

2013-2014

Magnet School

Annual Report

Area Cooperative Educational Services

Wintergreen Interdistrict Magnet School



Wintergreen Interdistrict Magnet School
670 Wintergreen Avenue
Hamden, Connecticut 06514
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Participating School Districts

Hamden

New Haven

Meriden

Wallingford

Woodbridge

ACES Parent Choice



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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)

At Wintergreen our focus on student learning remains at the center of the school's mission and goals. Until recently we were a magnet school without a magnet theme. We did not want to consider a content based theme like many of the other magnets and charter schools dotting the school choice landscape, so after many meetings, polls, and rich discussion we created a new vision for our school.

"Making the world a better place by educating the whole child through inquiry, innovation and the arts in a diverse, compassionate, mindful learning community"

We talk to stakeholders and prospective families about our theme being "**how we teach and how we learn, not just what we teach and what we learn about**". We now formulate our plans, pedagogy, and dialogue with stakeholders with that in mind. In order to truly become a school for innovation, inquiry and the arts, we have embraced and embodied those qualities in the way we teach and guide student learning and continue to identify and address barriers to achieving our goals. We do that through data analysis, common planning time, and consistent professional development and progress monitoring. Through sharing a common vision we can talk about our school in a succinct and interesting way. Our vision has anchored us when we embark on new initiatives and it has served to guide our thinking across curricular areas.

Wintergreen hosts tours, information sessions, and Open House events for prospective students and parents throughout the school year at a variety of day and evening times. A particular emphasis is placed on the January through March months complying with our districts' application periods. Ten to twelve of these sessions take place during the aforementioned three months. Additional information and visitation sessions are held for families once acceptance is offered. When enrollment is confirmed, registration and orientation sessions are held. Kindergarten families begin their experience upon

enrollment and workshops are offered during the summer for children and parents. Orientation for kindergarteners and new students precedes the opening of school. Each incoming student and parent receives a welcome letter from the school principals as well as an additional letter from the classroom teacher(s). Media including a new website are also used to recruit our student population. Comprehensive brochures, notices and newsletters as well as newspaper and magazine spaces were employed. Public television has also been used to share information on the school.

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

The overall focus of all professional development opportunities is to increase success for all students. As we aim to educate our students to mastery of CCSS, we become more and more adept at teaching practices and models that encourage inquiry, innovation and include the arts as personal expression and learning experience. Our theme, *"Making the world a better place by educating the whole child through inquiry, innovation and the arts in a diverse, compassionate, mindful learning community"* keeps us focused as we continue to grow and deepen our practice and commitment to deep thinking and learning. It also keeps us grounded in our belief that our diversity is essential to our community. Only in a diverse setting can students and staff become truly capable of deep appreciation for humanity as a whole. Our theme, which is also our vision reminds staff to both exemplify and teach mindful action and compassion. Through professional development in both the Responsive Classroom approach and "Mindful Schools" curriculum, our community has been strengthened and we have made more academic gains this year than we did last year. The teachers involved in "Considering Teacher Presence", our pilot study with Yale Child Study, have reported that this year has been their best year ever in terms of teaching efficacy, personal growth and relationships with colleagues.

The professional development priorities for the 2013-2014 school year include a focus on professional learning communities (PLCs), aligning to the Common Core State Standards, designing and implementing inquiry based units of study, and implementing a balanced literacy program with a strong focus on the Reader's/Writer's Workshop approach. This year we also made a commitment to improving Mathematics instruction. After considering several math programs, we decided to pilot the Math in Focus/Singapore math program for grades K-3. All teachers were provided professional development throughout the year. In 2014-15 we will have Math in Focus for grades 4-6, and will support teachers with professional development throughout the year. We also made a large investment in training teachers in the Responsive Classroom Approach, and Mindful Schools. All K-6 teachers and two 7th and 8th grade teachers have completed the Responsive Classroom level 1 training. 10 teachers received training from Mindful Schools and have met in weekly PLCs to support and further their practice both as mindful teacher and as teachers of mindfulness. Below is a sample of the professional development from 2013-14:

30 Staff members attended a one day Responsive Classroom Training in August, 2013

30 Staff members attended a 5 day Responsive Classroom Training that was divided into 12 weekly evening sessions

School Social Workers attended Social Thinking Organization - Thinking About You and Thinking About Me, Social Thinking Concepts and Vocabulary

7 Staff members attended the Mindfulness and Schools Conference at Omega in Rhinebeck NY in July of 2013

Mindful Schools Fundamentals - 10 staff members www.mindfulschools.org

Mindful Schools Curriculum Training 10 staff members

Instructional Coaches attended, Danielson's Framework for Teaching & Best Literacy Practice - Teachers College, NY - Reading & Writing Project

Purchased "Write Like This: Teaching Real-World Through Modeling and Mentor Texts" for middle school level Language Arts teachers for book study in PLC

Purchased the Power of Our Words, and Rules in School for full staff PD throughout the year led by teacher leaders in the Responsive Classroom PLC.

3 teachers attended the MSA National Conference, Hartford, CT 5/15/14

School Psychologist - UCAPP program - Special Education Institute

All K-3 teachers received Math In Focus professional development 2 sessions

Grade level teams continue to meet daily to analyze student data and respond with appropriate instruction. Academy teams continue to meet daily to plan for SRBI, theme integration, logistics and operational planning, and to meet with Technology facilitator.

This year we implemented our new Teacher Evaluation and Development Plan. All teachers took part in professional development to assist them in writing goals, monitoring progress, collecting evidence and analyzing relevant data. In conjunction with ACES, we will continue to provide opportunities for professional development.

- 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. At Wintergreen we believe that a shared leadership model is the key to building a true whole school professional learning community and to increase school improvement efforts as a whole. In my role as principal I have used my knowledge, passion, and instructional/organizational coaching skills to teach, facilitate, inspire and guide teachers, but they have to do the work with students and colleagues every day. We have built capacity from within and the leadership team has the tools they need to drive change in all three areas

identified for improvement. Teachers on the leadership team are passionate about their work, thus the teachers they lead are inspired and energized. We invite all teachers into the school improvement conversation, encouraging them to broaden their perspective to consider the needs of our whole school through a weekly bulletin, email, and informal and formal conversations.

To illustrate our success in this area we can point to our focus on literacy and this year's academic growth as we reduced the number of students in literacy intervention by over 30%. To support these efforts we have regular PD in literacy and pointed coaching, progress monitoring, and full implementation of literacy interventions.

We nurture PLCs in all areas. Our regular Academy meetings are used to provide embedded PD, allow time for collaboration, and to implement and review progress monitoring. Our regular faculty meetings are used to provide PD in areas of focus like planning for maximum engagement, the natural learning cycle, inquiry, arts integration, mindfulness, and the Responsive Classroom approach. All of our work is conducted with a clear understanding that we serve children and that their safety and education is our number one priority. Our WIMS constitution developed last year by our student government continues to guide us and serve as our norms for all meetings, events, and contracts for outside providers. Every staff member is valued and our community is our greatest asset. We have a very strong sense of mission here and we truly appreciate each other and our students. We value diversity, compassion, joy and equal access to education for all. Our Wintergreen community is a place where everyone, regardless of their individual goals, role, or purpose represents our school and our vision. We share a sense that everyone's work has value and is an essential thread in a bigger more beautiful fabric.

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

Our WIMS Steering Committee is comprised of representatives from all of our sending districts. