



Magnet School

Annual Report

2013-2014

CREC Two Rivers Magnet Middle School



Two Rivers Magnet Middle School

Name of School

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Robert McCain, principal

Director or Principal

Participating (formally) School Districts

East Hartford

Glastonbury

Hartford

Manchester

South Windsor



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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)**

CREC employed a diversified and aggressive marketing strategy to increase the number of students applying for CREC schools. This targeted marketing plan included specific strategies for Hartford families, suburban families, and communities for which we have not had a significant applicant pool in past lotteries. Through an intensive community outreach campaign, we were able to reach a number of applicants from families where English is their second language. This year’s marketing campaign included direct mail, advertising through social media, radio and television commercials, community events, application events, and various other outreach opportunities through our community partners. In addition to the district-wide marketing strategies, each CREC magnet school offered open houses and in-school events, presentations at magnet school fairs, and direct outreach to parents and students in both Hartford and suburban district public schools. As in previous years, CREC continued to see an increase in the number of applicants to a CREC school.

At Two Rivers Magnet Middle School, we added components to our marketing plan this year. One such component was the hiring of a theme coach, who attended all fairs and open houses. She worked closely with teachers on our staff to showcase our theme of environmental science and technology. She also traveled to CREC elementary schools to explain what our school has to offer. In addition, we had the opportunity to present in some of our participating district elementary schools. Another component we added this year was to develop new courses that represent our theme, and these were shared with parents at open houses. For example, we now offer courses in topics such as sustainability, freshwater ecology, and environmental ethics. We have also added required technology courses to make our students fluent in 21st century skills. These additions were well received by parents of our current and prospective students.

- 2) Describe your school’s professional development priorities for 2013-14. Be specific as to activities that support your special magnet theme.**

Professional development for staff at the Capitol Region Education Council (CREC) is designed to enhance the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of its educators so that they can improve student learning. The year's sessions focused on providing teachers with the tools needed to implement new national and state standards into all curricula, grades PreK-12.

Teachers' Academy

CREC identifies and delivers essential professional development for its new teachers at the start of each school year through its Teachers' Academy. This three-day event provides participants with the unique knowledge and skills that are essential for success as an instructor in our theme-based interdistrict magnet schools. While all certified educators who are in their first three years of employment with CREC are required to participate, returning teachers are also encouraged to register for sessions of interest. Over eighty workshops were offered in August of 2013. Topics included "Effective Strategies for Close Reading," "Flipped Learning," "Including Primary Sources into the Social Studies Classroom," "How to Use Manipulatives in the Mathematics Classroom," and "Strategies to Support Young Learners." Over 350 staff members attended CREC's Teachers' Academy this year.

Teachers' College Reading & Writing Workshop Project

CREC's schools continued to work with Columbia University's Teachers' College Reading and Writing Project (TCRWP) in an effort to build our capacity to meet the expectations of the Common Core State Standards. Staff developers from Teachers' College divide their time during professional development days by demonstrating strategies related to writing, reading and content-area literacy by coaching teachers, providing them with feedback and next-step goals, helping them to use and learn performance assessments, and preparing them for upcoming units of study.

Common Core State Standards

CREC Schools continued to implement Common Core Standards across all schools. Ongoing professional development was offered throughout the year to ensure fidelity of implementation.

Shared Inquiry Training

CREC Schools continued its work with the Great Books Foundation to support the teachers' use of the shared inquiry approach within its classrooms. The "shared inquiry" approach for reading and discussing literature engages students in higher-order thinking and collaborative problem-solving by emphasizing questioning, text-based support and student discourse. While new teachers to CREC received the initial training, returning educators used the continued work with Great Books to receive feedback on how to maximize the quality of student discourse that takes place in their classroom.

Academic Rigor and Instruction

CREC Schools continued to use tools for rigor, relevance and relationships developed by the International Center on Leadership in Education for grades K-12. We began adapting and using rubrics from Ed Leader21, specifically to assess communication, critical thinking,

creativity and collaboration. In addition, modules on Academic Rigor and Shared Inquiry were offered through the Blended Solutions grant.

Monthly Book Study Groups

The district's curriculum leaders facilitated monthly book study groups throughout the school year for all teachers. Book study groups promote conversations among teachers and school staff that lead to the application of new ideas and strategies in classrooms. Teachers had the opportunity to share insights, ask questions of the text and each other, and learn from the perspectives of other teachers across the district. Facilitated discussions on strategies that can be applied directly in the classroom, the potential obstacles to implementation, and what can be done to overcome these obstacles take place each month. *Maximizing Professional Capital* was one of the books discussed in the monthly study groups.

