education may accept on behalf of and for the schools any bequest or gift of money or property for a purpose deemed by the Board of Education to be suitable, and to utilize such money or property so designated.

The Superintendent of Schools shall set up criteria **to accept such gift** ~~be met in the acceptance of gifts~~ and the procedure for examining and evaluating offers of gifts to the district.

The Board recognizes that ~~many gifts will~~ **may** be designated for **a** particular schools or programs and every consideration will be given to assigning gifts as requested by the donor. However, ~~donors should be aware that~~ all gifts shall be accepted for the school district as a whole.

Legal Reference:

Connecticut General Statutes

10-240, Powers of School Districts Policy adopted: October 1988

Policy reviewed: April 2003

Policy Revised: November 2024

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
SOUTHINGTON, CONNECTICUT**

Informational Only _____ X _____ Board Meeting Date December 12, 2024

Decision Requested _____ Agenda Code 10 f. _____

AGENDA REPORTING FORM

Agenda Topic: Policy 4118.51 – Use of AI in Classrooms (Staff) - NEW - First Reading.

Summary of Issue: The Policy & Personnel Committee has reviewed Policy 4118.51 – Use of AI in classrooms (Staff).

Background: The Policy and Personnel Committee reviews policies with the administration to ensure they are current and appropriate.

Alternative Strategies: N/A

Cost (if applicable): N/A **Funding Source:** N/A

Beginning Date of Program or Project: N/A

Ending Date of Program or Project: N/A

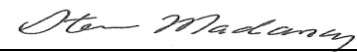
Recommendation or Comment: The Board of Education Policy & Personnel Committee is bringing the draft Policy 4118.51 to the full Board for a First Reading.

Titles of Attachments:

1. DRAFT Policy 4118.51



Signature of Staff Member Submitting Report



Signature of Superintendent of Schools

Policy 4118.51
Use of AI in Classrooms (Staff)
– NEW Policy
Draft

Series 4000: Personnel

Use of AI in Classrooms

Electronic Resources and Generative AI (Artificial Intelligence)

The Board of Education is committed to provide our students with the most innovative and effective educational experiences to foster high levels of learning and opportunities for self-expression. As our schools prepare students for a future that demands adaptability, critical thinking and digital literacy, we recognize the potential of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) and other related technology tools.

As with all technologies, staff must be mindful of and adhere to all considerations ensuring responsible and ethical use, especially as it relates to mitigating bias, promoting transparency, and ensuring the benefits of AI are accessible to all students.

While ensuring the responsible use for those interacting with and creating content from generative AI technologies, the Board underscores its commitment to foster a dynamic and engaging learning environment that leverages the advances in AI to enhance student learning outcomes and equip students with the skills and dispositions needed for success in the digital age.

(cf. 6141.9 – Responsible Use of Technology for Staff)

Policy adopted: January 2025

Policy 5121.3
Academic Dishonesty
– NEW Policy
Draft

Series 5000: Students**Academic Dishonesty: Cheating/Plagiarism**

As an academic community, the Southington Public Schools will not tolerate academic dishonesty. Any activity of this nature is in opposition to the goals of the District as a place of learning and is contrary to the values of the schools of the District and the community. Dishonesty is not merely a private matter between the teacher and student but is a concern to the entire school community.

Cheating is defined as copying another student's work and claiming it as your own. Plagiarism is defined as the use of another person's original ideas or writing without giving credit to the true author. Both are considered prohibited practices. Materials taken from physical and electronic sources are covered by this policy. Depending on the task and parameters provided by the teacher, the use of Generative AI could also be a prohibited practice.

A student who engages in any form of academic dishonesty will be subject to the loss of credit for the work in question, as well as other disciplinary measures. "Due process" must be provided to students accused of cheating or plagiarism.

Each school level (Elementary, Middle, High) will develop guidelines that address violations and procedures. Guidelines will be published in all student/parent handbooks and on the District/school website.

