

SOUTHINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Superintendent's Annual Report 2018 ~ 2019



Superintendent's Annual Report

2018-2019

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SOUTHINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Pages</u>
SUPERINTENDENT'S EXECUTIVE SUMMARY _____	1 - 2
CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION _____	3 - 5
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS _____	6 - 7
MATHEMATICS _____	8 - 9
SCIENCE _____	10
BUSINESS DEPARTMENT _____	11-12
OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT _____	13-14
HUMAN RESOURCE DEPARTMENT _____	15-16
PUPIL PERSONNEL SERVICES _____	17-20
TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT _____	21-23
SCHOOL-BASED ACTIVITIES _____	24-54



Southington Public Schools
Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019

SUPERINTENDENT'S EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Timothy F. Connellan, Superintendent of Schools

The Southington Public Schools once again enjoyed a rich blend of veteran and early career faculty, staff, Board of Education members, Central Office Administrators and Building and District-wide Administrators. This blended talent across the district continued to provide a rich environment for the cultivation of ideas and for creative problem solving. Some very talented and experienced individuals and promising early career professionals joined the staff during the 2018-2019 school year. The Southington Public Schools professional staff became more diverse in terms of training, background and experience. Staff members continued to exemplify the high standards and intense work ethic that is the hallmark of the Southington Public Schools.

The work involving Southington's Vision of a Graduate and 21st Century Skills included a continued focus on building capacity through professional learning opportunities. Specifically, members of the Administrative Leadership Team developed a deeper understanding of the 21st Century Skills that are the core of Southington's Vision of a Graduate. Administrators engaged in observations, dialogue, reflection and calibration of their own skills and understanding of 21st Century skills in classroom settings and 21st Century leadership practices. Administrators worked with staff in their buildings, providing opportunities for teachers to gain a better understanding of 21st Century skills in practical applications. In addition, some administrators began to set the stage for the integration of staff goals and 21st Century skills in staff evaluation and support plans and in the work of Instructional Learning Teams. As anticipated, growth and progress in this area was variable across the district and proceeded at a pace commensurate with the level of capacity built over time. A focus for the 2019-2020 school year will be to build greater capacity in all buildings while allowing for the continued differentiation, growth and evolution of individual schools and staff.

The District continued to focus on improved student performance at all levels. During the 2018-2019 school year, the Southington Public Schools consolidated and expanded the internal infrastructure necessary to ensure the highest quality of day-to-day teaching and learning. This infrastructure had several key components that are outlined below.

The redesigned Curriculum Development and Renewal Process with the addition of a Curriculum Leadership Team completed a second full year of implementation. Curriculum development was focused on Southington's Vision of a Graduate and the inclusion of 21st Century Skills in addition to content. The Southington Public Schools continued the implementation of a curriculum renewal process that was effective and sustainable. The Curriculum Leadership Team continued work on the implementation of a Learning Management System for curriculum development. A pilot group of educators worked with the new Learning Management System during the 2018-2019 school year. In addition, the STAR™ assessment system was implemented fully across the district for students in Kindergarten through grade eight. The system provided real time data that was used to modify and plan instruction

The Professional Development and Evaluation Committee (PDEC) successfully designed and implemented a thoughtful system of continuous professional learning experiences for all staff

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019 Executive Summary

across the district. PDEC attended to the very different professional learning needs of the diverse population of educators in the Southington Public Schools. In addition, PDEC began to examine alternative methods and structures that might better serve Southington's specific needs for support and evaluation of professional staff members. The work in this area will continue in the 2019-2020 school year and will be connected to Southington's Vision of a Graduate and focus on 21st Century Skills.

The Southington Public Schools consolidated the process of utilizing Instructional Learning Teams (ILT) during the 2018-2019 school year. The ILT's promoted collaboration and reflection among team members and facilitated the identification of real and pressing instructional/learning problems in classrooms. The ILT allowed teachers the time to work together in a very focused, specific and intentional manner. A focus for the 2019-2020 school year will be to connect the work of the ILT's with the instructional goals of the Evaluation and Support Plan and Southington's Vision of a Graduate.

The Southington Public School District completed the fourth full year of implementation of the Scientific Researched Based Intervention (SRBI) model. Each school refined its SRBI team and process. Through collaboration between and among general education classroom teachers and literacy and mathematics specialists, school-based teams consolidated their understanding of different tiered levels of targeted academic support for students at all achievement levels. The purpose of the SRBI process was to identify students in need of some level of support, provide that support, monitor student progress and then create pathways for students to succeed and perform academically and behaviorally on at least grade level. Each school achieved the capability to pursue that goal aggressively.

Southington Public School students continued to learn in areas not considered "academic" subjects. In each school, students engaged actively in the community in a variety of ways. Students learned the benefits of community service and of the intangible rewards that come with helping those in need. The details of Southington Public School students' efforts in these areas are reflected in the individual school reports. Suffice to say that students in the Southington Public Schools did engage in a broad range of experiences that had a significant and positive impact on their growth and development and had a positive impact on the community.

The District engaged in a second year of work with two consultants who worked directly with students in grades three, five, seven and eight on diversity and equity issues. In addition to the diversity and equity work noted above, the District created the Southington Public Schools Collaboration for Social Justice (CSJ). The CSJ is a broad-based group of professional staff, community members, parents and students working together to tackle the difficult topics that fall under the heading of social justice.

In summary, the Southington Public School District pursued a path of diligence, dedication and hard work. The professional staff worked to build capacity as described above and refined the internal organizational structures and processes that allowed the district to become intentional in its actions. The District focused on incremental and continuous improvement in professional practice in all areas. Southington's Vision of a Graduate had a significant impact on all areas of operation of the district. The Vision will continue to drive curriculum development, evaluation and support and selection and retention of talented professionals.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019

ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT FOR CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

Steven G. Madancy, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction

The Office of Curriculum and Instruction continued to work deliberately and intentionally to connect all initiatives and priorities to the district's Vision of a Graduate during the 2018-2019 school year. At the center of the Vision are the 21st skills of creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, communication, citizenship, content mastery and dispositions of empathy, equity and effort.

Curriculum

All content areas worked toward focusing district curriculum and assessment to the adopted Vision of a Graduate. The district level creation of content agnostic transfer goals that promote the use of 21st century skills within daily lessons and assessments was the first step toward this work this year. Some content areas began to embed these transfer goals into individual units within the Understanding by Design unit development process.

Revision or adoption of content specific curriculum work occurred across all levels of the school system this year. A combination of revised and new Kindergarten through grade five English Language Arts units were brought to the Curriculum and Instruction Committee of the Board of Education and adopted by the full Board. Also new science units for grades three, five and eight, Earth Science and Biology were adopted by the Board of Education. Units in grades six through eight in Social Studies and Health and a ninth grade Modern United States History curriculum were reviewed and adopted by the Board. The high school Social Studies department began work on a course revision for Civics.

The curriculum writing processes were revised and a revised compensation formula for curriculum writing will provide the district's Curriculum Leadership Team with assistance in further curriculum development, revision and expansion in the 2019-2020 academic year.

Instruction and Assessment

The district formally introduced and implemented the STAR™ Assessment series from Renaissance Learning in the fall of 2018. STAR assessments provided benchmark measurements for Kindergarten through grade eight students in the areas of reading and math. Data from these assessments was analyzed at the school and district level to determine students who needed intervention within the district's SRBI (*Scientific Research-Based Intervention*) process. Results from these assessments assisted teachers with instructional grouping to differentiate effectively for all students. A district committee undertook a complete revision of the district's SRBI manual to align accurately with current practices and promote consistency across the system.

The assistant superintendent, middle school administration and teacher representatives from both schools worked to develop measurable Habits of Work to inform and report out on student effort and engagement aligning to the Vision of the Graduate disposition of effort. Also, during the 2018-2019 academic year, this team of teachers worked with the district Instructional Technology Coordinator to test various approaches to recording and reporting out on these measures within the Student Information System, PowerSchool. This work will cascade out to all middle school staff during the 2019-2020 academic year for continued Beta level exploration with the goal of formal introduction to students and families for the 2020-2021 academic year.

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction 2018-2019

The online Learning Management System, Canvas, was introduced to staff in grades six through twelve. Canvas allows teachers to integrate material from multiple sources, collaborate with students in real time, and engage students at higher levels due to the various mediums that exist within the platform.

The district Instructional Technology Committee, along with approximately 60 teachers from all schools, vetted three database products and vendors in anticipation of the adoption and implementation of a new district database for the 2019-2020 school year. Lyman Systems was the chosen system and vendor. It was recently introduced to the Administrative Leadership Team. As a next step, this database will be rolled out to all teachers upon return from summer break in August.

Policy

The district made tremendous progress toward the review, revision or adoption of numerous Board of Education policies during the 2018-2019 school year. All 1000, 2000 and 3000 series policies were reviewed and updated as needed. Policies originating from legislation of recent years that were not yet present within the Board's current manual were created and adopted. Also, several 5000 and 6000 series policies were revised including the Board's Graduation Requirement Policy (#6146), which increased credits required for graduation from 22 to 25 starting with the class of 2023. This will apply to the incoming freshman class for the 2019-2020 academic year.

Professional Development

A significant district effort this year focused on building the professional capacity of the Administrative Leadership Team and furthering team member's understanding of the 21st century skills associated with the district's Vision of the Graduate. The school system's membership within the professional learning community, EdLeader 21, continued to provide a district leadership team made up of building administrators, content-area coordinators and central office leadership with the capacity and resources to support progress toward achieving the vision. Regular monthly administrative meetings served as professional learning sessions for building leaders and district coordinators. Much time was spent discussing why these 21st century skills were essential in achieving the vision and how they could be incorporated into professional learning for staff. The leadership practices associated with EdLeader 21 were used to discuss shifts in practice and theory associated with effective instructional leadership among the Administrative Leadership Team. The district began working with the executive leadership team of the administrator's bargaining unit as well as officials with the State Department of Education to revise the current Administrator Evaluation Plan to align with these leadership practices.

In addition to the administrative level work, teachers across the district continued to meet during regular professional learning time within Instructional Learning Teams. This collaborative structure allowed teachers to study their instructional practices with colleagues. The team structure provided opportunity for staff to think critically, exhibit creativity, and collaborate with one another; interacting themselves with the 21st century skills the district is reinforcing with students. Many teachers across the district used this time to better understand the Vision of the Graduate's associated 21st century skills and how to incorporate student use of these skills into daily lessons.

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction 2018-2019

Another area of focus within the elementary and middle schools during the 2018-2019 school year was the education of the whole child. Promoting the district's vision related disposition of empathy, a focus on EI (*Emotional Intelligence*) allowed two principals, awarded fellowships with Yale's Center for Emotional Intelligence, to provide regular and ongoing professional development to school-based teams. These teams then worked with their respective building staff to understand Emotional Intelligence and the associated strategies that promote self-regulation and reflection.

Trainers Paul Vivian and Audley Donaldson were brought back for a second year and worked with students in grades three, five, seven and eight at all schools relative to the Vision of the Graduate, related disposition of equity and diversity. In addition, the district formed the Southington Public Schools Coalition for Social Justice in the spring. The Coalition was formed with students, staff, parents, administrators, central office leadership, community members, professional partners from both SERC (*State Education Resource Center*) and CREC (*Capitol Region Education Council*) and two elected officials. The Coalition recently adopted four goals that will serve to focus the work around social justice and promoting equity for the 2019-2020 academic year and beyond.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

Stephanie Lawlor, English Language Arts Coordinator

Grades K-5 English Language Arts (ELA)

Reading and Writing Units of Study

Several units, new or revised, were rolled out to staff and adopted by the Board of Education as part of district efforts to revise the grades K-5 ELA curriculum. Teachers in Kindergarten through grade 2, continued to receive job-embedded professional development through the support of the literacy coaches. The coaches met with teams of teachers to introduce a new strategy, plan lessons, or study student work. The coaches not only modeled lessons, they observed teachers teaching and offered feedback. Grade 4 teachers had the opportunity to work with a staff developer from Teachers College. They focused on planning for small group instruction in reading, by studying student work, unpacking the reading progressions and creating tools to differentiate instruction.

Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI)

The elementary literacy team continued to use multiple data points to inform the SRBI process and classroom instruction. They worked diligently to support the needs of students in tier II and III interventions. The team not only focused on student achievement in literacy, but also on the growth of each individual student.

Controlled Study: Units of Study Phonics

Foundational reading skills that are taught in the primary grades are the building blocks for reading success. The district conducted a controlled study using the *Units of Study in Phonics* in four Kindergarten and twelve first grade classrooms across the district. Through the Instructional Learning Team (ILT) process, teachers engaged in learning the guiding principles behind this phonics approach. Teachers received job-embedded coaching on how to implement the lessons at an exemplary level and studied multiple data points to measure the effectiveness of implementation.

The team found that the major guiding principle for the phonics units is supporting student transfer of skills to reading and writing. The lessons provided teachers with strategies and tools to help children see that what they learned in word study fostered stronger readers and writers.

These units were rigorous, and the team found the lessons to be highly engaging. Students worked in “Rug Clubs” to practice strategies using mascots, singing songs, and solving mysteries such as The Mystery of the Silent E and using their super powers to apply their knowledge about letters, sounds and words in their reading and writing.

This past spring, the 2019-2020 cohort of teachers attended a Phonics Showcase to learn about the new units. Teachers had the opportunity to visit classrooms and hear firsthand from the teachers involved in the study. This cohort met in June to begin planning for September.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019 – ELA Curriculum & Instruction

Grammar

At the start of the year, teachers in grades one through five engaged in professional learning with a new resource on how to teach grammar. The approach was designed by Jeff Anderson and the resource was his book, Patterns of Power. Rather than showing students sentences with errors and asking them to fix them, students will be exposed to mentor sentences from authentic literature and coached through an "invitational process." They will be asked to discuss what they notice about a sentence, compare and contrast that sentence with another, imitate the sentence, edit and apply the pattern in their own writing. After a rule is taught, it will be written on a chart that students will use for reference when they are editing their work in writing workshop.

