

THE FRIENDSHIP SCHOOL



2013 - 2014 Annual Report



The Friendship School

Name of School

24 Rope Ferry Road, Waterford, CT 06385

Address

(860) 447-4049

Phone

ksuprin@thefriendshipschool.org

E-Mail

Kathleen Suprin

Director or Principal

Tricia Baran

Assistant Director

Participating School Districts

New London

Waterford

Contents

Information for Statewide Policymakers 4
Financial Information 9
Basic Checklist for Title IX and 504/ADA Compliance 11



Learning to Express His Thoughts in Writing



Information for Statewide Policymakers

2013-14 continued to be a year of unprecedented inquiry into statewide interdistrict magnet schools by a range of policy groups and those holding the ultimate legislative and budgetary authority over our statewide program. The Connecticut General Assembly continues to require the CSDE to produce a Results-based Accountability template for determining program effectiveness and a comprehensive magnet school plan with specific recommendations for supporting and sustaining the program. In order for the CSDE to be able to answer specific questions to ensure the program's long-term viability, we request information on the following objectives:

- 1) Describe the methods used to ensure recruitment and retention of a diverse student body, and how the demand for your program translates into sustained interest in the school. Please include any specific efforts in reaching families that may not yet be familiar with school choice programs. (Note: not applicable for those schools who were required to submit an enrollment management plan in the spring of 2014 due to non-compliance)

The recruitment and admissions process for The Friendship School begins in December by developing and distributing "sell sheets" to key agencies in New London and Waterford including all of the schools and libraries. Public service announcements and posters are also disseminated in December. A banner with recruitment information hangs at the front of the building from December through the end of March and local electronic bulletin boards are utilized to announce the application period.

Starting in December prospective families sign up for a guided tour either during the day or in the evening. Morning tours are held every week during the recruitment period and twice a month in the evening. Guided Tours are also provided in Spanish. During the guided tour, families are introduced to the philosophy of the school, the curriculum, transportation and other important aspects of the school. At the end of the guided tour, parents are given instructions for completing an online application. School computers or paper applications are available for those who need them.

To summarize, in order to attract a diverse population we post recruitment information through:

- Guided Tour sell sheets.
- Newspaper advertisements
- Flyers to New London and Waterford students as well as distributed through TVCCA, New London Adult & Continuing Education
- Public service announcements
- Posters
- Banner
- The TFS and LEARN web sites

- Electronic bulletin boards

To maintain a diverse population we:

- Send school-wide documents home to our families in two languages, Spanish and English.
- Provide translation services for PPT meetings as necessary
- Hire a diverse population of employees
- Develop relationships with partners (Head Start, Birth-3, our districts) who can help a variety of populations gain access to the school
- Celebrate our diversity
- Maintain a high quality program that attracts families

2) Describe your school's professional development priorities for 2013-2014. Be specific as to activities that support your special magnet theme.

- Reading Comprehension and the CCSS
- LEARN's Educator Development and Performance Plan
- NEASC Accreditation
- Safety Care
- Ongoing learning around Autism Support
- Curriculum revision process begun
- Nature Explore Outdoor Classroom shared at the Magnet Schools of America Conference
- Curriculum Writing
- Continue implementing SRBI and PBIS

3) What does your school do uniquely well (related to your magnet theme) that you think other regular public schools may replicate on the local level or in other public schools.

What makes The Friendship School unique is the fact that it brings together over five hundred young children and their families from two communities, one urban and one suburban, in a magnet school setting which specializes in early childhood learning, nurturing the development of the whole child. In the academic realm, literacy is the conduit for learning at The Friendship School. Emergent literacy skills such as listening, speaking, vocabulary building and book awareness lead to reading for comprehension in kindergarten and beyond.

At The Friendship School, families are involved and active in the school community with frequent visits, one hundred percent participation during parent-teacher conferences and excellent participation at regular family events held at the school under the sponsorship of an active Family Organization.

Because Friendship School students are three, four and five years old, our three R's are not initially reading, 'riting and 'rithmetic. Rather, they are: relationships, routines and respect. These must all be well established in each classroom and in the school before any other types of learning can take place. For this reason, the development of social skills are a large part of our curriculum. We practice interacting positively with each other and with the children and teach expected behaviors in every part of the school, establishing our routines and procedures and building trusting relationships. All adults in the school are involved in this effort and our parents are kept informed so that they can "speak the same language" at home. Positive feedback is abundant and positive talk is the norm. Academic development is valued and rigorous instruction follows the accepted curriculum along with the development of physical and creative skills. Differences and commonalities are celebrated and acceptance is the norm.