(cf. 5114 – Student Discipline)

(cf. 5121 – Examination/Grading/Rating)

(cf. 5144 – Discipline/Punishment)

Policy Adopted: January 2025

Policy 5145.3
Prohibition of Sex Discrimination, Including Sex-
Based Harassment - Revised Policy
Draft

Series 5000: Students

Welfare

Civil and Legal Rights and Responsibilities

Sexual Harassment of Students

It is the policy of the Board of Education that any form of sex discrimination or sexual harassment is prohibited in the Board's education programs and activities, whether by students, Board employees or third parties subject to substantial control by the Board. The Board does not discriminate on the basis of sex in the education programs or activities that it operates, and the Board is required by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and its implementing regulations ("Title IX") and Connecticut law not to discriminate in such a manner. Students, Board employees and third parties are required to adhere to a standard of conduct that is respectful of the rights of students, employees and third parties. Any student or employee who engages in conduct prohibited by this Policy shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion or termination, respectively.

For conduct to violate Title IX, the conduct must have occurred in an education program or activity of the Board; the conduct must have occurred within the United States of America; and the complainant must be participating in or attempting to participate in the education program or activity of the Board.

Conduct that does not meet these requirements still may constitute a violation of Connecticut law or another Board policy.

Sexual harassment can occur adult to student, student to student, between members of the opposite sex, or between members of the same sex.

Sex discrimination occurs when a person, because of the person's sex, is denied participation in or the benefits of any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

Sexual harassment under Title IX means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

- (1) An employee of the Board conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the Board on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual

conduct (*i.e.*, *quid pro quo*);

Series 5000: Students

~~(2) Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the Board's education programs or activities; or~~

~~(3) "Sexual assault" as defined in 20 U.S.C. 1092(f)(6)(A)(v), "dating violence" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(10), "domestic violence" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(8), or "stalking" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(30).~~

~~**Sexual harassment under Connecticut law** means conduct in a school setting that 1) is sexual in nature; 2) is unwelcome; and 3) denies or limits a student's ability to participate in or benefit from a school's educational program. Sexual harassment can be verbal, nonverbal or physical. Sexual violence is a form of sexual harassment.~~

Reporting Sex Discrimination or Sexual Harassment

~~It is the express policy of the Board to encourage victims of sex discrimination and/or sexual harassment to report such claims. Students are encouraged to report complaints of sex discrimination and/or sexual harassment promptly in accordance with the appropriate process set forth in the Administrative Regulations. The Board directs its employees to respond to such complaints in a prompt and equitable manner. The Board further directs its employees to maintain confidentiality to the extent appropriate and not tolerate any reprisals or retaliation that occur as a result of the good faith reporting of charges of sex discrimination and/or sexual harassment. Any such reprisals or retaliation will result in disciplinary action against the retaliator, up to and including expulsion or termination as appropriate.~~

~~Any Board employee with notice of sex discrimination and/or sexual harassment allegations shall immediately report such information to the building principal and/or the Title IX Coordinator(s), or if the employee does not work in a school building, to the Title IX Coordinator(s).~~

~~The Southington Public Schools administration (the "Administration") shall provide training to Title IX Coordinator(s), investigators, decision makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process (as set forth in the Administrative Regulations), which training shall include but need not be limited to, the definitions of sex discrimination and sexual harassment, the scope of the Board's education program and activity, how to conduct an investigation and grievance process, and how to serve impartially, including by avoiding prejudice of the facts at issue, conflicts of interest, and bias. The Administration shall make the training materials used to provide these~~

Series 5000: Students

~~trainings publicly available on the Board's website. The Administration shall also periodically provide training to all Board employees on the topic of sex discrimination and sexual harassment under Title IX and Connecticut law, which shall include but not be limited to when reports of sex discrimination and/or sexual harassment must be made. The Administration shall distribute this Policy and the Administrative Regulations to staff, students and parents and legal guardians and make the Policy and the Administrative Regulations available on the Board's website to promote an environment free of sex discrimination and sexual harassment.~~

~~The Board's Title IX Coordinator(s) are Special Education Coordinator Amy Areseo and Special Education Coordinator Amy Battaglia. Any individual may make a report of sex discrimination and/or sexual harassment directly to the Title IX Coordinator(s) using any one, or multiple, of the following points of contact.~~

~~Amy Areseo
Southington Public Schools
200 North Main Street
Southington, CT 06489
aareseo@southingtonschools.org
860-628-3200, ext. 10208~~

~~Amy Battaglia
Southington Public Schools
200 North Main Street
Southington, CT 06489
abattaglia@southingtonschools.org
860-628-3200, ext. 10325~~

~~Any individual may also make a report of sexual harassment and/or sex discrimination to the U.S. Department of Education: Office for Civil Rights, Boston Office, U.S. Department of Education, 8th Floor, 5 Post Office Square, Boston, MA 02109-3921 (Telephone (617) 289-0111).~~

~~Legal References: Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. § 1681, et seq.~~

~~Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 34 C.F.R § 106.1, et seq.~~

Series 5000: Students

~~Gebser v. Lago Vista Independent School District, 524 U.S.
274 (1998)~~

~~Davis v. Monroe County Board of Education, 526 U.S. 629
(1999)~~

~~Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-15c – Discrimination in public schools
prohibited.~~

~~Policy Adopted: September 1992~~

~~Policy Reviewed: August 2002~~

~~Policy Revised: March 2005~~

~~Policy Reviewed: November 2006~~

~~Policy Revised: February 2022~~

**Series 5000: Students
Welfare
Civil and Legal Right and Responsibilities**

Sexual Harassment

~~Under certain circumstances, alleged harassment may also be possible abuse under Connecticut law. If so, the duties of mandatory reporting under Connecticut General Statutes Section 17a-101 may be applicable.~~

~~Nothing in this policy will prohibit the School District from taking immediate action to protect victims of alleged sexual harassment or abuse.~~

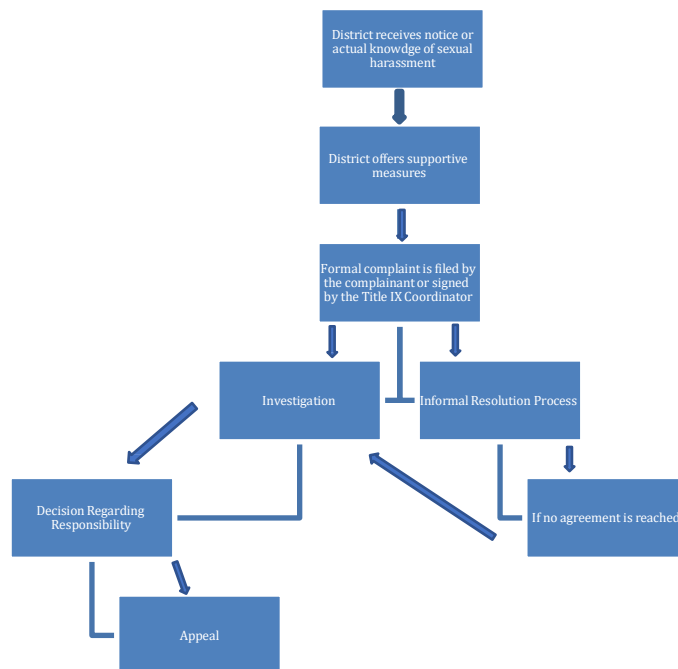
~~It is the express position of the Southington Public Schools to encourage all persons who feel they have been sexually harassed and persons with knowledge of sexual harassment to report such claims. A student who believes that he/she has been subjected to or witness to sexual harassment as defined in Policy may address his/her claims in the following manner:~~

- ~~• Sexual harassment complaints will be investigated within fourteen (14) calendar days in the same manner as any other allegation of student misconduct. If the complaining student or alleged harasser is a student under the age of 18, the harassment complaint official shall notify the student's respective parent(s)/guardian(s) of the investigation within three (3) school days. Upon completion of the investigation, parent(s)/guardian(s) of both the complainant and alleged harasser will be notified in writing of findings.~~
- ~~• Students found to have engaged in sexual harassment will be subject to disciplinary action in keeping with the established policies, regulations and rules of the school district. Such disciplinary action may include suspension or expulsion from school.~~
- ~~• Any student who believes that he/she has been the subject of sexual harassment and persons with knowledge of sexual harassment should make a report immediately either orally or by written complaint. The report may be made to the building principal and/or the Title IX Coordinator(s), or if the employee does not work in a school building, to the Title IX Coordinator(s).~~
- ~~• If the District has actual knowledge of sexual harassment in a District education program or activity

 - ~~○ The District must respond promptly and in a manner that is not deliberately indifferent.~~
 - ~~○ The District is deliberately indifferent only if its response to sexual harassment is clearly unreasonable in light of known circumstances.~~
 - ~~○ The District's response must treat complainants and respondents equitably by offering supportive measures to the complainant and~~~~

- ~~by following the grievance process before the imposition of any disciplinary sanctions or other actions that are not supportive measures.~~
- ~~A formal complaint means a document filed by a complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging sexual harassment against a respondent and requesting that the recipient investigate the allegation of sexual harassment.~~
- ~~Upon receipt of a formal complaint of sexual harassment, the District must provide a written notice to the known parties and provide the parties with a copy of the grievance process.~~

The ~~Grievance Process for Allegations of Sexual Harassment~~ is captured below.