Grades 6-8 English Language Arts (ELA)

The grade six units of study in reading and writing were adopted by the Board of Education this year. These units build upon the skills and strategies taught at the elementary level. Teachers collaborated to create and revise performance tasks that align to the 21st century skills. Students created Ted Talk presentations and Public Service Announcements to demonstrate mastery of skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening.

Teachers in grades seven and eight reviewed new units of study in reading that will be sent to the Curriculum and Instructions Committee for review and adoption next year. Once these units are approved, the district will have vertical alignment in reading and writing curriculum from kindergarten through grade eight. During district department meeting time, teachers revised the middle school writing rubrics to ensure vertical alignment from grades K-8. Staff also spent time using a protocol to calibrate their scoring of writing pieces.

Each middle school was fortunate enough to have two literacy specialists to support the SBRI model. This team collaborated with one another and the ELA teachers to ensure the district met the needs of all students. The two middle schools shared a literacy coach. The coach was able to support teachers with planning for small group instruction and support the implementation of the workshop model.

Grades 9-12 English Language Arts (ELA)

At the high school level, the ELA Coordinator, English Department Chair, and the Assistant Principal for ELA, met weekly to draft the ELA K-12 Macro-curriculum. The draft was shared with a team of teachers for feedback. The Macro-curriculum is aligned to the Southington Public Schools Vision of the Graduate and will guide the curriculum revisions that will begin at Southington High in the fall.

MATHEMATICS CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

Amy Zappone, Mathematics Coordinator

Grades K-2 Math

Over the course of the year, grades Kindergarten through grade two teachers engaged in a process of curriculum evaluation to determine which Mathematics curriculum or program would best support the needs of students in Southington. The K-2 teachers reviewed curricular options and submitted their feedback to the District Math Advisory Council. The Advisory Council then brought the district recommendation to the Curriculum and Instruction Committee meeting in April 2019, and the Committee supported the adoption of Ready Classroom. Ready Classroom is a comprehensive Mathematics curriculum that is built upon student discourse and problem solving. This Spring, all K-2 teachers who were not slated to begin the new phonics program in the fall, began their professional learning around the implementation of Ready Classroom. The elementary mathematics department will continue preparing and training K-2 teachers for implementation over the summer and throughout the school year, so teachers feel confident and supported throughout their implementation. As a district, the mathematics teachers are very excited to launch Ready Classroom for the 2019-2020 school year to work toward a coherent and consistent approach to teaching and learning of Mathematics. The elementary Mathematics specialists will increase their coaching support to assist teachers with Ready Classroom, to benefit from peer to peer collaboration.

Grades 3-5 Math

This year, teachers in grades three through five continued using Ready Common Core to support Mathematics instruction. To expand capacity in differentiating instruction for all learners, teachers engaged in professional learning around Math Workshop. For the Math Workshop Model, the district support encompassed the following principles: quality tasks are at the heart of workshop; student collaboration and discourse are essential; teachers are facilitators of learning. Teachers in grades three through five worked with colleagues across the district to develop and refine differentiated tasks for math workshop. Teachers were also able to use the newly purchased Splash Math program in their technology station within the Workshop to build number sense and fluency. They will continue their efforts with Math Workshop for next year and anticipate continued gains in student growth as a result of purposeful differentiation.

Grades 6-8 Math

The Middle School Mathematics Department engaged in a department book study of National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) Principles to Actions, over the course of the school year. This professional resource focused on the eight Highly Effective Teaching Practices for Mathematics. The department focused on practices one and two: “Establish math goals to focus learning,” and “Implement Tasks that promote reasoning and problem solving.” During district department meetings, the work focused on developing and posting student-friendly learning targets and success criteria to guide student learning. Teachers used Instructional Learning Teams (ILT) and curriculum meeting time to collaboratively plan lessons and assessments that promoted cognitive engagement through problem solving. The department was fortunate to have two full-time Mathematics specialists, one at each middle school. The Mathematics specialists worked with

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019 - Mathematics

teachers in the department to support the needs of all students through the Scientific Research-Based Instruction (*SRBI*) process and Tier I instruction. The middle school Mathematics teachers look forward to continuing to explore engaging and rigorous tasks for next year's instruction.

Grades 9-12 Math

The Southington High School Mathematics Department utilized vertical articulation time to meet with the middle school teachers who taught algebra I. The middle school and high school Algebra I teachers were able to collaboratively review the current curriculum and instructional practices. This summer, the work will continue with a focus on incorporating more opportunities for problem solving and real-life application. The district will be using Open Education Resources to fuel curriculum writing. The high school mathematics teachers worked with their colleagues to analyze Preliminary Scholastic Achievement Test (PSAT), Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT) and Advance Placement (AP) data to inform instruction. Also, teachers participated in professional learning opportunities around the practices of using learning targets and student success criteria to support "Visible Learning" from John Hattie's work. Next year, the department will engage in a book study to support their learning around the 21st century skill of Collaboration, which is a critical element of the District's Vision of the Graduate.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019

SCIENCE CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

John Duffy, Science Coordinator

The district continued the implementation of Connecticut's Science standards, the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). The NGSS represented a major shift in instruction for Science teachers. Teachers focused on guiding students in developing answers to students' own questions about real world phenomena. Students took on the role of scientists as they built their understanding of science concepts while solving problems and developing explanations for engaging and puzzling science experiences. In the elementary schools, the emphasis was placed on grades three through five with each grade level implementing new units this year. All grade three, four and five teachers received professional development emphasizing the instructional strategies necessary to successfully support students as they engaged with new units of Science this year. Select grade three, four, and five teachers initiated a collaborative partnership with teachers in the Plainville school district as part of a grant administered by the Connecticut Science Center. This grant-funded partnership was designed to help build district capacity to make the changes in instruction required by the Connecticut Next Generation Science Standards. This grant program will be extended next year to include Kindergarten, first and second grade teachers. The middle school teachers and high school teachers implemented new NGSS units of study at every grade level. Professional development for teachers directly connected with new Science units continued this past school year. As a result of their professional development and curriculum work this year, the middle school teachers will be delivering a complete NGSS curriculum during the next school year. At the high school, the grade nine and ten teachers work this year will result in a fully transformed NGSS curriculum next year. The grade 11 and 12 teachers are on track for the full implementation in the 2020-2021 school year.

Southington students demonstrated a great deal of creativity this year. All grade five students created an invention as part of an invention curriculum unit. One-hundred and eighty students participated in the district-wide Invention Convention with nineteen moving on to the state-wide Invention Convention. Four of those students were invited to the national Invention Convention. Southington middle school students participated in the national eCybermission competition, a Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) challenge for middle school students. A team of four grade six students from John F Kennedy Middle School were awarded first-place in the state of Connecticut for their unique design solution for oil spills.

The district continues to partner with Lewis Educational Agricultural Farm (LEAF) and seventh generation Southington farmer Mark Ramsay in supporting gardening in all elementary schools, both middle schools and Alta, the alternative high school. Under Mr. Ramsay's tutelage, students at all schools planted vegetables for harvest this summer and fall. Mr. Ramsay and LEAF continued to work with our middle schools this year and plans are in place for an expansion of this partnership during the next school year.

The district continued a partnership with YMCA Camp Sloper funded by a generous grant from the Southington Education Foundation (SEF). All grade four students spent two full days, one in the fall and one in the spring, immersed in a standards-based field experience.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019

BUSINESS DEPARTMENT

Sherri P. DiNello, Director of Business & Finance

The Business Office has accomplished the following items during the 2018-2019 school year.

Budget Development 2019-2020

During the 2018-2019 school year, the Board of Education 2019-2020 Operating Budget was developed and presented. The Southington Board of Finance and Town Council funded the Board of Education 2019-2020 Operating Budget with an increase of \$2.3 million or 2.46%. In addition, funds were appropriated in separate line items to fund the anticipated increase to the MERS Municipal Employee Retirement System (MERS) and a contribution to the state Teacher's Retirement Board (TRB). The state budget was not finalized prior to the action by the Town Council; therefore, to be fiscally responsible yet still maintain control of these funds, they were not included within the Board of Education Operating Budget.

Education Finance System/Alio

The 2017-2018 financial report, ED001, was filed on the new EFS (Electronic Funds Source) platform that the State Department of Education rolled out in the spring of 2018. Local Education Agencies (LEAs) were required to report financial data using the new system beginning with the filing of the ED001 Report due by September 1, 2018 for the 2017-2018 school year. All account records uploaded were classified using the EFS codes for: Funding Source, Function, Object, Education Type, Pre-K, Allocation and Location. The Alio financial system did not provide a crosswalk to code the accounts to upload them successfully. The coding was done manually. The programmers at Computer Management Technologies (CMT), the Alio support vendor, have been working on the state reporting module. The district has been assisting them by sharing the excel spreadsheets created to use as real data to test and determine the best way to program the module so all Connecticut districts using Alio can benefit from their new module. In addition, new accounts were created to allow the appropriate coding of building level expenses.

Online Payment System for Fees and Activities Expanded

The Purchase Department Accounting Manager worked with the staff at Southington High School to expand the use of MyPaymentPlus online payment system to collect fees. The dues for the freshman class and payments for the Advanced Placement (AP) exams were collected using the online payment system this year.

Employee Wellness

The Healthy & Wise Committee ran several successful employee wellness programs throughout the year. Walking and weight loss challenges continue to be the most popular. WW (Weight Watchers) was offered onsite and, although participation was low, participants appreciated the opportunity and found success in reaching goals. Also, an introduction to yoga class was offered. Eight (8) one-quarter (1/4) size Crop Shares were purchased to be raffled off to staff, to showcase the fresh local produce options here in town.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019 - Business Department

Food Service Financial Reporting

The Food Service Program utilized Alio financial software for payroll and accounts payable. The Accounting Manager worked to expand the chart of accounts to encompass revenue line items so sales and cash receipts could be posted. The goal was to produce financial statements from the software. This goal was completed in May of 2019. In addition, the Accounting Manager reconciled the Prepaid Student Liability Account. Archived data was restored to reconcile funds left from graduates and students that transferred. The Food Service Office staff will reach out to parents of inactive students to offer the option of a refund of their prepaid account balance or a donation of the balance to fund meals and snacks for students in need. A new practice was established for account balances remaining once students exit Southington Public Schools.

Negotiations – Southington Education Association (SEA)

The Director of Business & Finance worked with the Superintendent and legal counsel on behalf of the Southington Board of Education, to coordinate negotiations with the SEA. The Board of Education was able to reach an agreement with the SEA and avoid costly arbitration fees due to the continued conversations between the parties that occurred after mediation. The new contract begins on July 1, 2019.

Paraprofessionals, English Language Tutors (EL) & Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) Therapists

The Director of Business & Finance negotiated a three-year contract extension with the UPSEU (United Public Service Employees Union) bargaining group. The extension was accomplished without opening the contract for full negotiations and saved the district legal funds because an attorney was not used for the negotiation process.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019

OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT

Peter J. Romano, Director of Operations

The Operations Department accomplished the following items during the 2018-2019 school year:

Construction and Building System Improvements

A substantial portion of construction and improvement projects were performed by in-house staff as a result of the budget uncertainty. These items included:

- Researched, designed and began installation of a state-of-the-art security camera system at Southington High School. Preliminary work was completed prior to the end of school. Work will be completed over the summer recess.
- Replaced a considerable amount of concrete sidewalk at Southington High School and Strong Elementary School.
- Replacement of traditional florescent light bulbs with Light-Emitting Diode (LED) lamps in schools continued throughout the district. The LED lamps were purchased at a discounted price through an Eversource Rebate Program.
- Replaced all existing counters and upgraded the electrical power to support current technology in the Music room at Southington High School.
- Continued the ongoing maintenance of the irrigation system at Southington High School.
- Improved on strategies to ensure the reliable, long-term performance and extending the life-cycle of roofs district-wide.
- Completed short-term structural repairs to the tennis courts at Southington High School.
- The exterior door for the Southington High School Band Room was structurally enlarged from a 3-foot wide door to a 4-foot door to allow for the larger instruments to be transported to the field without being disassembled.

With the approval of the referendum to replace ±70,000 square feet of roof at Southington High School, administrative work began. A building committee was formed, project manager and architect selected, and state funding requirements were satisfied. Work is scheduled to start at the beginning of summer recess.

Removed the underground fuel tank that was servicing a generator at Southington High School as required by the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection.

Continued working toward completion of the required improvements outlined in the Civil Rights Compliance review at Southington High School.

Operations oversaw the replacement of a failed cylinder casing for the main elevator at Southington High School. The modernization of this elevator was bid with the support of the town's Capital Improvement Plan. Elevator work will begin at summer recess. Electrical, fire alarm, and Heating, Ventilation & Air Conditioning (HVAC) work will be performed in-house by the maintenance staff.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019 – Operations Department

Energy Conservation

Energy Management System: With ten (10) of the district's schools on the web-based dashboard, the Operations Department continued to monitor systems and programmed them for optimum efficiency and health of the buildings.

Reporting

South End Elementary School Construction Close-out: Operations completed documentation with the State Department of Education and Town of Southington Director of Finance, to close-out the project with the state.

Joseph A. DePaolo and John F. Kennedy Middle Schools Construction Close-out: Operations is working with the State Department of Education and Town of Southington Director of Finance to close-out the projects with the state.

School Rental System: The Operations Department evaluated the rates for outside rental of the schools and the policies and procedures. Recommendations were approved by the Board of Education for the 2019-2020 school year.