Next Generation Science Standards

While Connecticut has not yet adopted the Next Generation Science Standards, CREC's teachers began conversations about how the *Framework* and NGSS standards may be implemented. Following the recommendations from the Connecticut State Department of Education, CREC's staff examined the eight Science and Engineering Practices described in the Framework for K-12 Science Education, learned about the knowledge components inherent in each of the eight Practices, explored how students' abilities to use the Practices with specific content increases in complexity across the grades, and learned to design instructional outcomes that integrate all 3 Dimensions by combining one of the Practices with a science concept and a crosscutting theme.

Positive Behavior Support System (PBIS)

All CREC schools have implemented a PBIS system in their schools. District wide training of teams and coaches took place throughout the year.

Theme-based Professional Development

Professional development is a key part to our school. This past year we spent a considerable amount of time on three key features. First, we trained all teachers in Schoology, which will be a required platform for us this coming year. This will enable us to better communicate with parents and to be less reliant on paper. Second, we trained all staff in CORE 6 teaching strategies. We decided this was necessary to fully embrace the CCSS, and to ensure that best practices are being used throughout our building. Third, we worked in committees and sub committees to design our new courses. We also reworked our master schedule to fit these new classes, and this called for professional development on planning and teaching in a block schedule.

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.

Two Rivers Magnet Middle School is a dynamic and diverse science and technology-based learning community, centered within an environmental theme. We spent considerable time over the last year to re-energize our commitment to our theme. We hired a theme coach, and reworked our master schedule and course catalog. For this coming year we will offer eight new encore classes that are science and technology based, along with returning favorites like

Exploratory Science, Think Tank, and Pre-Engineering. For example, students can now choose from classes like sustainability, environmental ethics, or hydroponics. We also now require all students to take technology as an encore, ensuring the development of key 21st century skills. Our teachers understand that they will teach science through their discipline, as we fully embrace our theme. Technology is an integral part of our student's day, as each student is issued a laptop at the start of the year. Most of their work is done electronically, which also connects to our environmental theme.

Two Rivers Magnet Middle School is often visited and consulted regarding our work in the area of intervention. Students are placed in tier I, tier II, or tier III programs, and these placements are fluid. The students are assessed for entry throughout the year, and then placed accordingly. We have found that students are able to move quickly in and out of our Math Intervention classes, but this is not as applicable for our Literacy Intervention students. Often students in need of literacy intervention struggle with basic concepts, like decoding or comprehension. In order to ensure that these intervention classes don't occur in isolation, the teachers are careful to use materials that connect to our theme. For example, a comprehension lesson will be done using science materials. These programs have helped numerous students raise their achievement scores and have resulted in making progress towards closing the achievement gap at our school.

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

CREC has developed the Blended Solutions website to share best practices with their colleagues in the Hartford Public Schools. Blended Solutions offers a continuum of professional development for Hartford and CREC teachers through a mixture of online and face-to-face sessions that are aligned to Connecticut Common Core Standards, the Common Core Teaching Domains and the State Board of Education's Position Statement on Culturally Responsive Education. The site includes a library of resources, as well as videos that demonstrate CREC teachers providing high quality, research-based instruction within highly effective magnet school classrooms. Currently there are eight modules for professional learning available and over forty videos.

As mentioned above, we are using CORE 6 strategies at Two Rivers. This allows our students to have continuity. We also had presentations by the master teachers and coaches in the building. Our literacy coach worked directly with teachers by modeling best practices. Our theme coach was called upon to co-teach lessons in non-science classrooms, and to find materials that can be used across the disciplines. Our administrative team observed all classes frequently to find the best practices at work, and shared their findings with staff. Our School Data Team conducted four walkthroughs this year to document this as well. Our non-tenured staff were given time to observe teachers in the building and to share out in their group about what they saw. Finally, we had teachers from another district come and observe our intervention program, as well as teachers from within CREC.

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.

1. Our first challenge is to continue to be an exciting and viable choice for families. We believe our rededication to our theme will help in this area. We want to entice students who are interested in environmental science and technology, and are looking to succeed. As a 6-12 school, this becomes even more important, as the recruiting we do for the middle school affects the high school in the future. To address this challenge, we will attend all school choice fairs, visit elementary schools and hold open houses for families. We have also added a Community Outreach Coordinator to help us to recruit students.
2. Our second challenge is to continue to embrace the CCSS. The curriculum has been aligned to these standards, but the change is still happening in the classroom. Professional development for teachers will be key. As SBAC comes online for all schools this year, we need to make sure we are adhering to the CCSS to prepare our student's for this assessment. Last spring we started to mirror our assessments to the SBAC style, and teachers were designing lessons in this format as well to ensure that students are comfortable with taking tests in this manner.

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

***NOTE:** The above information is managed by the SDE and can be obtained through the Department of Education and the Regional School Choice Office (RSCO).

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

***NOTE:** The above information is managed by the SDE and can be obtained through the Department of Education and the Regional School Choice Office (RSCO).