Grievance Process

- ~~The grievance process requires an evaluation of all relevant evidence including both inculpatory and exculpatory evidence.~~
- ~~Credibility determinations may not be based on a person's status as a complainant, respondent, or witness.~~
- ~~The designated Title IX Coordinator, investigators, decision makers, and informal resolution facilitators must not have a conflict of interest or bias against complainants or respondents generally, or an individual complainant or respondent.~~

Series 5000: Students
Welfare continued

R-5145.3

- Remedies must be designed to restore or preserve equal access to the District’s education program or activity.
- Remedies may include supportive measures; however, remedies need not be non-disciplinary or non-punitive and need not avoid burdening the Grievance process must be followed before any imposition of any disciplinary sanctions or other actions that are not supportive measures against a respondent.

Supportive Measures

The Title IX Coordinator must promptly contact the complainant to discuss the availability of supportive measures, consider the complainants wishes with respect to supportive measures, inform the complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without filing a formal complaint, and explain to the complainant the process for filing a formal complaint.



Both the complainant and the respondent must have the same opportunities to have others present during any part of the grievance process, including an opportunity to be accompanied by an **advisor** of their choice. This person can be, but is not required to be, an attorney.

The District may establish restrictions regarding the extent to which the advisor may participate in the proceedings, as long as the restrictions apply equally to both parties.

Title IX Coordinator:

- ~~Title IX Coordinator will inform complainant about the right to file a formal complaint and will not encourage or discourage a person to file a formal complaint.~~
- ~~At the time of filing, the complainant must be participating or attempting to participate in the District's education program or activity.~~
- ~~Formal complaints can be filed by a student's parent or the Title IX Coordinator.~~
- ~~When the Title IX Coordinator signs a formal complaint, he/she is not the complainant or otherwise a party.~~
- ~~Parents can be present during interviews.~~

~~The Title IX Coordinator must dismiss any formal complaint that~~

- ~~would not constitute sexual harassment under the definition,~~
- ~~did not occur in the District's education program or activity,~~
~~or~~
- ~~did not occur against a person in the United States.~~

~~The Title IX Coordinator may dismiss any formal complaint if~~

- ~~the complainant notifies the Title IX Coordinator in writing a desire to withdraw the formal complaint or any allegations therein,~~
- ~~the respondent is no longer enrolled or employed in the District or~~
- ~~specific circumstances prevent the District from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination as to the formal complaint or allegations therein.~~
 - ~~Upon a dismissal, the District must promptly and simultaneously send written notice of the dismissal and the reason(s) to each party. Either party can appeal the decision.~~
- ~~There may be times when a complainant does not want to file a formal complaint. The Title IX Coordinator may respect the complainant's wishes if doing so is not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances.~~
- ~~If the Title IX Coordinator deems it clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances to not proceed with the formal grievance process, the Title IX Coordinator must sign a formal complaint. Thus, the formal grievance process would begin.~~

Investigation

~~For any meeting or investigative interview, the investigator(s) must provide a written notice to any party whose participation is invited or expected.~~

~~The notice must include the date, time, location, participants, and purpose.~~

Investigative Review of Evidence and Report

- ~~• The investigator(s) must provide both parties an equal opportunity to inspect and review all evidence obtained as part of the investigation that is directly related to the allegations in the formal complaint.~~
- ~~• This includes any evidence upon which the investigator(s) does not intend to rely and any inculpatory or exculpatory evidence.~~
- ~~• The investigator(s) must send to each party (and the party's advisor, if any), the evidence subject to inspection and review in either electronic format or hard copy.~~
- ~~• The parties must have at least 10 days to submit a written response.~~
- ~~• The investigator(s) must consider these written responses prior to completing the investigative report.~~
- ~~• The investigator(s) must create an investigative report that fairly summarizes the relevant evidence and must send the report to each party (and the party's advisor, if any) in electronic format or hard copy.~~
- ~~• Each party can then provide a written response to the investigative report.~~