Health and Safety

Operations, in conjunction with the Southington Police and Fire Departments, coordinated and participated in unannounced emergency drills and fire drills at all schools district-wide.

Asbestos and radon testing programs: Ongoing management of the state mandated asbestos removal and reporting continued. Air quality testing for radon was performed at Agricultural Sciences, Hatton, Strong, and Thalberg Schools, as per Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and state guidelines for ongoing testing in schools.

Polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) testing was conducted at the John Weichsel Municipal Center, J. A. DePaolo Middle School and J. F. Kennedy Middle School.

Administrative Enhancements

Operations created and maintained an online process for reporting district-wide fire and safety drills. Drills are reported annually to the Connecticut State Division of Energy Management and Homeland Security.

The Operations Department continued to build on its' electronic infrastructure. Operations worked closely with all the schools in the district. The transition to electronic documentation for the department allowed for greater efficiencies and information sharing throughout the district. A considerable amount of work was 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. Among the projects completed this year include: Recreation Park water heater repairs, highway garage upgrades, plumbing maintenance at fire stations, and HVAC work at the library.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019

HUMAN RESOURCE DEPARTMENT

Michelle Passamano, Human Resource Manager

Progress was demonstrated in many areas throughout the 2018-2019 school year after the Human Resource Department (HR) resources were merged between the Southington Town Government and the Southington Public Schools in 2017-2018.

Alio/Database Merge:

Assisted by the Technology Department and an Alio representative, the department continued work to finalize the process of combining existing multiple employee data sources into one employee database. The completed transition will ensure accuracy and efficiency of operation, saving time in the production of reports required by the state or the district and town.

Hiring Process:

The Hiring Committee worked to improve and update the hiring process including evaluation of documents, reference check information, and interview scoring rubrics. Newly implemented procedures increased efficiency and reflected the current work of the district. The standard forms were converted into pdf fillable forms. Collaboration with the Payroll and Technology Departments helped determine the forms and information necessary for posting on the district's website along with the most efficient manner to store employee documents within the website. Training videos required for new hires; e.g., Bloodborne Pathogens, Life-threatening allergies, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and Title IX, were incorporated within that website. The Human Resource Department continued work on the development of a Personnel Accountability form in Google Forms that will assist the department with notifications from building administrators regarding location and assignment changes, recommendations for hire, and requests for personnel vacancy postings.

The Human Resource Department is currently in the process of utilizing additional resources available through the Frontline Application System. This application system has many features that will streamline the process, including administrators being able to prepare their own postings and electronically routing applications to different levels of the hiring process. Administrators will no longer need to send their recommendations for hire documents to HR in paper form. They will identify who they selected to interview and their recommendation for hire directly in Frontline. The Hiring Committee reviewed the interview questions for all areas and are continuing the work of developing them in Frontline for electronic use during interviews.

Human Resource Website:

The Human Resource Department website is under development. All onboarding forms were created in pdf fillable form format and will be added to the website for use by all new hires. The Human Resource Department has contracted with e-FMLA for all new medical leave notification requests. This is an online source that provides employees with a link to enter their information. A letter will be generated automatically from HR to the employee. The number of requests for absences under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) have increased exponentially. This resource ensures that the required guidelines and timelines are met. The Payroll Department and HR meet twice a month to review an employee's FMLA status.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019 ~ Human Resource Department

Training and Networking:

Training, networking and attending workshops has been an ongoing process for the employees in the HR office. Areas that have been addressed include collective bargaining, sexual harassment investigations, union negotiations and labor relations, employee conflicts, diversity, and OSHA. The hiring of a town of Southington Human Resource Generalist to handle the town departments has been a challenge due to turnover of that position. A goal for the 2019-2020 school year is to provide a training plan for the Town Department Heads in how to conduct meetings that may lead to disciplinary action.

Celebration:

The Human Resource Department developed a process for Town of Southington employee recognitions at Town Council meetings in January and April of 2019. This was an appreciation celebration process that was implemented by the Southington Board of Education for many years. The celebrations will continue throughout the year in the months of October and November.

Town Handbook and Southington Public Schools Manuals:

The Human Resource Department is currently in the process of updating the Town Handbook and developing a procedure manual. Great progress has been made and will continue through the next fiscal year.

Ongoing Work:

The Human Resource Manager continues to focus on working closely with Town of Southington Departments and Southington Public Schools staff to establish and build working relationships and effective communication.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019

PUPIL PERSONNEL SERVICES

Margaret T. Walsh, Director of Pupil Personnel Services

The Pupil Personnel Services Department Leadership Team is comprised of four Special Education Coordinators and a Director. The leadership team continues to be a collaborative “think tank”, looking at all facets of the school system with a focus on maximizing the efficiency and effectiveness of staffing and services for students and their families.

For the 2018- 2019 school year, areas of focus for the department included refinement of the work throughout the district including, but not limited to, the following:

- Active participation and representation on the District-wide Professional Development and Evaluation Committee.
- Ongoing revisions and refinement of the online manual for special education processes.
- Program development and best practices for an inclusion setting, including increasing the capacity of building level teams to meet the differentiated needs of identified students.
- Finding a new location for the “STELLAR” program when Lincoln College closed (December 2018) and partnering with Branford Hall and The Florian Properties Management company.

Programmatic components were identified as areas of development including the following:

- Creating an inventory database to track student's devices;
- Maximizing resources (including staff, time and materials);
- Developing uniform practices throughout the district regarding Extended School Year (ESY) programming and requests for paraeducator support for identified students;
- Streamlining the process for analyzing requests for various computer applications for student devices;
- Expanding the staff knowledge-base regarding vocational/transitional programming for students 14 - 21 years of age; and,
- Creating a continuum of services for students within each building and increasing collaboration among district staff.

State and Federal Compliance

The Special Education Department maintained compliance with the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) 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 fourteen performance indicators in special education. Southington's most recent District Annual Performance Report indicated that Southington was a district classified as “Meets Requirements”. This rating (based upon the indicators) was determined by ongoing data collection, Special Education Data Application Collection (SEDAC) reports and numerous other state monitoring reports.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019 – Pupil Personnel Services

Community and Parent Partnerships

Continuing collaboration with parents, community stakeholders and local or state agencies was critical to ensure that students with disabilities had an opportunity to experience the quality of life to which they are entitled. The department worked closely with families, community agencies and state programs this year to continue to bring these resources into the students' lives. Staff facilitated parent workshops that were made available to families this year. Pupil Personnel Services staff participated with community-based programs to promote stronger partnerships. Those partnerships included the Next Steps Parent Group, Lewis Educational Agricultural Farm (LEAF), Parks and Recreation Programs, Emotional Intelligence presentations for several groups, the Student Attendance and Truancy Committee, Southington's Town-wide Effort to Promote Success (STEPS), the YMCA and Southington Youth Services.

The Director of Pupil Personnel Services served on the Executive Committee for the Special Education Advisory Council for the State of Connecticut, representing the Connecticut Council of Administrators of Special Education (CONNCASE) and the public-school sector. The position is a two-year term commitment and allowed for direct participation in advising the Governor, General Assembly, State Board of Education, Bureau of Special Education and other elected and appointed officials who provided guidance and oversight of special education services in the state.

Student Achievement

It is imperative that student's Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are aligned with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and that all staff continue to strive for best instructional practices in classrooms. Whether through team teaching, direct explicit instruction, special education inclusion support or pull out sessions, teachers engaged students in rigorous meaningful instruction. Ongoing professional development for teachers in content curriculum as well as in differentiating instruction was extremely important to support teachers in improving their professional practice. To support student success, special educators continued to work with the content area teachers and other specialists in all schools.

School Readiness and Prevention

The Preschool Program continued to grow in numbers every month. Southington's Preschool classrooms (three at Hatton and one at Strong), the Family Resource Center (FRC) and the partnership with Birth-to-Three agencies continued to provide support and resources for families with young children who are developmentally delayed. Supported by a grant, FRC was able to adopt the "Ready, Set, Read" program, which provides basic literacy skills for English Learners prior to the start of Kindergarten year. The department enhanced resources for Mathematics instruction of preschool students by developing Mathematics readiness skills through math-based preschool activities. This activity came to fruition through collaboration with the Mathematics Coordinator and Mathematics specialists working with preschool staff. The Department of Pupil Personnel Services supported an Early Childhood prevention program through a collaboration with Wheeler Clinic to expand their "Child First" program into the Southington community. The Department wrote a letter of support and provided information (data) to Wheeler Clinic for their grant application to demonstrate the need for preventative services in town. This program serves young children ages three through six and their families. It has been implemented in several surrounding communities.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019 – Pupil Personnel Services

Elementary 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 terms of the continuum of services for elementary students. The department streamlined the referral process for students who required that level of programming. The referral packet was thorough and required that the sending schools exhausted all possible strategies and interventions before moving to a more restrictive environment. Pupil Services used this process unless there were extenuating circumstances regarding safety concerns. Students joined their typical peers for lunch, recess, special area instruction and other times during the day that were deemed appropriate. There were criteria developed as well for students to demonstrate the ability to return to their neighborhood school. Special education teachers participated in a variety of code-based literacy professional development sessions both in-district and at the state level. These professional learning activities increased the capacity of special educators to diagnose dyslexia and write strong goals and objectives addressing literacy weaknesses. Additionally, the professional learning opportunities helped teachers improve their instructional practice with children who experienced significant reading disabilities.

Middle School Level

The Educational Adaptive Social Experience (EASE) program at J. F. Kennedy Middle School and the Therapeutic Educational Alternative Model (TEAM) program at DePaolo Middle School provided structures and resources for Southington's in-district educational services. Staff continued to strengthen the programmatic structures as well as fine-tuned services to allow students appropriate access to all aspects of their education. In addition to providing counseling coverage and support for the TEAM program, the school psychologist completed psychological evaluations throughout the district and at some magnet schools. Providing these services in-house provided the least restrictive environment for students and was a cost savings for the district. A "Reading Academy" was established at J. F. Kennedy Middle School for students with dyslexia. The academy serviced middle school students who required direct explicit literacy instruction in addition to language enrichment, writing skills, fluency decoding, encoding, comprehension and oral language development.

High School Level

The Special Education Department engaged in ongoing professional development on the following topics: the upcoming New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) accreditation process; creating legally defensible Individual Education Plans (IEP's); and individually designed learning. A new curriculum, Unique Learning, was implemented in the ACHIEVE program for students with significant cognitive, developmental and physical challenges. Data from this program indicated that student learning was augmented and that students made appropriate progress toward meeting goals and objectives. Curriculum development activities occurred, allowing the former Academic Support classes to become credit bearing classes. The curriculum is scheduled to be reviewed by the Board of Education for approval in August 2019. The department worked with an outside clinical psychologist who provided the students in the Therapeutic Educational Program (TEP) with counseling services and supports. Upon evaluation of these services provided by a private clinician, the Pupil Services Department chose to enter instead into a contract with Wheeler Clinic for therapeutic support beginning in the 2019-2020

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019 – Pupil Personnel Services

school year. The program was renamed the Collaborative Learning Program to better reflect how this program can assist in meeting Southington's Vision of the Graduate. Planning meetings took place throughout the year with staff, students, administrators, Dr. Mike Russo, Director of Collaborative Learning Programs for Wheeler Clinic, and service providers at the high school. This new partnership will assist the district in providing a highly structured program with solid clinical services for students who are enrolled in the program.

Ongoing Needs

The Pupil Personnel Services Department will continue to maximize resources within the district for staff, students and families. The department will continue to develop and consolidate systematic practices across the district. The restructuring of the department has allowed coordinators to have a laser-like focus on enhancing the capacity of the teams in each building to meet the diverse needs of all students. Future needs include professional development to increase the level of collaboration between regular education staff and the special education/pupil services staff. Collaboration between and among professional educators will ensure that the district offers the best educational experience for all children. It is imperative to provide this professional learning to enhance teaming and collaboration and to optimize instruction. The Pupil Personnel Services Department will work with the Administrative Leadership Team and the Professional Development and Evaluation Committee to help create a plan of action that will meet this need. Increasing mental health services for students continues to be an area of ongoing need.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019

TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT

Jamie T. Olander, Director of Technology

The 2018-2019 school year was full of district-wide projects, new equipment, and ongoing long-term planning. The following were the major technology initiatives accomplished this past year.

Infrastructure Improvements

Technology staff completed replacement of all main core switches in all schools including secondary data closets - Intermediate Distribution Frame (IDF). The team completed the installation of Computer Information System Company (CISCO) Power of Ethernet (POE) switches, resulting in improved Wireless Fidelity (Wi-Fi) access to all schools. In addition to supporting classroom instruction, improved access was necessary for the administration of the Connecticut State Department of Education Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA) and Advanced Placement (AP) testing utilizing district Chromebooks and MacBooks. The district purchased a new server that will be the Data Center for both Southington High School and the district. In the summer of 2018, new fiber was installed throughout Southington High School resulting in the following improvements:

1. **Speed**: Allow for instant data retrieval and Internet data to transfer at the fastest speed.
2. **Bandwidth**: Equal upload and download speeds that allows for much longer transmission distances and a high signal rate.
3. **Security**: Most secure network available due to the glass composition of the fiber. The only way to penetrate the connection is by breaking it. With a copper line, there are potential threats that can hack directly into the system.

In the summer of 2019, the team will work to add additional Access Points at Southington High School to improve further the Wi-Fi access throughout the building. The Technology team will continue to focus on infrastructure improvements at Southington High School and across the district for the 2019-2020 school year.