The Friendship School is the school of record for our districts' students who have special needs. Twenty percent of our student's have identified special needs which, for the most part are met in an inclusive environment with typical peers. Classroom teachers are supported by a team of related services providers who help the children achieve their goals for learning. The school's Assistant Principal conducts Placement and Planning Team meetings and coordinates the identified services for each student within the school. The special education staff at the Friendship School consists of four (4) certified full-time special education teachers. All four special education teachers deliver special education services to children in both the pre-kindergarten and kindergarten grades. The certified special education staff members are assisted by twenty (20) special education assistants. The special education assistants work in specific classrooms with small groups of students or on specific skills development with specific children. The special education program also utilizes the services of specialists such as speech and language pathology, occupational therapy, and physical therapy. In addition, most of the classroom teachers at The Friendship School hold special education certifications. The Friendship School initiated an Intensive Autism program at the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year. In the 2013-2014 school year the Intensive Autism program serviced ten (10) students with varying needs. On average the special education population of the school consists of approximately one hundred (100) children each school year. Special education services at The Friendship School are supported in many ways by LEARN's Special Education Department.

The Friendship School provides a rigorous education for our community's youngest citizens following State, district and Common Core standards for learning. We must never lose sight of the fact that our students are very young and young children learn best when their learning feels like play, when their minds and hands and bodies are busy, involved learning tools. The challenge is to constantly engage our students in well-designed, developmentally appropriate, rigorous learning tasks which honor their needs to experience their learning in an age appropriate manner.

Another area of expertise at The Friendship School is represented by the work of our Outdoor Classroom Committee, a group of five teachers who have turned our outdoor play area into a certified Nature Explore Outdoor Classroom, complete with gardens for growing fruits, vegetables, flowers and herbs with the children and all of our teachers. This year the

committee presented this project at the Magnet Schools of America National Conference, sharing the experience with other public schools who were interested in doing the same thing.

The Friendship School provides a developmentally appropriate, nurturing environment for the development of the whole child in an academic atmosphere where highly qualified teachers, supported by classroom assistants interact with and instruct the children all day. Families are very involved as partners and our two districts support us in numerous ways.

- 4) Describe the manner in which you promote replication of your school's best practices with regular public schools.

Many other districts have consulted with us and have visited the school to see for themselves what a quality early childhood school looks like. Since we were the first school of this size in the state we are seen as a model and as a resource to others. We are always willing to share what we have learned along the way during our nine years of practice/operation.

The Friendship School staff members have developed relationships with area high schools and colleges which place their student interns with our teachers. This way future teachers have realistic, hands-on experience in early childhood classrooms, with high quality certified early childhood educators providing excellent role models for them. Eventually, these professionals will be staff members in other public schools in Connecticut, using the knowledge and skills they acquired at The Friendship School.

- 5) Describe your school's two greatest challenges/obstacles to meeting or exceeding the school-wide student learning goals in 2014-15. Please include ways in which the CSDE may support our school in meeting these challenges through enhanced professional development opportunities or specific technical assistance on matters needing close attention.

The budget is one of our greatest challenges. As resources diminish it is a challenge to maintain the excellent programming that we have been able to develop and the supporting personnel. With the per pupil grant staying the same while cost increase by 3-5% it is impossible not to lose something each year or, where expenditures are required, such as special education needs, to spend more than the amount budgeted.

Another challenge is the ever-present achievement gap. We observe it even among our three year-olds who come to us without the words and experiences they need to be successful in school both socially and academically. There are numerous theories related

to the origin of the achievement gap but what we have noticed are gaps in language and experience. Once enrolled at The Friendship School, children have exposure to many new ideas and experiences and their growth continues in a positive direction. Children acquire vocabulary through the books they've had read to them, those they read and by going places (such as the Mystic Aquarium) and doing things they might not be able to do otherwise.

- 6) Provide the number of applications received by grade and town of residence; as of date of lottery.

NL PK 4 - 94

NL PK 3 - 74

NL K 33

W PK 4 - 62

W PK 3 - 59

WK - 8

- 7) Provide the number of students on wait list/pool by grade, race and residence; as of October 1, 2013, (see note)

NL PK 4 – 32 (A=2, B = 7, H = 12, W = 11)

NL PK 3 – 4 (H = 1, B =1, W = 2)

NLK – 10 (W = 5, B = 3, H = 2)

Total 46

Note: Wait list/pool refers to those students not enrolled in your school or another interdistrict magnet school who applied for admission to your school for the 2013-14 year. Example: any student who entered a lottery for admission to your school as a first choice that ultimately not placed in any interdistrict magnet school.