Informal Resolution Process

~~At any time prior to reaching a responsibility determination, the District has the option of suggesting to the parties an informal resolution process, such as mediation, to resolve the formal complaint. The District is not required to offer this process. Prior to facilitating an informal resolution to a formal complaint, Title IX Coordinator will:~~

- ~~• Provide parties disclosing allegations~~
- ~~• Note requirements of informal resolution process~~
- ~~• Note any consequences from participating in the informal resolution process~~
- ~~• Obtain voluntary, written consent from both parties to engage in informal resolution~~

~~The informal resolution facilitator must be someone other than the investigator or decision-maker (if already assigned) and must be free from conflicts of interest, bias, and must serve impartially. The informal resolution facilitator may be the Title IX Coordinator.~~

- ~~• Prior to agreeing to any resolution, any party has the right to withdraw from the informal resolution process and resume the grievance process with respect to the formal complaint.~~
- ~~• If a satisfactory resolution is reached through this informal process, the matter will be considered resolved. If these efforts are unsuccessful, the formal grievance process will continue.~~
- ~~• This process is not available to resolve a formal complaint that an employee sexually harassed as student.~~

Appeals

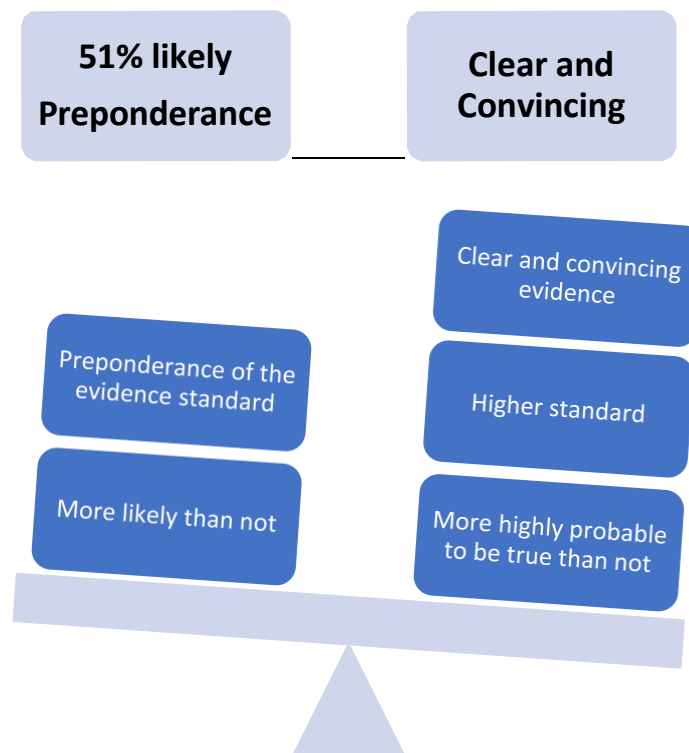
- ~~• When an appeal is filed, the District must:
 - ~~• Provide notice to the other party in writing and implement appeal procedures equally for both parties.~~
 - ~~• Ensure that the decision-maker(s) for the appeal is not the investigator(s), Title IX Coordinator, or decision-maker(s) for the responsibility determination.~~
 - ~~• Give both parties a reasonable, equal opportunity to submit a written statement in support of, or challenging, the outcome.~~
 - ~~• Issue a written decision describing the result of the appeal and the rationale for the result, and~~
 - ~~• Provide the written decision simultaneously to both parties.~~
 - ~~• Supportive measures for either or both parties may be continued throughout.~~~~

Decision Maker

- ~~• The District shall appoint a decision maker(s), who must be someone other than the Title IX Coordinator or the investigator(s).~~
- ~~• The investigator(s) and the decision maker(s) shall not discuss the investigation's facts and/or determination while the formal complaint is pending.~~

- ~~• After the investigative report is sent to the parties, the decision maker(s) must afford each party the opportunity to submit written, relevant questions that a party wants asked of any party or witness.
 - ~~○ The opportunity to submit written questions must be afforded to the parties even if the District provides a live hearing.~~~~
- ~~• The decision maker(s) must then provide each party with the answers and allow for additional, limited follow up questions from each party~~
- ~~• The decision maker(s) must explain to the party proposing the question any decision to exclude a question as not relevant.~~

Evidentiary Standard



Affirmative Consent means an active, clear, and voluntary agreement by a person to engage in sexual activity with another person.