Reconfiguration of the Southington Public Schools Wi-Fi Access

The Technology Department continued to work to ensure the security and reliability of the Wi-Fi network and leveraged a new authentication method. The result separated staff, students, and guests for security and allowed more control over bandwidth usage. The transition included the following:

- **SPS-Devices**: For District-owned devices - will be phased out. Unlimited access.
- **SPS-Wi-Fi**: For all District users that are presently in the Active Directory (AD), must use AD credentials to access. Unlimited access.
- **SPS-Guest**: For guest users, must accept district terms and conditions and enter email address. External access and heavily filtered.

Implemented a District Firewall and Endpoint Security System

The district purchased a Firewall and Endpoint Security system. The robust security checkpoint system was deployed to protect all Southington Public School computers and other network devices from attacks. This system helped enforce rules regarding network use and monitoring of the activity on the district's network. A new robust antivirus was deployed to all district devices.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019 – Technology Department

Affordable Care Act

Since 2016 (for the 2015 tax year), Southington Public Schools was required annually to issue a new tax form, Form 1095-C under the ACA (*Affordable Care Act*). It contains detailed information about the medical coverage offered to staff and their dependents. The technology team completed the printing of these forms and has processed these electronically to the Internal Revenue Service adhering to strict deadlines.

School Messenger – Report Cards

The Technology Department converted the entire district (Pre-K – Grade 12) to electronic report cards. The district used School Messenger's Secure Document Delivery functionality to deliver sensitive documents such as report cards to all parents. This initiative allowed the district to safely send documents electronically and reduce expenditures for mailing and recover staff time.

Website - Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance

It is required that all federally funded educational institutions adhere to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. These requirements address two main attributes of the website: content and design. All the following website content must follow ADA requirements: Photos, Text, Forms, Portable Document Format (PDF) and Video. The Technology Department updated the Southington Public Schools website to follow these mandates.

File Storage

The Technology Department introduced the district to OneDrive for enhanced file accessibility and increased storage. This initiative created two options for cloud-based file storage; OneDrive and Google Drive. These file migration options helped the district in the following ways:

- **Lowered server costs:** There are no longer extra costs associated with increasing memory, hard drive space and processing power.
- **Allowed data centralization:** Information for projects and different schools are stored in one location that can be accessed on-site or remotely.
- **Data recovery:** Cloud computing enabled automatic data backup on the cloud system.
- **Increased sharing capabilities:** All documents and files can be emailed and shared whenever required.

Data Compliance – Public Act 16-189

The 2016 Connecticut legislative session brought a variety of changes to education laws. The most significant piece of education legislation effecting technology was Public Act 16-189, an Act Concerning Student Data Privacy. Public Act 16-189 addressed privacy issues related to the provision of personally identifiable student information to individuals or entities outside of the public school domain, otherwise known as third parties. The Technology Department has reviewed all educational software and requested that vendors sign the required Student Data Privacy Pledge. A process and set of procedures was developed to address compliance with this statute and to process software requests without deployment delays. Implementation of Public Act 16-189 was delayed until the 2018-2019 school year.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019 – Technology Department

Office 365 Mail

All district staff and grades six through twelve students were provided with Office 365 email addresses. The Technology Department continuously monitored and upgraded the system to ensure that all teachers, administrators, staff, and students had access to email and files from any Internet compatible machine. This means that email and files can be accessed regardless of what Windows-based computer is used. A user simply logs in with the appropriate credentials.

Implementation of Canvas

The Technology Department assisted in the implementation of Canvas, a new district Learning Management system. This included, but was not limited to, a nightly PowerSchool sync of enrollment, course, and teacher assignment data as well as grade pass back sync from Canvas to PowerSchool. Students and staff accessed the site through a single sign-on page.

Implementation of Lyman Systems LLC

The Technology Department purchased and set up the dedicated servers for Lyman Systems, the new district data warehouse. The team worked with the previous system, SchoolNet, to export all data and then imported the information into the new system. The new data warehouse will more comprehensive student data analysis and reports. Technology created an external Uniform Resource Locator (URL) access that will allow staff to access the data from remote locations.

SHS Security Cameras

The Technology Department purchased and set up the dedicated switches to accommodate the existing and additional security cameras added to Southington High School. The team worked countless hours with the Maintenance Department on camera locations and data runs. Technology staff set up the software dashboard that will allow staff to access the views from all camera locations from their current staff devices. The Technology Department purchased and set up the Southington High School Lead Security Guard laptop to allow viewing and recording of all videos.

SHS Voice Over Internet Protocol (VoIP) Upgrade

The Technology Department worked with the Vendor, the Operations Department and Maintenance Department to determine the current infrastructure requirements to deploy the new VoIP system at Southington High School. The team ran audits on all the current data ports, purchased new switches and addressed all initial and existing phone problems.

Elementary Desktop Replacement

The Technology Department replaced outdated iMac desktops with new innovative Tech Tubs and Chromebooks in all elementary schools' grades two through five. The Tubs and Chromebooks are used to enhance instruction in the classrooms and for state assessments. The Tubs provided a better mobile solution for charging, storing and sharing devices among different classrooms.

Tech Camp Training

The Technology Department worked in collaboration with the Curriculum and Instruction team to offer training sessions for Canvas, Google, One Drive, and Power Teacher Pro.

SOUTHINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SUPERINTENDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT

2018 ~ 2019



School-Based Activities

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019

SOUTHINGTON HIGH SCHOOL

Brian Stranieri, Principal

Enhancements

Southington High School continued its efforts on teaching and learning with the understanding that a high-quality educational program lead to improvements in all areas. The College Board recognized SHS for significantly increasing the number of students participating in Advanced Placement (AP) courses while simultaneously producing, maintaining, or increasing the percentage of students meeting with mastery on the AP exams. The eighth Annual AP Expo was held in the SHS cafeteria where student teams explored individual learning opportunities within their course work and presented to an audience. Beyond these significant achievements, Southington High School has experienced a rise in the overall four-year graduation rate. The SHS College Fair provided students and parents, the opportunity to connect with over ninety-five colleges and universities. Financial Aid Night, College Basics 101, and Navigating the College Process Night provided students and parents opportunities to hear from professionals about the college planning process.

Southington High School spent a significant amount of time preparing for the in-school Preliminary Scholastic Achievement Test (PSAT) and Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT) exams this past year. Teachers engaged with administrators, department leaders and colleagues to promote increased student learning through the teacher evaluation system. The ninth-grade team model continued to excel and provided the level of communication necessary among the teachers, students and families to ensure that the transition to high school was successful. In addition, SHS continued to ensure that student voices were heard and respected. The Student Council (ABC Team - Think Tank) grew as an organization as students participated in leadership training and engaged with student issues. The Multi-cultural Student Union, LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer) Club and Gender Sexuality and Equality Alliance flourished this year resulting in heightened diversity awareness at SHS. Another gender-neutral lavatory was added to the building to allow greater student access. The athletics department continued to listen to the voices of student-athletes through the Knights of the Roundtable. The Scientific Researched-Based Intervention (SRBI) program was very successful this year as all grades showed an improvement in retention and graduation numbers.

Celebrations

Southington High School had much to celebrate during this school year. The school community continued to celebrate the great success of students involved in extra and co-curricular activities. The SHS Marching Band finished their season with a second-place finish at the National Competition. The SHS Robotics Program "Team 195" finished third in the world this past year at the FIRST Robotics competition held in Detroit, Michigan. The Distributive Education Club of America (DECA), the Future Business Leaders of America club (FBLA) and the Future Farmers of America club (FFA) each continued to be top vocational student run organizations in the state. The Interact and Key Clubs performed numerous hours of community service throughout Southington. Two retired Technology Education teachers, Mr. Gervais Barger and Mr. William Heath, received the "Order of the Blue Knight" award for meritorious service to Southington High School.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019 – Southington High School

Southington High School offered two highly successful trips abroad. The first trip went to Chile and the second trip encompassed Berlin, Prague, Krakow and Budapest. These trips allowed students to engage with the people, culture and communities in these countries. Additionally, with the efforts of the SHS literacy specialists, SHS offered many successful student book clubs that spread the love for reading. Unified Theater, Unified Sports and Best Buddies continued to shine. The Drama Club received multiple HALO Awards (Helping and Leading Others). Project Lead the Way (PLTW) continued to produce outstanding future engineers and held another successful Senior Capstone evening. The Green Knights had a successful second year recycling plastic bottles from around the school. The club raised approximately \$1,500.

Athletic teams at SHS had another outstanding year. Seven different teams won league titles and represented SHS well in state tournaments. The Southington Girls' Softball Team won the 18th State Championship in school history. More than fifty student-athletes will continue their playing careers in college with ten of them receiving athletic scholarships.

Ongoing Work

SHS will be undergoing a ten-year accreditation process in 2021. The New England Association of Schools and Colleges (*NEASC*) decennial visit is scheduled for November 2021. This year was instrumental in laying the foundation for the accreditation. Self-reflection surveys were completed by students, staff and parents during the fall of 2018. In the spring of 2019, committees for each of the five standards were formed and submitted reports to NEASC regarding the self-study.

The hard work of the SHS staff and the strong educational foundation that has developed over time is leading to significant growth in many areas. As the school community looks forward to a new year, further developments in 21st Century learning, such as Mastery Based Learning (*MBL*), are anticipated. All staff will engage in the sixth year of the teacher support and evaluation program.

SHS reviewed the High School Reform Act and developed a plan to address the need for students to meet the new high school graduation criteria mandated by the State of Connecticut. The School Improvement Team (*SIT*) worked diligently on these new graduation requirements during the summer of 2018 and during *SIT* meetings that were held in the fall of 2018. The final plan was submitted to the Board of Education for review, accepted, and incorporated into the Program of Studies for the 2019-2020 school year.

Staff will continue to embrace the curricular changes required to implement the Common Core State Standards with a focus specific to the individual disciplines. The administration and staff will continue to audit courses in all disciplines and determine what courses can be eliminated and what new courses should be added to any curriculum. One example of a successful outcome to this process is the SHS Yearbook, a new course in the high school Business Department.

The faculty and staff will commit to individualizing the learning of every student at Southington High School and ensure opportunities for all students to develop 21st Century Skills and embody Southington's Vision of the Graduate.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019

ALTA **ALTERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM**

Jess W. Levin, Director

Congratulations to the teaching staff at Alta for another fantastic year! Alta was fortunate to have Mrs. Elizabeth Cinque join the faculty as a science teacher who fit into the Alta culture immediately. Mrs. Cinque introduced and taught Forensic Science as part of the curriculum for the first time. The course was successful and well received by students and parents.

Alta programs continued to grow and evolve along with the changing needs of the student population. Personalized learning continued to be a focus; enriching academic learning with practical hands-on experiences in the community and the workplace. For the second year, Alta offered an eight-week intensive culinary program in collaboration with Bread for Life and The Outback restaurant in Southington. Students learned kitchen skills, food preparation and safety skills, customer service, and budgeting. Students completed performance-based assessments and obtained the Food Safety Certificate necessary to work in a commercial restaurant setting. Twelve students completed the program and gained valuable experience. This program was made possible through a grant awarded to Alta by the Southington Education Foundation.

Alta has offered and developed personalized student independent study programs for credit recovery in each of the past three years. These personalized pathways continued to be an area of growth and progress. The independent study programs were a successful initiative and continued expansion and development of the programs is planned for the 2019-2020 school year.

Eleven students reached the level of first and second honors during the 2018-2019 school year. All ten seniors who were eligible for graduation received their 2019 Southington High School Diploma's. Alta expanded the book club program, offering a book club during all four marking periods for credit recovery or for extra elective credit.

Plans to include a World Language offering were completed. Spanish will be offered at Alta during the 2019-2020 school year as part of the statewide mandate for students to earn twenty-five credits as a graduation requirement. The twenty-five credit requirement begins with the incoming freshmen who are the class of 2023.

Alta culminated the school year with a fundraiser benefitting Bread for Life. Every Alta student built a model rocket and donations were accepted from the community to sponsor the rockets. The rockets were successfully launched with all profits channeled to Bread for Life.

In the 2019-2020 school year and beyond, Alta will continue to focus on the transition program for potential graduates and continue to develop strategies to help Alta students become true 21st century learners. The staff and students will continue to foster connections between the community at-large and the district's student population. Alta will continue to educate and service students with a wide variety of academic, social, emotional, and behavioral needs.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019

JOSEPH A. DEPAOLO MIDDLE SCHOOL

Frank M. Pepe, Principal

Broad-Based Enhancements

As part of J. A. DePaolo Middle School's continued commitment to Emotional Intelligence (EI), a space in the school was converted to a "Mindful Room". This has proven helpful to many students and staff that need a tranquil environment to refocus and increase productivity. Many teachers utilized this space to assist students in regulating their emotions in a positive manner.

Kindness was a focus for DePaolo students this year. A student assembly presented by guest speaker Brian Williams entitled "Thank Kindness" was held. Students learned about carrying out acts of kindness without the desire of seeking recognition. After the presentation, DePaolo students took part in a "15-days of kindness" challenge including organizing a shoe drive for children in need in Kenya. DePaolo was able to collect and donate almost 20 full bags of shoes.

Celebrations

DePaolo continued to establish bonds between students and the community. This year, DePaolo expanded the Animal Helpers Club in the Leadership Program to include a partnership with Lewis Educational Agriculture Farm (LEAF). Students travelled to the farm on Bellevue Avenue to learn about caring for all the animals on site.

This year, DePaolo recognized 97 eighth grade students at the annual awards night. The guest speaker was Curtis Robinson, a Plantsville resident who is owner and President of C&R Development Company, the largest minority construction management company in the east. He delivered a presentation stressing positivity, hard work, and hope.

DePaolo proudly acknowledged teacher, Ms. Toni Rock, who was recognized as an outstanding Science Educator by the Connecticut Science Teachers Association. Ms. Rock was honored at an awards celebration that recognized various recipients from across Connecticut held at the New Haven Country Club.