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

DIRECTIONS: Provide, as attachments, Schedules 1 and 2 from the attached expenditures and revenues document. These should reflect *actual expenditures and revenues* by the close of 2013-14, and not merely the budgeted amounts from the onset of the school year submitted in your grant application.



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]



Financial Attachments

BUDGET FORM

Created On: 5/28/2014

ED 114

| | | | | | |
|----------------|---------------------------------|----------|---------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Fiscal Year: | 2014 | | | | Funding Status: Final |
| Grantee Name: | CREC | Grantee: | 241-000 | | Vendor ID: 00241 |
| Grant Title: | MAGNET SCHOOL OPERATING | | | | |
| Project Title: | TWO RIVERS MAGNET MIDDLE SCHOOL | | | | |
| Fund: | 11000 | SPID: | 17057 | Year: | 2014 |
| | | PROG: | 82062 | CF1: | 170031 |
| Grant Period: | 7/1/2013 - 6/30/2014 | | | CF2: | SDE00101 |
| Project Code: | SDE000000000002 | | | Authorized Amount: \$6,892,380 | |

AUTHORIZED AMOUNT BY SOURCE:

| | | |
|----------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| LOCAL BALANCE: | CARRYOVER DUE: | CURRENT DUE: \$6,892,380 |
|----------------|----------------|--------------------------|

| CODES | DESCRIPTIONS | BUDGET |
|-------|--|--------------------|
| 111A | NON-INSTRUCTIONAL | 296,865 |
| 111B | INSTRUCTIONAL | 4,378,456 |
| 112A | EDUCATION AIDES | 236,332 |
| 112B | CLERICAL | 328,845 |
| 119 | OTHER | 392,741 |
| 200 | PERSONAL SERVICES-EMPLOYEE BENEFITS | 963,289 |
| 321 | TUTORS | |
| 322 | IN SERVICE | |
| 323 | PUPIL SERVICES | |
| 324 | FIELD TRIPS | |
| 325 | PARENT ACTIVITIES | |
| 330 | EMPLOYEE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES | |
| 510 | STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES | |
| 530 | COMMUNICATIONS | |
| 560 | TUITION | |
| 580 | TRAVEL | |
| 590 | OTHER PURCHASED SERVICES | |
| 611 | INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPLIES | |
| 7 | ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPLIES | |
| 890 | OTHER SUPPLIES | |
| 700 | PROPERTY | |
| 890 | OTHER OBJECTS | |
| 940 | INDIRECT COSTS (Prior FY2015) | 295,852 |
| | TOTAL | \$6,892,380 |

Original Request Date: 9/10/2013

This budget was approved by Regina Hopkins on 5/14/2014.

Magnet School Name: Two Rivers Magnet Middle School: 2013-2014

School Code: 2415014

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 | 6,432,033 | 4,768,356 | 1,004,820 | 94,882 | 226,875 | 337,101 | |
| 1203 | 2100 | Support Services-Students | 861,642 | 568,027 | 141,795 | 149,891 | 1,929 | - | |
| 1204 | 2200 | Improvement of Instructional Services | 42,579 | | | 42,579 | | - | |
| 1205 | 2300 | Support Services - General Admin. | 449,559 | | | 449,559 | | | |
| 1206 | 2400 | School Based Administration | 570,968 | 464,013 | 106,956 | | | | |
| 1207 | 2600 | Operation and Maintenance of Plant Svc. | 1,040,828 | | | 693,879 | 346,949 | | |
| 1208 | 2700 | Student Transportation Services | 31,765 | | | 31,765 | | | |
| 1209 | 2500 | Support Services | 113,989 | | | 65,767 | 38,588 | | 9,634 |
| | 2900 | | 369,916 | | | 369,916 | | | |
| 1210 | 3100 | Net Expenditures for Food Services | - | | | - | | | |
| 1211 | 3200 | Net Expenditures for Enterprise Operations | - | | | | | | |
| 1212 | | Indirect Overhead | 436,342 | | | | | | |
| 1213 | | TOTAL | 10,349,620 | 5,800,396 | 1,253,570 | 1,898,237 | 614,340 | 337,101 | 9,634 |

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

Magnet School Name: Two Rivers Magnet Middle School

School Code: 2415014

2013-2014

| SCHEDULE 2: Revenues by Source | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Include all projected revenues for the school | | |
| LINE | CODE DESCRIPTION | Total Revenue (Col. 1) |
| 220 | xxxx State Grants** | |
| | 660 students @ \$10,443 | \$6,892,380 |
| | Summer School | 69,813 |
| | | |
| 221 | xxxx Federal Grants** | |
| | Title I | 223,142 |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| 226 | xxxx Other Sources of Revenue** | |
| | Special Ed Services | 803,583 |
| | Local Tuition 660 students @ \$4,045 | 2,631,669 |
| | Other revenues | 15,652 |
| | Insurance proceeds | 7,448 |
| 299 | Total | \$10,643,686 |