- When determining whether consent for sexual activity was given, consider the following:
 - Was consent given by all persons who engaged in the sexual activity?
 - Consent may be revoked at any time.
 - It is the responsibility of each person to ensure that he/she has the consent of all persons engaged in the sexual activity throughout the entirety of the sexual activity.
 - The existence of a prior or current dating/sexual relationship between the parties, in and of itself, is not determinative of consent.

Confidentiality

The Southington Public Schools recognizes that both the complaining student and the alleged harasser have strong interests in maintaining the confidentiality of the allegations and related information. The privacy of the complaining student, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses will be respected as much as possible, consistent with legal obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, to comply with any discovery or disclosure obligations, and in accordance with regulation herein.

Retaliation

It is a separate and distinct violation of this policy for any member of the school community to retaliate against any person who reports alleged harassment or against any person who testifies, assists or participates in an investigation, proceeding or hearing relating to such harassment. It is possible that an alleged harasser may be found to have violated this anti retaliation provision even if the underlying complaint of harassment is not found to be a violation of this policy. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment and may be redressed through application of the same reporting, investigation, and enforcement procedures as for harassment. If it is found that acts of harassment or retaliation do occur, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

Alternative Complaint Procedures

In addition to, or instead of, filing a harassment complaint through this policy, a person may choose to exercise other options, including but not limited to filing a complaint with outside agencies or filing a private lawsuit.

~~Notice and Publication~~

~~This policy shall be conspicuously posted throughout each school building in areas accessible to students and staff members. A summary of this policy shall also appear in the student handbook. The School District will develop a method of discussing this policy with students and employees.~~

~~Record Keeping~~

~~The District must maintain for a period of seven (7) years records of:~~

- ~~• Each sexual harassment investigation including any determination regarding responsibility, any disciplinary sanctions imposed on the respondent, and any remedies provided to the complainant designed to restore or preserve equal access to the District's education program or activity;~~
- ~~• Any appeal and the result therefrom;~~
- ~~• Any informal resolution and the result from that resolution; and~~
- ~~• All material used to train Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process. The District will make these training materials publicly available on its website.~~

~~Review Process~~

~~*This policy shall be reviewed annually for compliance with state and federal law.*~~

~~SOUTHINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT~~

~~STUDENT SEXUAL HARASSMENT COMPLAINT FORM~~

- ~~1. Date Received:~~
- ~~2. Name of the complainant:~~
- ~~3. Name(s) of Alleged Harasser(s):~~
- ~~4. Date(s) of Alleged Harassment:~~
- ~~5. Place of incident:~~
- ~~6. Name of Witnesses (if any):~~
- ~~7. Description of misconduct:~~

~~Complainant's Signature:~~

~~Date:~~

Series 5000: Students
Welfare continued

~~SOUTHINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT~~
~~STUDENT SEXUAL HARASSMENT COMPLAINT FORM~~

~~NOTICE OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT ALLEGATIONS UNDER TITLE IX~~

~~In accordance with the Board's Policy and Administrative Regulations regarding the Prohibition of Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment (Student), a formal complaint of sexual harassment has been filed with the Title IX Coordinator.~~

~~Identities of the parties involved, if known:~~

~~(Complainant(s))~~

~~(Respondent(s))~~

~~The conduct allegedly constituting sexual harassment:~~

~~The date and the location of the alleged incident, if known:~~

~~The Title IX Coordinator or designee will contact the parties regarding the next step in the grievance process. Questions can be directed to the Title IX Coordinator: Amy Battaglia (860) 628-3200, ext. 10325 or Amy Aresco 860-628-3200, ext. 10208~~

~~The respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct. A determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process.~~

~~All parties involved may have an advisor of their choice who may be, but it not required to be, an attorney. This advisor may inspect and review evidence as permitted by the Board's Administrative Regulations regarding the Prohibition of Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment (Student).~~