Ongoing Work

DePaolo was selected to participate in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) assessment this year. The NAEP is the only assessment that measures what United States students know and can do in various subjects across the nation, states, and in some urban districts. Also known as "The Nation's Report Card", NAEP has provided important information about how students are performing academically. By participating in NAEP, DePaolo assisted in helping to inform decisions about how to improve the education system in our country.

Teachers focused attention on 21st century skills. These included Communication, Critical Thinking, Collaboration, and Creativity, which help form a foundation for successful learning. The focus is to prepare students for the future whether they pursue education beyond high school or enter the workforce directly after graduation.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019 – J. A. DePaolo Middle School

Emotional Intelligence implementation continued this year as DePaolo introduced the RULER concept to our students. RULER stands for Recognizing, Understanding, Labeling, Expressing, and Regulating emotion. It is an evidence-based approach for integrating social and emotional learning into schools that was developed by the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence. Summer curriculum work led to the implementation of six lessons that were delivered during advisory periods for all students. Students have many outside factors that can impact their learning and the best learning occurs when students are able to regulate their emotions. DePaolo began by teaching students to identify, control, and respond to their respective emotions.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019

JOHN F. KENNEDY MIDDLE SCHOOL

Richard Terino, Principal

Enhancements

Certified staff subdivided into 18 Instructional Learning Teams (ILTs) and began the concerted work of aligning instruction to four C's within the Vision of the Graduate (collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity). The objectives to increase daily cooperative learning and to increase the rigor of assessments through critical thinking and creativity in all curriculum areas has begun and will be dynamic and sustained.

The school instituted two half-year world language courses, Spanish and French, which complemented each other. These Exploratory World Language courses were designed for students whose involvement in literacy and/or math intervention and subsequent exit, hitherto, precluded the taking of world language. In an effort to enhance cultural awareness among the student body, Paul Vivian and Audley Donaldson returned to J. F. Kennedy Middle School (JFK) for the second consecutive year to conduct another three-day workshop on diversity at the beginning, middle and end of the school year. Their presentation, a mix of video and audience question/answer, was just one in a series of steps taken to address student stereotyping and mean behaviors.

Initiated last year, teachers continued receiving professional development in Emotional Intelligence (EI) with the end focus on teaching students to grow self-awareness. EI lessons became an integral topic presented during student advisory periods throughout the year.

Collaboration between the Library/Media specialist and Social Studies department continued its expansion as it added other teacher participants. The co-teaching instruction focused on student generation of higher order, research-related questions and strategies to avert inadvertent plagiarism.

Local community support for enrichment activities remains strong. The school's Annual Career Day offered grade seven students a rotation among three sessions of individual career choice of interest. Among 21 presenters were Peter Farr (Detective/CSI), Terri Parks (Zing Fitness), Dr. Megan McNicholas-Leggett (McNicholas Family Chiropractic), John Duffy (district science coordinator), Bonnie Plourde (Barnes Museum curator), and Southington Board of Education member, Colleen Clark (Zion Nursery School director).

The PTO sponsored an assembly for each grade: Freestyle Repertory Theater. These performers entertained with an interactive blend of comedy improvisation and curriculum-based subject matter. The Southington Drug Task Force also sponsored assemblies for grades seven and eight entitled "Point of View." This production sought to provide students a new perspective on the differences that separate them from their peers, their parents, and others around them while developing an appreciation of the diversity of race, language, and culture that make up a community.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019 – J. F. Kennedy Middle School

Celebrations

Southington's renowned artist, Dale Zarrella, delivered the message "Follow your dreams" to grade seven and grade eight assemblies on October 23. This former DePaolo Junior High student, who resides on Maui, presented samples of his artwork in video/PowerPoint and relayed Hawaiian folklore. He also conveyed personal stories of his life's journey, a journey where he has connected to so many notable people from NASCAR's Geoff Bodine to Pope Francis to National Geographic's Dewitt Jones.

In honor of Veterans Day, the school held its annual veteran's celebration which included service recognition and reception of any family member among the student body as well as assemblies by local veterans who shared their military experiences with students, inspiring the next generation to become guardians of freedom. Ms. Kathy Conway, retired Southington High School teacher and member of the Southington Historical Society, joined grade eight students through the coordinated efforts of Social Studies teacher, Mrs. Blaszczyk. Students were introduced to the poem "In Flanders Fields" from where the idea of poppies was stimulated. Ms. Conway showed students how to craft poppies. She distributed the names of all local WWI veterans and a poppy was made with a paper name strip entwined for each. The poppies were assembled into wreaths and ceremoniously given to the American Legion in celebration of Veterans Day. The school celebrated its annual A Taste of Culture at Kennedy. This year Myanmar, Canada, Italy, Poland, and Jordan were highlighted.

Students from Team 6A spread holiday cheer with the residents of LiveWell. They made friendship bracelets, colored Thanksgiving scenes, played games, made crafts, sang songs and danced. Students learned to dispel the stereotype of someone with dementia as out of touch with "fun." Young and old alike boogied down to Christmas carols and the Chicken Dance. Song, sounds, smiles, and dancing again abounded as the Kennedy Middle School National Junior Honor Society in conjunction with the Calendar House hosted a Valentine's Day dinner dance for seniors. Swing choir and band students entertained young and old alike along with a DJ spinning those "oldies but goodies."

Other notable humanitarian distinctions are as follows: Grade seven Mathematics students raised \$625 in donations for the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital by obtaining pledges to support participation in the hospital's math challenge. The First Baptist Church's Martin Luther King, Jr. Award was bestowed upon Mariah Davino; this student annually requests her birthday donations be made in dollars, which she then donates to the March of Dimes walk for babies. Caitlyn Hourigan was one of three state-wide winners in Senator Murphy's Martin Luther King, Jr. Essay Award. For the second consecutive year, Maggie Wernicki ran an EagleTHON at school that raised over \$500 to contribute to the annual Huskython drive for the Connecticut Children's Medical Center (CCMC).

Kennedy Middle School students continue to distinguish themselves academically among their peers locally and state-wide. Notable achievements are as follows: Dylan Remsen brought the district-wide spelling cup back to Kennedy Middle School after a five-year absence. In First Lego League regional competition, the JFK Robotics Team (Captain Mateo Torres and members Ethan Flood, Griffin O'Neill, Alisha Paul, Casey Pietruszewicz, Alyssa Polverari, Ellen Serensen, and Brennan Sullivan) brought home the Best Inspiration Trophy along with a golden ticket to the state

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019 – J. F. Kennedy Middle School

championships. The JFK Mathcounts Team competed in the Hartford Chapter Mathcounts Competition at University of Hartford. Under the direction of Gail Duffy, Mathcounts coach, Brian Kalwat, Alisha Paul, Jonathan Pillsbury, and Brody Watson placed tenth overall in the team competition. Alisha Paul moved on to the Countdown Round and took third place. Brody Watson individually placed in the top twenty-five percent overall. At UConn's Connecticut Middle School Science Bowl, the JFK Team of Emily Adams, Aiden Nielsen, Alisha Paul, Sachet Sahoo, and Mateo Torres recorded a 6-win, 3-loss, 1-tie record to qualify for the quarter finals. At the Connecticut Invention Convention, Chris Jozczyk, grade six, received the Pratt and Whitney/UTC Award "Moving the World Forward" for his invention: The Bio-Stamp. The eCybercats (Leighann Melanson, Lauren Mellitt, Emma Pintek, and Josh Pintek) captured first place in eCybermission competition for their work on oil spill clean-up. For the second consecutive year, Brian Kalwat of the JFK Stock Market Club placed tops in the InvestWrite competition held throughout Connecticut across grades six through eight. This seventh grader demonstrated knowledge of investing that surpassed thousands of other competitors. Ms. Elizabeth Reidel, representative of the Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association, announced and presented his award in a grade level assembly dedicated to this student.

Ongoing Work

Educating the whole child is the mission of any school. This involves teaching emotional awareness and intra-personal skills. Teaching of Emotional Intelligence, begun this year, shall be sustained in subsequent years.

The work of the Instructional Learning Teams (ILTs) in aligning instruction to four C's within the Vision of the Graduate (collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity) shall continue into its second year.

Allotting intervention time during the eight-period day does still pose the paramount challenge. A Smarter Balanced Assessment achievement gap between high needs students and the general population in literacy and math continues. The first gap beckons increased coordination in literacy instruction across the curriculum among Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science. The gap in Mathematics predicates the allotment of professional development time to refine co-teaching and cooperative learning in the Mathematics department.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019

WALTER A. DERYNOSKI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Jan Verderame, Principal

School Accomplishments

The 2018-2019 school year at Walter A. Derynoski Elementary School (Derynoski) focused on building a community of 21st century learners. The Derynoski community continued to collaborate with all stakeholders to support a successful and positive learning environment. Although all content areas were enhanced, a continued focus was placed on math and science. The Math Workshop model was consistently implemented across all grade levels. This model provided time for explicit group instruction, as well as, differentiated lessons that aligned with Core Standards. Instructional practice in science continued to correlate with the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) where new units and practices were implemented. Teachers embraced the new practice of inquiry-based learning that aligned to the integration of 21st century learning.

The Scientific Research Intervention Program (SRBI) continued to be a target area this year for both academics and behavior. Instructional tiers were well defined using this systematic approach to intervention. This year, the school psychologist presented an SRBI workshop to certified staff to review expectations at all tiered levels. Strategies to support positive behavior in the classroom were shared with all staff and a resource folder was developed for teachers to support this work.

Derynoski staff participated in professional learning centered on Emotional Intelligence (EI) using the RULER model (Recognizing, Understanding, Labeling, Expressing, and Regulating emotions) from the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence. The initial training helped staff acquire skills to recognize, understand, label, express and regulate emotions. All members of the Derynoski staff collaborated to develop a School Charter, a component of this work. The next phase of this initiative will be to roll the concepts, language, etc. out to all students. The expectation is that the work on Emotional Intelligence will complement the activities supported through Southington's Town-wide Effort to Promote Success (STEPS). These efforts will enhance the whole school positive support plan by increasing students' emotional intelligence and ultimately support a positive school climate.

Safety continued to be addressed this year at Derynoski School. Through a strong partnership with the Southington Police Department, training was completed to ensure that all staff and students understood the revised elements of the emergency plan. The School Safety Committee met three times with first responders to review the current plan and address next steps for September. First responders were present at both fire and lockdown drills to provide feedback. Also, the police and fire departments provided unannounced safety drills throughout the year.

The PTO continued to be an integral part of the Derynoski School community. Revenue from fundraising this year supported field trips, cultural arts activities, technology, and books for classroom libraries. In partnership with all families, Derynoski continued to focus on finding ways to have parents assume an active role in their child's school experience. Derynoski families experienced multiple opportunities to bond with other members of the Derynoski community. Monthly family nights, writer's celebrations, mystery readers, volunteer recognition and observation days encouraged parental involvement in the school.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019 – Derynoski Elementary School

Celebrations

Derynoski students and staff showed how they valued their community by making them an integral part of the school culture. Various events, such as the Veteran's Program and Guest Reader Day welcomed community members. The veterans were honored with a special program which included a "white table" ceremony. A yellow ribbon was placed on the Derynoski Veteran's Wall for Derynoski family members who served in the armed services. Guest Reader Day brought the community together with the theme "Mosaic of Experiences." Community members including elected officials, celebrities and veterans shared their love of reading with students. Also, guest readers shared their backgrounds and professions with their classroom audience. This was a highlight of the school year.

Kindergarten

The team implemented a social skills program that provided students with explicit instruction in targeted pragmatic skills. This was the kindergarten team's instructional learning goal. Through collaboration and self-reflection, students worked through specific social scenarios to problem solve appropriate outcomes. Math was a curriculum focus this year. The math coordinator provided the team with several workshops on the integration of strategies to ensure best practice. These professional learning opportunities provided information on the Math Workshop model and the planning and execution of a mini-lesson. The team continued to deliver interventions in literacy and math to meet individual student needs. The implementation of literacy centers proved to be successful with improved student engagement, motivation, and confidence in reading and writing skills. The kindergarten team provided workshops for incoming kindergarten students and their parents to ensure a smooth transition next year.

Grade 1

The Reader's and Writer's Workshop models were implemented to promote skills development and a love of reading. Writing instruction included narrative, poetry, and informational writing, as well as, opinion genres. The first-grade team was part of a controlled study for a new phonics program this year. This program was taught daily to bridge reading and writing. The phonics program is a researched based sequential word work program that was taught with fidelity by the first-grade team. The lessons taught students strategies on how, when, and why they could use the skills being taught. Every day the students were involved in activities that allowed them to take risks, explore, pretend, play, question, invent, sing, and laugh around the topic of how the English language works. The students worked in partnerships, small groups, and independently to complete target learning goals.

Grade 2

The Reader's and Writer's Workshop models were implemented with fidelity. Writing instruction included a new genre, lab reports, which was embraced by second graders. Patterns of Power, a grammar resource, was introduced and implemented to target appropriate sentence structure. This enhanced the writing program. The Math Workshop model was implemented this year with significant time spent in modifying and differentiating ready and supplemental materials to meet all students' individual needs. The team collaborated weekly, developing differentiated lessons and materials for math stations. Each station was comprised of three levels. The STEPS program supported a positive school climate and was generalized in all settings.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019 – Derynoski Elementary School

Grade 3

This year, the focus included new initiatives in math and science. The Math Workshop model was refined and teachers developed lessons and differentiated stations to support the targeted math concepts. Training was provided by the math coordinator with a focus on math mini-lessons. The Grade 3 team received training to support new Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) units. Students had the opportunity to create, communicate, collaborate and think critically throughout the science units. Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) investigations were planned to support the curricular concepts in science. More science units will be integrated in the 2019-2020 school year. Through the Reader's and Writer's Workshop model, integrated literacy celebrations were created with the focus on student work. A new program, "Patterns of Power" was implemented that focused on explicit instruction in grammar concepts.