Financial Information

Magnet School Name: THE FRIENDSHIP SCHOOL School Code: 2450214

SCHEDULE 1: Total Current Expenditures from All Sources by Function and Object

Report All Cash Expenditures and Encumbrances from All Sources Regular and Special Education. #

LINE	CODE	FUNCTION (Program Area)	OBJECT						
			Total	Salaries	Employee Benefits	Purchased Services	Supplies	Property	Other
			(Col. 1)	(Col. 2)	(Col. 3)	(Col. 4)	(Col. 5)	(Col. 6)	(Col. 7)
1202	1000	Program Expenditures	2,949,335	2,178,325	507,228	138,998	18,431		
1203	2100	Support Services – Students	950,087	572,959	325,312	41,147	10,669		
1204	2200	Improvement of Instructional Services	62,765	58,961	3,804				
1205	2300	Support Services - General Admin.							
1206	2400	School Based Administration	406,706	266,090	69,052	46,024	3,876	21,664	
1207	2600	Operation and Maintenance of Plant Svc.	589,403			277,487	210,621	101,295	
1208	2700	Student Transportation Services							
1209	2500 2900	Support Services	624,676	270,158	46,641	307,877			
1210	3100	Net Expenditures for Food Services	72,627	54,651	17,976				
1211	3200	Net Expenditures for Enterprise Operations							
1212		Indirect Overhead	268,501						
1213	TOTAL		5,924,100						

* Do not include transportation costs associated with home to school and back home or the excess cost of special education services.

Magnet School Name: The Friendship School School Code: 2450214

SCHEDULE 2: Revenues by Source		
Include all projected revenues for the school		
LINE	CODE DESCRIPTION	Total Revenue (Col. 1)
220	xxxx State Grants**	3,973,700
	IA Grants Waterford	15,985
221	xxxx Federal Grants**	148,892
222	1920 Contributions	798,023
	Related Town Support	499,156
226	xxx Other Sources of Revenue	
	Food Service	72,627
	Reimbursement Carelot	10,348
	Other General	5,673
299	Total	5,746,729



Basic Checklist for Title IX and 504/ADA Compliance

Both Title IX (34 CFR § 106.9) and Section 504 (34 CFR § 104.8) require that educational entities that receive federal funds must have a policy on nondiscrimination and a published statement. The publication of this statement notifies applicants, students, employees and parents that it does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or disability. Schools and educational agencies that receive federal funds must list the Coordinators of Section 504 and Title IX with their name/title, address and phone number in the notice of nondiscrimination.

The following checklist was prepared to assist you in meeting some minimum requirements of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. It is not an exhaustive checklist and therefore should not be used as a substitute for careful reading of the regulations themselves.

§ 106.8 Designation of responsible employee and adoption of grievance procedures.

1. At least one Title IX coordinator has been designated at the district or school level to coordinate efforts to comply with Title IX, including investigations of any complaints.
2. At least one Section 504/ADA coordinator has been designated at the district or school level to coordinate efforts to comply with Section 504/ADA requirements, including investigations of any complaints.
3. All students and employees have been notified of the name(s), office address (es), and telephone number(s) of the coordinator(s).
4. Grievance procedures for students have been adopted and published.
5. Grievance procedures for employees have been adopted and published.

(Authority: Secs. 901, 902, Education Amendments of 1972, 86 Stat. 373, 374; 20 U.S.C. 1681, 1682)

§ 106.9 Dissemination of policy.

6. The following been notified of a policy of nondiscrimination.
 - applicants for admission and employment
 - students and parents of students
 - employees
 - sources of referral of applicants
 - unions, professional organizations
7. Notification of a policy of nondiscrimination has been placed in one or more of the following:
 - local newspapers
 - school newspapers and magazines
 - memoranda's or other written communications distributed annually to each student and employee
 - announcements, bulletins, catalogs, student and faculty handbooks
 - application forms
8. The above-listed school publications are free of text and illustrations suggesting differential treatment on the basis of sex or disability.
9. Admission and recruitment representatives (including counselors or student advisors and personnel officers) have been advised of the nondiscrimination policy and requirements for adherence to the policy.

(Authority: Secs. 901, 902, Education Amendments of 1972, 86 Stat. 373, 374; 20 U.S.C. 1681, 1682); [45 FR 30955, May 9, 1980, as amended at 65 FR 68056, Nov. 13, 2000]