~~Any employee who knowingly makes false statements or knowingly submits false information during this grievance process is subject to discipline, up to and including termination. Additionally, it is a violation of the Board's Policy to lie to school officials or otherwise engage in dishonest behavior, which includes knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information during the grievance process. Any staff member who knowingly makes false statements or knowingly submits false information during this grievance process will be subject to sanctions pursuant to the Board's Discipline Policy.~~

~~A copy of the Board's Policy and Administrative Regulations regarding the Prohibition of Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment (Personnel) is included with this notice.~~

Series 5000: Students
Welfare continued

R-5145.3

~~Regulation Approved: September 1992~~
~~Regulation Revised: August 2002~~
~~Regulation Revised: March 2005~~
~~Regulation Reviewed: November 2006~~
~~Regulation Revised: February 2022~~

**Series 5000
Students**

**PROHIBITION OF SEX DISCRIMINATION, INCLUDING SEX-BASED
HARASSMENT**

The Southington Board of Education (the “Board”) and Southington Public Schools (the “District”) do not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibit sex discrimination in any education program or activity that the Board and/or District operate, as required by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. § 1681, et seq. and its implementing regulations (“Title IX”), as it may be amended from time to time, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (“Title VII”), and Connecticut law.

Inquiries about Title IX may be referred to the District’s Title IX Coordinator, the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights, or both. The District’s Title IX Coordinator is:

Frank Pepe, Assistant Superintendent

200 North Main Street, Southington

fpepe@southingtonschools.org

860-628-3200 ext 10207

The Superintendent of Schools shall develop and adopt grievance procedures that provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints made (1) by students, employees, or other individuals who are participating or attempting to participate in the District’s education program or activity, or (2) by the Title IX Coordinator, alleging any action that would be prohibited by Title IX, Title VII, or Connecticut law (the “Administrative Regulations”). The Administrative Regulations are located hereafter.

Sex discrimination occurs when a person, because of the person’s sex, is denied participation in or the benefits of any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. This includes discrimination on the basis of sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, pregnancy or related conditions, sexual orientation, and gender identity. **Sex discrimination includes sex-based harassment**, as defined below.

Sex-based harassment is a form of sex discrimination and means sexual harassment and other harassment on the basis of sex, including on the basis of sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, pregnancy or related conditions, sexual orientation, and gender identity, that is:

1. *Quid pro quo harassment*, or where an employee, agent or other person authorized by the Board to provide an aid, benefit or services under its education program or activity explicitly or impliedly conditions the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the Board on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;
2. *Hostile environment harassment*, or unwelcome sex-based conduct that based on the totality of the circumstances, is (1) subjectively and objectively offensive and (2) so severe or pervasive that it limits or denies a person's ability to participate in or benefit from the District's education program or activity. Whether a hostile environment has been created is a fact-specific inquiry that includes consideration of the following:
 - a. the degree to which the conduct affected the complainant's ability to access the District's education program or activity;
 - b. the type, frequency, and duration of the conduct;
 - c. the parties' ages, roles within the District's education program or activity, previous interactions, and other factors about each party that may be relevant to evaluating the effects of the conduct;
 - d. the location of the conduct and the context in which the conduct occurred; and
 - e. other sex-based harassment in the District's education program or activity; or
3. *A specific offense*, as follows:
 - a. Sexual assault, meaning an offense classified as a forcible or nonforcible sex offense under the uniform crime reporting system of the Federal Bureau of Investigation;
 - b. Dating violence, meaning violence committed by a person: (i) who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim; and (ii) where the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the following factors: the length of the relationship, the type of relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship;
 - c. Domestic violence, meaning felony or misdemeanor crimes committed by a person who: (i) is a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim under the family or domestic violence laws of Connecticut, or a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim; (ii) is cohabitating, or has cohabitated, with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner; (iii) shares a child in common with the victim; or (iv) commits acts against a youth or adult victim who is protected from those acts under the family or domestic violence laws of Connecticut; or
 - d. Stalking, meaning engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to: (i) fear for the person's safety or the safety of others; or (ii) suffer substantial emotional distress.