Grade 4

The Grade 4 team engaged in professional learning opportunities with Columbia Teacher's College consultants throughout the year. Two new language arts units were introduced and Derynoski School continuing to be a district lab site for this effort. The team continued to utilize the narrative and informational learning progressions and self-assessment rubrics for students to set individualized reading and writing goals. Throughout Reader's Workshop, literacy specialists and tutors provided small group and individual support, which enhanced student learning. Technology continued to be a focus and students drafted, edited, and published their work using Google for Education Tools such as Google Drive. Explicit instruction in grammar and spelling was implemented to help students learn how to edit and revise their own work. In mathematics, fourth grade teachers continued to implement the Math Workshop with a mini-lesson and differentiated stations such as, teacher support, technology, fact development, math communication, number sense, and problem solving. Stations were differentiated to meet individual student's needs. The team's Individualized Learning Team (ILT) focused on problem solving skills to help students navigate multi-step problems. All subject areas were enhanced with technology such as, Greg Tang Math, Learn Zillion, Splash Math, Read Works, Freckle, Newsela and BrainPOP. The team continued to support student behavior using the STEPS / Second Step programs, as well as, the School Improvement Team's whole school plan for monthly celebrations.

Grade 5

Fifth grade continued to implement departmentalization of Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. This structure gave teachers the opportunity to become experts in their content area. The reading curriculum targeted more non-fiction reading and researched-based writing. Instructional learning goals aligned with school goals and focused on the Math Workshop model and NGSS. Resources supplied by the Math department were used to challenge higher level learners. In Science, students were instructed using NGSS models and new curriculum in space and the decomposition of matter. All students participated in the Invention Convention with several presenting at the district and state level. The fifth grade team continued to provide comprehensive interventions which consisted of explicit differentiated instruction in the areas of reading and math. The STEPS Developmental Assets were an integral part of the fifth-grade programs such as Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE), Veterans Recognition, and town meetings. Students continued the tradition of spearheading fundraisers to support various charities and organizations throughout the community.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019 – Derynoski Elementary School

Ongoing Work & School Improvement

Derynoski's work next year will include continuing the integration of strategies to align with 21st Century Skills. Integrating the Four C's (*Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Communication, and Creativity*) into practice will be a target all year with certified staff. Staff will continue to work with the rubrics aligned with these areas to understand the continuum of performance in each category. Teachers will identify areas in their practice that aligned with the Four C's. The School Improvement Team will focus on best practices in instruction to increase student achievement. The team will analyze fall data and collaborate with grade level teams to determine instructional learning targets.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019

FLANDERS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Katie T. Guerrette, Principal

School Accomplishments

Flanders Elementary School is part of a diverse neighborhood with a strong connection to its families and the greater Southington community. Flanders continued to connect with the greater community by supporting a variety of organizations. Flanders supported Bread for Life with food drives throughout the year and tending to the community garden throughout the summer. Flanders was proud to have placed fourth in fundraising for the Southington Relay for Life this year raising over \$5,600. Also, Flanders contributed to the Sloper Plunge to raise money for scholarships for students to go to YMCA Camp Sloper. In addition, Flanders held the 14th annual Veterans' Day Ceremony with a luncheon provided by Mission BBQ for the veterans. Flanders collected many items to donate to the Rocky Hill Veteran's Home. The Flanders staff established a school-wide focus on utilizing components of Responsive Classroom, implementing the morning meeting to build classroom community, responsive language to remind, redirect, and reinforce student actions, and the use of logical consequences. Flanders strived for social and academic excellence and provided students with a wide range of opportunities to showcase their learning and skills.

Celebrations

Flanders School held the second annual *One School, One Book* with the whole community reading Frindle by Andrew Clements. This shared literacy experience was a wonderful way to build the home-school connection promote family literacy. Throughout the event, families were assigned chapters to read and trivia questions were posed at school. Students who answered the trivia questions correctly were entered into weekly raffles for books, notebooks, and frindles (pens). At the end of the event, a school wide Frindle celebration ensued filled with literacy activities for all.

Flanders hosted several exciting events with Southington public figures and community members. In the winter, Salvatore Romano, Major League Baseball Player for the Cincinnati Reds, who graduated from Southington High School, spoke to Flanders' fourth and fifth graders about perseverance and hard work. In addition, Miss Southington, Taylor Lemme, visited Flanders' Kindergarteners, first graders, and second graders during Food Allergy Awareness Week to teach about signs of anaphylaxis and what to do if you see a friend having an allergic reaction. In May, students participated in an Egg Drop which is a Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM) Challenge. Students in second grade through fifth grade used creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, and communication to design a contraption to keep eggs safe when being dropped from a fire truck. The Southington Fire Department brought their truck to Flanders and the eggs were dropped from a height of thirty feet. Eggs that survived the first drop moved onto the second round, being dropped from one hundred feet. Eleven Flanders Teams created contraptions that survived the one hundred-foot drop.

Flanders Southington Town-wide Effort to Promote Success (STEPS) representatives attended a Leadership Conference and implemented their learning as they planned and ran the Flanders' Town Meetings, helping students and staff to learn about the STEPS Assets. One particularly exciting town meeting was focused on the asset of Positive View of Personal Future through the lens of Career Day. Many students enjoyed dressing up to show what they want to be when they grow up, and parents were invited in to share information about their careers.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019 – Flanders Elementary School

The Flanders PTO continued to support the school and make Flanders a wonderful place for students and staff. This year, the PTO “flipped” (remodeled) a fourth-grade classroom. The classroom received a beautiful facelift with new decorations, curtains, and supplies. The PTO generously sponsored multiple cultural arts programs this year including, Destiny Africa a Children’s Choir from Uganda, an author from Alaska, Shelley Gill, and Li-Liu a classic Chinese Acrobat. The Flanders PTO Drama Club staged another wonderful production. This year, the show was *Aladdin Jr.* where a very talented group of student actors and actresses performed in an entertaining show with fantastic singing, dancing, and acting. Flanders was grateful to have such a dedicated group of parents and high school volunteers who made this production possible.

Kindergarten

It was a fabulous year in Kindergarten. Students became super readers, writers and mathematicians. They learned to navigate relationships and solve conflicts with their peers throughout the day and especially during social centers, lunch, and recess. Kindergarteners took a field trip to the Beardsley Zoo and learned about the behaviors of many living things. At the end of the year, the Kindergarteners shared their beautiful voices and amazing writing with their families at the Flanders Kindergarten Showcase.

Grade 1

First grade students enjoyed the company of family during the monthly Fridays For Families, where reading and writing were shared and celebrated. First graders took a field trip to Hungerford Nature Park, which tied into the Science curriculum unit on “Animals and Life Cycles”. They had first-hand experience in the classroom with life cycles of chicks, mealworms, and tadpoles. First graders became word detectives with interactive and playful word study with the new Phonics Units of Study.

Grade 2

Second grade had an exciting year. Writing brought many new opportunities for second graders. The nonfiction unit taught them to research a topic. They created a poster and presented their new learning to their families. During the fairytale unit, students read scripts, created props and scenery, and performed their plays for guests. The second grade visited the Connecticut Science Center, collected items for the Meriden Humane Society, and planted vegetables in the Flanders garden.

Grade 3

Third Graders enjoyed becoming research scientists and creating collaborative group projects using technology during the nonfiction unit. In math, students strived to become fluent with multiplication facts as well as practicing previously taught strategies through interactive Web 2.0 tools such as Kahoot and Math Jeopardy.

Grade 4

Fourth grade students were exposed to Math Workshop this year, which is a differentiated approach to enhance students' understanding of math. Students took part in a mini-lesson, focused on one specific skill or strategy before breaking off into groups. Student groups rotated between working in small groups with the teacher, using technology, and applying math skills with hands on games and strategy problems.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019 – Flanders Elementary School

Grade 5

Fifth grade students participated in Explorer Boat Races, Colonial Living Museum, a Sturbridge Village field trip, Invention Convention, Drug Awareness Resistance Education (DARE), daily math centers, Readers' and Writer's Workshops, and leadership clubs which include: Southington Town-wide Effort to Promote Success (STEPS), Youth Empowering Service, Peer Role Models, Physical Education Training, Peer Tutoring, News Crew, and I've Been Framed Art Committee. Fifth graders enjoyed many leadership opportunities.

Special Areas

Students really flourished in advancing their technology skills in Library Media sessions. Grades 3-5 learned the value of powerful passwords. First and second graders saw first-hand the magic of the World Wide Web. They discovered how it allowed them to connect with different people and visit faraway places without leaving the comfort of their own school. Kindergarteners were introduced to an app called SeeSaw, which is a Learning Management System for younger students. Students became quite tech savvy over the last 181 days. In Physical Education, students learned about team work and collaboration through a variety of activities throughout the year from cup stacking to learning the basic principles of basketball with each activity offering an opportunity to demonstrate positive sportsmanship. In art, students had opportunities to use a variety of mediums and styles. Students learned about print making, weaving, wooden relief sculptures, drawing, painting, and much more. Students were proud to have their artwork displayed in the hallways at Flanders and at the John Weichsel Municipal Center. In music, students enjoyed vocal exploration through high and low tones, fast and slow, rhythmic sounds, and in the upper grades they used solfege syllables. Students in grades four and five performed beautifully in vocal music concerts, and students in grade three were right on key when they performed in a recorder concert. Instrumental music kept busy with a large number of students participating in either band or orchestra. The fourth graders learned the musical scale for their instrument and worked on eighth note rhythms. The fifth graders refined their rhythm reading and learned about dynamics and the challenges associated with playing at softer volumes. Instrumental music put on two impressive concerts with students demonstrating all they learned.

Ongoing Work and School Improvement

Flanders will continue to use data-driven decision making when planning for the instructional needs of all learners. In addition, the use of the Instructional Learning Team Model will allow staff the opportunity to analyze instructional needs and grow as learners themselves. School teams will continue to refine the Scientific Research-Based Intervention (SRBI) process and student interventions, ensuring all students needs are met. Flanders will continue to utilize the Responsive Classroom approach to foster a positive school climate for all. Flanders teachers have been trained in Emotional Intelligence and will bring this skill set to students and families in the 2019-2020 school year. Flanders continues to focus on fostering a safe and respectful community for learning, valuing kindness and hard work.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2029

WILLIAM H. HATTON SCHOOL

Robert Garry, Principal

Accomplishments

William H. Hatton Elementary School continued a strong commitment to excellence in teaching and learning again this year. The PTO remained dedicated to supporting the school community through enrichment activities, cultural arts programs, and a variety of family night events, including: two very successful book fairs, supported arts enrichment programs, a pasta supper, bingo night, family movie nights, an ice cream social, a family picnic, and collaboration with Hatton's physical education teacher to run an amazing "outer space" themed field day for all classes.

The Hatton Drama Club, with the assistance of several talented high school student directors and dedicated parents, performed *The Little Mermaid Junior*. This is the third year for the drama club and it highlighted the amazing skills of Hatton's fourth and fifth grade students. Hatton School's continued success was due to an amazing group of teachers and parents who willingly gave time to assist in classrooms and school events, and to raise funds that supported enhancements to the school that benefited all children.

Hatton School received a generous grant from the Southington Education Foundation to create a Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM) Lab. This space will provide all students from pre-K through grade 5 with high-tech learning opportunities and will support development of 21st Century Learning Skills (critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity). The STEM Lab will be developed by teachers and Hatton families and come online in the fall of 2019.

Celebrations

Hatton School continued to focus on maintaining strong home-school connections and recognizing the contributions of both students and staff. The school theme this year was "Hatton students and teachers are rock stars," complete with rock music for our opening day with staff and even some parents dressed as famous musicians. A wonderful tradition at Hatton is the *Friday Phone Call*. Each week the principal recognized a student from every class by calling their parents (*right from the classroom*) to celebrate their success. This served as a great motivator for the students and was a meaningful way to recognize and reinforce positive contributions to the school community. Over 700 calls were made this year, to the delight of Hatton families.

Preschool

The Wrinn Preschool Center at Hatton School has been actively incorporating the new Connecticut Early Learning Development Standards to guide the preschool curriculum. Staff members received formal training this year and will be revising preschool report cards to align with these standards next year. The preschool teachers successfully collaborated on an instructional leadership project to develop specific math reinforcement materials for use with students who were struggling to meet grade level benchmarks. The use of fifth-grade volunteers as play partners and mentors for the preschool students continued to be a positive experience for all.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019 – William H. Hatton School

Kindergarten

Kindergarten students had their first experience with public speaking with each child having a speaking part in the Flag Day Program. Students wrote an All About Flag Day book to go along with the “All About” writing unit. Students had the opportunity to celebrate their grandparents on “Special Person’s Day” by sharing a story and making unique placemats for their special person. Students visited Lincoln Theatre at the University of Hartford to watch a performance of Pete the Cat. This trip was a great opportunity to see how books can come alive and to learn more about the characters.

Grade 1

The first-grade classes were able to incubate eggs and hatch chickens as part of their science unit. The classes learned about animal life cycles by observing frogs and mealworms go through metamorphosis. Students performed the play “Once Upon a Lily Pad” for the school and held an evening performance for families. The annual first grade play was a great opportunity for students to strengthen listening and speaking skills. Each first-grade class held a Meet the Authors celebration to highlight all the writing that the students completed.