Reporting Sex Discrimination:

The following people have a right to make a complaint of sex discrimination, including a complaint of sex-based harassment, requesting that the District investigate and make a determination about alleged discrimination under Title IX:

1. A “complainant,” which includes:
 - a. a student of the District or employee of the Board who is alleged to have been subjected to conduct that could constitute sex discrimination under Title IX; or
 - b. a person other than a student of the District or employee of the Board who is alleged to have been subjected to conduct that could constitute sex discrimination under Title IX at a time when that individual was participating or attempting to participate in the Board’s education program or activity;
2. A parent, guardian, or other authorized legal representative with the legal right to act on behalf of a complainant; and
3. The District’s Title IX Coordinator.

For clarity, a person is entitled to make a complaint of sex-based harassment only if they themselves are alleged to have been subjected to the sex-based harassment, if they have a legal right to act on behalf of such person, or if the Title IX Coordinator initiates a complaint consistent with the requirements of Title IX.

With respect to complaints of sex discrimination other than sex-based harassment, in addition to the people listed above, the following persons have a right to make a complaint:

- Any student of the District or employee of the Board; or
- Any person other than a student of the District or employee of the Board who was participating or attempting to participate in the Board’s education program or activity at the time of the alleged sex discrimination.

To report information about conduct that may constitute sex discrimination or make a complaint of sex discrimination under Title IX, please contact the District’s Title IX Coordinator or an administrator.

Any Board employee who has information about conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination must as immediately as practicable notify the Title IX Coordinator. If the Title IX Coordinator is alleged to have engaged in sex discrimination, Board employees shall instead notify their building principal or the Superintendent of Schools, if the employee is not assigned to a school building.

Individuals may also make a report of sex discrimination to the U.S. Department of Education: Office for Civil Rights, Boston Office, U.S. Department of Education, 9th Floor, 5 Post Office Square, Boston, MA 02109-3921 (Telephone (617) 289-0111) and/or to the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Hartford, CT 06103-1835 (Telephone: 860-541-3400 or Connecticut Toll Free Number: 1-800-477-5737).

Legal References: Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. § 1681, et seq.
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 34 C.F.R § 106.1, et seq.
Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VII, 42 U.S.C. § 2000e-2(a)
Meritor Savings Bank, FSB v. Vinson, 477 U.S. 57 (1986)
Gebser v. Lago Vista Independent School District, 524 U.S. 274 (1998)
Davis v. Monroe County Board of Education, 526 U.S. 629 (1999)
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Policy Guidance on Current
Issues of Sexual Harassment (N-915.050), March 19, 1990
Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-15c - Discrimination in public schools prohibited.
Conn. Gen. Stat. § 46a-54 - Commission powers Connecticut
Conn. Gen. Stat. § 46a-60 - Discriminatory employment practices
prohibited
Conn. Gen. Stat. § 46a-81c - Sexual orientation discrimination:
Employment
Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-153 - Discrimination on the basis of sex, gender
identity or expression or marital status prohibited
Conn. Agencies Regs. §§ 46a-54-200 through § 46a-54-207
Brittell v. Department of Correction, 247 Conn. 148 (1998)
Fernandez v. Mac Motors, Inc., 205 Conn. App. 669 (2021)

ADOPTED: _____

REVISED: _____

7/29/24

Policy 6141.11
Use of AI in Classrooms (Students)
– NEW Policy
Draft

Series 6000: Instruction - Use of AI in Classrooms**Electronic Resources: Generative AI (Artificial Intelligence)**

The Board of Education is committed to providing our students with the most innovative and effective educational experiences to foster high levels of learning and opportunities for self-expression. As our schools prepare students for a future that demands adaptability, critical thinking and digital literacy, we recognize the potential of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) and other related technology tools.

As with all technologies, users must be mindful of and adhere to all considerations ensuring responsible and ethical use, especially as it relates to mitigating bias, promoting transparency, and ensuring the benefits of AI are accessible to all students.

While ensuring the responsible use for those interacting with and creating content from generative AI technologies, the Board underscores its commitment to fostering a dynamic and engaging learning environment that leverages the advances in AI to enhance student learning outcomes and equip students with the skills and dispositions needed for success in the digital age.

(cf. 6141.9 – Responsible Use of Technology for Students)

(cf. 5121.3 – Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism)

Policy adopted: January 2025