Grade 2

The second-grade team enhanced student learning in science by having the classes attend the New Britain Museum of Art. Students completed a project modeling the style of Georgia O’Keefe and her flowers that aligned with the plant unit. Students were taught how to write a lab report, as well as conduct experiments using the Scientific Method. This was a challenging task, but students enjoyed the challenge and produced great work. To support the instructional leading team work on enhancing sentence structure, the grade two teachers continued to embed the “Right Writes” curriculum into daily word work. To strengthen the home-school connection, parents were invited to read to their child's classroom to celebrate Read Across America.

Grade 3

The third-grade classes completed an engaging new science unit on the states of matter. Students learned about the different physical features of Connecticut, created their own Connecticut maps, and presented them to classmates. Students also focused on reading chapter books, including various mysteries, biographies, and fiction/nonfiction stories. Students went on a field trip to the State Capitol to complete the government unit in social studies. In math, students learned how to multiply and divide using different strategies. Students performed the annual Turkey Tango Dance for their families and gave speeches about how Thanksgiving is celebrated.

Grade 4

The fourth-grade teachers focused their efforts on strengthening teachers’ abilities to implement Math Workshop practices. Teachers attended numerous workshops (both district-wide and in-house) with the math specialist and collaborated with grades three and five to create engaging math center activities. In reading, grade four teachers worked with the staff developer from Teachers College on conferencing, small group work, and to unpack new units in both reading (Reading the Revolution) and writing (Bringing History to Life). Grade four students visited YMCA Camp Sloper for a Science Day, and the Connecticut Science Center to view the exhibits relating to the science curriculum. Students performed a choral concert in May.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019 – William H. Hatton School

Grade 5

The fifth-grade classes held an annual author's tea party in November. The focus was on personal narratives as well as informational text. Grade five students traveled to Sturbridge Village to support the Social Studies curriculum. At the end of the school year, the fifth-grade team welcomed Veterans to the school for a Memorial Day and Flag Day presentation. The Veterans present a flag every year to Hatton school at this annual event. Teachers engaged in a yearlong project with their colleagues to enhance teacher learning related to math workshop practices.

Ongoing Work and School Improvement

Hatton teachers will continue to work on enhancing student and teacher learning in the coming year. The leadership and data teams will review achievement data at all levels and make recommendations for instructional resources and professional development. The SRBI (Scientific Research-based Intervention) team will continue to monitor student progress and work with families to implement strategies that will increase student learning. Hatton School remains committed to establishing and maintaining strong relationships with families in order to insure a positive learning experience for all students.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019

URBIN T. KELLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Marilyn Kahl, Principal

Urbin T. Kelley Elementary School students and staff had an excellent 2018-2019 school year. Teachers' commitment to their own continued learning was evidenced by their participation in numerous professional development workshops in Reading, Mathematics, and Science as well as collaboration during grade level common planning time and Instructional Learning Team (ILT) meetings. As a direct result, student growth was evident in all subject areas across every grade level. Through the dedicated efforts of the PTO, school staff and families, and the Southington community, Kelley School was the recipient of a brand-new playground after taking second place in a national contest sponsored by Terracycle and Colgate. Special thanks go to the many parents who worked tirelessly with voting, collections, and installation of the new playground. Kelley School continued to promote learning and enrichment beyond the school day. Many students participated in after school programs including the Math Olympiad and CyberShamrocks Robotics Teams, Running Club, Art Club, Drama Club, Chamber Singers, Southington Town-wide Effort to Promote Success (STEPS), Safety Patrol and the Unified Sports Team. The Kelley School PTO worked hard all year to provide funding for cultural arts activities and transportation to all field trips for students. A Welcome Back Picnic, Holiday Fair, two Scholastic Book Fairs, Movie Nights, and Fifth Grade Recognition were all very successful due to the efforts of our PTO. For the fifteenth year, Kelley School, once again, took part in Math-A-Thon, an academic fundraiser to benefit St. Jude Children's Hospital, raising over \$14,000 to benefit young children with cancer.

Kindergarten

A strong focus on academics paired with opportunities for creative play and social skill development provide the foundation for kindergarten instruction and learning. The youngest students at Kelley School demonstrated excellent growth in all academic areas this school year. Eighty-five percent (85%) of students met or exceeded the end of year benchmark in Reading as measured by the Fountas & Pinnell Reading Assessment. Use of centers provided individual and small group differentiation to meet students' needs. A field trip in the fall and an in school "Curious Creatures" program supplemented the Social Studies and Science curriculum. Readers' Theater presentations to families highlighted the students' growth in Reading. Kindergarten Graduation was a wonderful celebration of a great year of learning.

Grade 1

Readers' and Writers' Workshop instruction and success was driven by the Lucy Calkins units of study and resources. The students continued to grasp concepts and skills at their "just right" reading level. The implementation of Mathematics centers supplemented the Ready Math program and provided further differentiation of instruction and student work. A trip to the Beardsley Zoo in May was the culmination of the first-grade Science unit on animals that included monitoring mealworms and tadpoles in their habitats. A highlight of the year for first graders was the hatching of chicks in late May. A Mother's Day program and Readers' and Writers' celebrations provided the opportunity for students to share songs and academic accomplishments with parents.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019 – Urbin T. Kelley School

Grade 2

Implementation of units of study in Readers' and Writers' Workshop continue to drive literacy instruction in second grade. A new resource, *Patterns of Power*, supplemented instruction in the Conventions of English. More work on its implementation will continue next year. Mathematics Centers provide differentiated and engaging activities for students, with lessons aligned to the grade level curriculum and the Common Core State Standards. An updated Ready Math Program will be introduced next year. Science continued to provide many opportunities for problem-solving and hands-on learning. The air and weather unit culminated with a field trip to the Everwonder Museum, a day filled with activities that sparked students' imaginations in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).

Grade 3

New Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) units of study were introduced in third grade this year following teacher professional development with Mr. John Duffy, district Science Coordinator. Students enjoyed experimenting with *Oobleck* as they learned the properties of solids and liquids. Continued understanding of the reading progressions and character traits helped drive instruction in Readers' Workshop. Students made notable progress on the STAR Reading and Mathematics Assessments this year. STAR assessments by Renaissance Learning are standardized assessments. Third grade Social Studies students celebrated with a field trip to the Eli Whitney museum and an Open House during which students shared their Connecticut map projects with each other and parents.

Grade 4

Fourth grade students were introduced to two new Language Arts units; Journalism in Writers' Workshop and Historical Fiction Book Clubs in Readers' Workshop. These units involved book clubs, which led to the development of deeper communication among students to identify the themes and author's purpose of the texts they read. Extensive professional development in this area was provided by Columbia Teachers' College. Teachers were able to apply those professional learning experiences directly back to their instruction in the classroom. Two trips to Camp Sloper allowed for enrichment and study of habitats and ecosystems, erosion and weathering. Several students participated in the town-wide Invention Convention, presenting their inventions at Southington High School for judging. Fourth graders took a field trip to Old Sturbridge Village. A day at this outdoor history museum was a wonderful way to combine learning from social studies and the historical fiction unit of study.

Grade 5

Fifth graders had a great year to end their time at Kelley School. Departmentalization of Writing, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies instruction helped prepare students for the middle school model of instruction. All three teachers knew every student, which allowed for strong collaboration and communication related to any student's academic, social, and emotional well-being. New NGSS Science units were successfully implemented. These units fostered students' self-discovery through open-ended questioning. Students spent time wondering and noticing as they began to know and process information. There was a clear link to the writing units of study as students stated a claim and found evidence to support it as a result of their inquiry and logical reasoning. Math Workshop was implemented allowing students to work independently or in small groups to strengthen their knowledge and understanding of key math concepts. Invention Convention, the Writing Celebration, Math Fair and field trip to Mystic Seaport were highlights of the year.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019

PLANTSVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Stephen F. Bergin, Principal

School Accomplishments

Plantsville School continued to grow as a school community with children coming from various parts of the country and with the district's participation in the Open Choice Program. The staff continued to work with the mutually revised Continuous Improvement Plan. Literacy and Numeracy goals were directly related to Common Core State Standards as well as district benchmarks. Data meetings were held to review and monitor ongoing student progress. These meetings assisted teachers as they aligned their instructional goals based on the results of individual student data and action plans. The teachers used differentiated instruction based on student need as it developed in the instructional setting. Both Writers' and Readers' Workshop were fully implemented in all classrooms. All teachers were fully trained in both models. Writing skills were emphasized across subject areas, as children wrote in all classes every day. Small flexible groups within the Mathematics classrooms were based on student need as identified by individual and benchmark assessments. Identified areas of weakness were addressed by the literacy specialist, special educators, and intervention tutors. Since the Plantsville Elementary School facility is full of diverse technology, teachers and students use the technology daily to further instruction and learning. Teachers, paraeducators and students used interactive Smart Televisions, document cameras, and computer technology in all teaching areas, including the Library/Media center. The computer carts were used continuously within the classrooms.

The Plantsville faculty demonstrated a strong commitment to the academic programs. Teachers continued to attend professional development on Columbia University's Reading Model of instruction. Mathematics workshops were attended as the school moved forward with the common core in these areas. Several teachers continued their education with college courses, and many requested attendance at professional development opportunities outside of those offered by the district. They shared important information as "lead trainers" with staff upon their return. Plantsville staff gave back professionally, serving as cooperating teachers for young student teachers and as team mentors for new teachers. Plantsville School has received training from the Yale Center of Emotional Intelligence that assisted in the implementation of RULER skills (Recognizing, Understanding, Labeling, Expressing, and Regulating emotions). The focus on the emotional intelligence of staff and students was instrumental in creating a positive and safe climate and culture.

Plantsville continued to take pride in Music, Art, and Physical Education programs; the school held two instrumental and two vocal concerts. Physical Education classes integrated literacy and numeracy goals. Science and Social Studies objectives were integrated with a variety of unique learning centers. Teachers integrated their teaching of nonfiction with Social Studies and Science. Children learned to delve deeper into various areas of print and media, integrate information, and make arguments through debate.

Plantsville School has been fortunate to have a strong and supportive PTO. Along with cultural programs, the PTO continued to be active in many areas. The PTO sponsored two book fairs, an ice cream social, and funded Field Day and class field trips where real life experiences were

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019 – Plantsville School

provided outside of the classroom. Through Plantsville School's partnership with Calendar House and The Summit, students continued their outreach to older adults in the community.

Student Achievements

Kindergarten

Kindergarten students experienced a balanced program of literacy and numeracy. The highlight of the Social Studies curriculum was a visit from the Southington Fire Department as the students were given the opportunity to explore a fire engine while learning what these community members do for them. Academic growth was significant as 94% of students met end of year expectations in Reading goals.

Grade 1

The first-grade literacy program was highlighted in the spring by participation in the school-wide Young Authors' celebration. Family members were invited to the school and each child had an opportunity to read published writing pieces. The first-grade curriculum was enhanced by visits from community helpers such as Southington's Fire Department, a local dentist and a visit from nurses to discuss illness prevention behaviors such as hand-washing.

Grade 2

Second graders learned how to write Science Lab Reports in Writer's Workshop. After reading about force and motion to acquire background knowledge, the students learned "How to write like a Scientist". Cars and ramps were used to explore the concept of force and motion. Each second-grade student planted a plant in the garden that was provided by Lewis Educational Agricultural Farm (LEAF). The plants will harvest flowers and vegetables in the fall. In Science, students studied plants in the spring and this activity brought the community resources and Science curriculum together. Classes grew crops to share within the school community.

Grade 3

Third grade students were immersed in a literature rich environment covering a wide range of genres. They read and wrote daily with specific objectives helping to guide the experience. In the area of Mathematics, students were exposed to many new concepts and were provided the opportunity to grow their knowledge base and skill set while moving through the concrete, representational, and abstract stages of learning. In Science, groups participated with their peers in the hands-on exploration of a myriad of topics while gaining a better understanding of the scientific method.

Grade 4

Fourth graders had monthly celebrations in Reading and Writing, through Writers' Workshop, Best writing was shared with peers, and conversations about Best books were held. Also, students presented completed writing to their parents during Young Author Day. The annual Star Gazing night was a huge success. Science was enhanced by participation in the Connecticut Invention Convention where several Plantsville School students achieved state recognition. Grade four learners visited YMCA Camp Sloper twice with Science related topics. An in-school field trip that integrated Science was a big hit with all learners.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019 – Plantsville School

Grade 5

Fifth grade students participated in the election for Connecticut's First Student Governor. A Plantsville School student, Reilly Bard, was one of the seven state finalists, and all participants traveled to the Old State House in Hartford to listen to state and federal legislators speak. Students learned to write in a variety of formats, including research-based historical and argument essays. These units were cross-curricular, combining Reading, Science, and Social Studies with the writing process.

Continuous Work and Growth

Teachers and administration will continue to use data-driven decision-making to determine individual learning plans for students. The use of Scientific Research-Based Intervention (SRBI) has strengthened individualized intervention for students as Plantsville School continued to meet the needs of all learners. A focus on character development was a school-wide goal as the staff worked as one to integrate the Responsive Classroom approach within each classroom while incorporating morning meetings. Teachers participated in Emotional Intelligence (EI) training from the Yale Center of Emotional Intelligence. They used this skill set within their classrooms as they started to build the student's emotional intelligence. Smarter Balanced Assessments were taken into consideration as teachers wrote their goals. The expansion of leveled classroom libraries will continue, especially in the area of nonfiction. The school will continue work as an inclusive setting, so that every child is in his or her least restrictive environment. The school community will strive to become even more technologically literate, updating web pages and using technology, when appropriate, to enhance student learning.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019

SOUTH END ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Erin Nattress, Principal

School Accomplishments

South End Elementary School had a successful 2018-2019 school year. Students were held to high standards continually both academically and civically. Teachers encouraged students to persevere through challenges. Teachers used a differentiated approach to instruction to ensure the needs of all students were met across all subject areas. To continue growing the Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI) structure, teachers collaborated with Mathematics and Literacy specialists to plan for classroom-based, tiered interventions.

The South End Staff guided by a Lead Team focused on Emotional Intelligence throughout the year. Time was spent learning ways to identify and regulate emotions. A staff charter was developed for a common understanding of how the staff wanted to feel while working.

The South End PTO provided another year of community-building activities as well as cultural arts programs to enhance student learning. The PTO sponsored two successful book fairs, which resulted in large classroom library donations. The South End Elementary School community came together for a Welcome Back Picnic and an Ice Cream Social. The PTO held a Gala to fundraise for a new iPad Cart, which was purchased at the end of the school year. South End students will benefit from this new technology. The PTO sponsored many after school clubs along with the Drama Club production of *Aladdin Kids*.

Community involvement is a priority at South End School. A total of nine jumpers participated in the Annual Sloper Plunge. The school sponsored events to raise money for families in need. Our Southington Town-wide Effort to Promote Success (STEPS) team coordinated a food drive to support Southington Youth Services.

Celebrations

South End held the Third Annual *One School, One Book* with the whole community reading The World According to Humphrey by Betty G. Birney. The program was kicked off during Read Across America. Related literacy and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) activities were instituted for building comprehension, vocabulary and strong conversations about literacy. Two teachers established the South End Cyber Skyhawks Robotics Team. The team worked hard together and competed in their first competition. Two students from South End were recognized at the State Invention Convention for their creative innovations. Fifth grade STEPS Ambassadors participated in a Leadership Conference. They implemented newly acquired leadership skills by organizing monthly Asset Building Town Meetings.

Kindergarten

Students had explicit instruction through whole group lessons, small strategy groups and individual intervention in literacy. Teachers participated in a controlled study, implementing the Columbia University Teacher's College Phonics Units. Upon exiting Kindergarten, ninety-seven percent (97%) of students were reading at grade level. Students participated in hands-on learning with field trips to Lewis Farms and the West Hartford Science Museum. Kindergarten students took an active part in planting the South End Community Garden.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019 – South End Elementary School

Grade 1

First grade students made excellent growth in Reading this year. In Reading, ninety-four percent (94%) of students met or exceeded grade level as measured by the STAR Reading Assessment. Teachers participated in a controlled study, implementing the Columbia University Teacher's College Phonics Units. Teachers implemented differentiated Mathematics centers. The first-grade students experienced hands-on learning as they watched their chicks hatch and tadpoles turn into frogs. Additionally, Indian Rock came to South End for a Fabulous Frogs presentation. Students attended a performance of *Henry and Mudge* at Lincoln Theater.

Grade 2

The second-grade team focused on differentiation in Literacy to promote student growth. At the end of the year, eighty-two percent (82%) of students met or exceeded grade level as measured by the STAR Reading Assessment. Students demonstrated excellent gains in the area of fluency resulting from individualized goals in this area. Also, the team focused on building reading stamina to prepare for the rigor of grade three. Students participated in a field trip to Nature's Art in Oakdale to support the Science curriculum. The second-grade team showcased student writing for parents at a celebration in June.

Grade 3

Third grade students experienced a year full of growth in Literacy with a shift to reading for meaning and interpretation. One hundred percent (100%) of third grade students met the end of year standard as measured by the STAR assessment. Strong conversations about text were fostered with classroom book clubs. Teachers collaborated with the Mathematics specialist to differentiate mathematics centers. The grade three teachers piloted new Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) units promoting inquiry and communication. They ended the year with a hands-on learning field trip to Indian Rock.

Grade 4

Fourth grade students worked hard to develop critical thinking skills around text. At the end of the year, eighty-two percent (82%) of students met or exceeded the end of year reading standard as measured by the STAR assessment. Students were able to extend their learning with a field trip to Camp Sloper to support the science curriculum. They participated in a field trip to Sturbridge Village to support the Historical Fiction reading and writing units. Students connected their journalism unit to STEPS by creating a whole school newspaper and broadcast to celebrate the success of the school year.

Grade 5

Fifth grade teachers worked hard to prepare students for the transition to middle school. Teachers used small strategy groups to target specific skills. Students worked hard to continue growth in Reading. Ninety-seven percent (97%) of students met or exceeded the end of year standard as measured by the STAR assessment. The Science teacher continued to work with the district Science Coordinator to integrate NGSS units. All students participated in the Invention Convention. Students visited Mystic Seaport in May to enhance the curriculum.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019 – South End Elementary School

Ongoing Work & School Improvement

Much of the work from the 2018-2019 school year will continue with solid momentum. All staff members are prepared to start implementing Emotional Intelligence with students and families. There will be a focus on strengthening social emotional readiness for students. Also, the staff will focus on improving classroom-based tiered interventions in both Literacy and Mathematics with the support of District specialists. Teachers in Grade two will continue to grow the implementation of the Columbia University Teacher's College Phonics units. Teachers in Kindergarten and Grade one will collaborate with the Mathematics specialist to implement Ready Classroom. Overall, goals will center always on creating a well-supported and mindful learning environment for all learners.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019

WILLIAM M. STRONG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Melissa Barbuto, Principal

Enhancements

The 2018-2019 school year was another year full of amazing accomplishments at William M. Strong Elementary School. Strong Elementary School continued to focus on cultivating a positive school climate that promoted 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. Through the Instructional Learning Team (ILT) process, staff developed a strong professional culture that focused on collaborative professional learning to improve instructional practices and promote student learning.

Celebrations

Kindergarten

Kindergarten 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”, kindergarten teachers implemented key components of Emotional Intelligence through the creation of classroom Charters and checking in on the Mood Meter, which had a positive impact on student’s social and emotional growth. Kindergarten teachers collaborated with their colleagues through the ILT process to research best practices in the area of phonics. Due to this professional collaboration, the team was proud to report that eighty-seven percent (87%) of all Kindergarten students ended the year meeting or exceeding end of year expectations as measured by the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS).

Grade 1

First 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”, first grade teachers implemented key components of Emotional Intelligence through the creation of classroom Charters and checking in on the Mood Meter, which had a positive impact on student’s social and emotional growth. First grade teachers collaborated with their colleagues through the ILT process to research best practices in the area of Mathematics by implementing Math Workshop. Due to this professional collaboration, the team was proud to report that ninety-seven percent (97%) of all first-grade students ended the year at or above grade level expectations in Mathematics.

Grade 2

Second 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”, second grade teachers implemented key components of Emotional Intelligence through the creation of classroom Charters and checking in on the Mood Meter, which had a positive impact on student’s social and emotional growth. Second grade teachers encouraged students to develop a growth mindset and incorporated flexible seating into their classrooms. Second grade

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019 – Strong Elementary School

teachers collaborated with their colleagues through the ILT process to research best practices in the area of Mathematics by implementing Math Workshop. Due to this professional collaboration, the team was proud to report that ninety-one percent (91%) of all second-grade students ended the year at or above grade level expectations in math.

Grade 3

Third 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”, third grade teachers implemented key components of Emotional Intelligence through the creation of classroom Charters and checking in on the Mood Meter, which had a positive impact on student’s social and emotional growth. Third grade teachers collaborated with their colleagues through the ILT process to research best practices in the area of Mathematics by implementing Math Workshop. Due to this professional collaboration, the team was proud to report that ninety-five percent (95%) of all third-grade students ended the year at or above grade level expectations in Mathematics and eighty-six percent (86%) of all third-grade students scored proficient or higher on the Mathematics portion of the Smarter Balanced Assessment.

Grade 4

Fourth 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”, fourth grade teachers implemented key components of Emotional Intelligence through the creation of classroom Charters and checking in on the Mood Meter, which had a positive impact on student’s social and emotional growth. Fourth grade teachers collaborated with their colleagues through the ILT process to research best practices in the area of Mathematics by implementing Math Workshop. Due to this professional collaboration, the team was proud to report that eighty-six percent (86%) of all fourth-grade students ended the year at or above grade level expectations in mathematics and seventy-six percent (76%) of all fourth-grade students scored proficient or higher on the Mathematics portion of the Smarter Balanced Assessment.

Grade 5

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”, fifth grade teachers implemented key components of Emotional Intelligence through the creation of classroom Charters and checking in on the Mood Meter, which had a positive impact on student’s social and emotional growth. Fifth grade teachers collaborated with their colleagues through the ILT process to research best practices in the area of Mathematics and Science by implementing Math Workshop and new Science units.

Ongoing Work

As the school continues to work on creating a positive school climate, staff will continue to deepen their understanding of Emotional Intelligence. Staff will continue to expand the work in this area by introducing the next anchor tools of Emotional Intelligence to students and parents. Teachers will continue to utilize the Responsive Classroom component “Morning Meeting” as a structure to implement Emotional Intelligence and build a positive school community. The staff looks forward to continuing the work with Instructional Learning Teams next year, focusing on deepening teachers understanding of exemplary practice within Math Workshop and Phonics instruction.

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019

REUBEN E. THALBERG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Katie Reeves, Principal

Introduction

Reuben E. Thalberg Elementary School had a successful and exciting 2018-2019 school year. The staff worked hard to help students build life-long learning habits, increase student achievement in academics and social/emotional development, and increase an appreciation for art and music. Students were held to high standards academically, socially and behaviorally. The students at Thalberg demonstrated growth throughout the year and reached for success based on their individualized goals.

The Thalberg faculty and staff provided club activities to enrich the lives of students. Many of these clubs included community involvement and volunteering. The recycling club worked hard at collecting cans and bottles and even made stuffed monsters out of old sweaters. The ABC/STEPS Club volunteered in the primary grades to serve as role models and mentors for the youngest learners. The Orchard Valley Garden Club partnered with Thalberg students to beautify the gardens and create flower arrangements to hand out in the community.

The Thalberg PTO brought exciting programs with important messages about anti-bullying to the students this year. They sponsored two successful book fairs in which proceeds went to provide teachers with new books and supplies for their classrooms. Thalberg School families participated in special events such as Family Fun Night, Game Night, Special Person Dance and Trunk or Treat. The PTO sponsored the Drama Club production of Willy Wonka, Jr., Running Club, Bowling Club and Chess Club.

Celebrations

A group of fifth graders took it upon themselves to raise money for a water well in South Sudan after reading the book A Long Walk to Water. These students were so moved by the story that they planned fundraising events, created a bulletin board and held an assembly. They raised over \$3,000. The fourth-grade teachers were recipients of the Fund for Teachers Grant. They will be traveling abroad this summer to Denmark in order to document what life was like during the Nazi occupation to strengthen a Historical Fiction reading unit and help students make stronger connections to characters in the books read in class.

Kindergarten

Students experienced hands-on learning centers throughout the year to support language arts and math. Through these hands-on experiences and Readers' Workshop instruction, eighty-five percent (85%) of students were reading at grade level in June. In addition to inviting parents to volunteer on a regular basis in centers, the kindergarteners also had special events like Grandparents Day, Mother's Day Celebration and American Education Week. They were able to experience a favorite story in a different art form by attending a performance of *Pete the Cat*.

Grade 1

First grade students made excellent growth this year in both reading and math. They implemented hands on phonics centers in order to improve phonics and reading scores. They ended the year with eighty-seven percent (87%) of students reading at or above grade level. Also, ninety-one percent (91%) of first graders scored proficient on the STAR reading assessment. The first-grade

Superintendent's Annual Report 2018-2019 – Reuben E. Thalberg School

experienced hands-on learning as they watched their chicks hatch and when they went to Beardsley Zoo.

Grade 2

The grade two team experienced an outstanding year with eighty-nine percent (89%) of students reading at grade level. The team was proud of student Mathematics scores. The work was focused on improved fact fluency and opportunities for all students to grow. Ninety-two percent (92%) of second graders performed at or above grade level on the end of year STAR assessment in Mathematics. Also, the second-grade team implemented a new Writing unit, Lab Reports, and the students loved it. Students were engaged in the Science experiments which resulted in the creation of many connections between Science and Language Arts. They participated in a field trip to Lake Compounce where they learned about Force and Motion to support the Science curriculum.

Grade 3

Third grade teachers collaborated with the Mathematics specialist this year to begin to shift to a Math Workshop model. Students experienced success and demonstrated academic gains across the board in Mathematics. The team implemented Readers' and Writers' Workshop and eighty-five percent (85%) of students demonstrated grade level skills by the end of the year. The students loved book clubs and the collaboration that came along with them. Parents were invited to join their third graders for a recorder concert as they performed a preview for the second graders. The classes ended the year with a field trip to the State Capital to support the Social Studies curriculum.

Grade 4

The fourth grade replicated a day in the life of Southington residents during the American Revolution. This hands-on learning allowed the students to experience a bit of what they had been reading about in books. Many parents and volunteers joined in the day. Along with the fifth grade, they piloted a food waste management and recycling program. They were able to involve custodians, kitchen staff and other teachers with the goal of bringing the entire school on board for next year. The students' goal is to have Thalberg become the first school in the state to have a food waste management program.

Grade 5

Grade 5 students assumed leadership roles throughout the school and served as role models for younger students. Some students created and produced Thalberg News; students made daily morning announcements, and they created new clubs for students to join during recess. They worked on peer mediation and problem-solving in a safe and respectful way. Ninety percent (90%) of students were reading at grade level at the end of the year. Students visited Mystic Seaport to end their year.

Ongoing Work & School Improvement

Thalberg School continues to grow and learn. The Thalberg faculty and staff will be focused on rolling out Emotional Intelligence (EI) to students next school year. The foundation for EI was created this year with teachers attending training and practicing for their own understanding. This will help to support the ever growing social and emotional needs of students. Also, teachers will continue to strengthen Tier 1 instruction through the workshop model and differentiation with the success of every student as the goal.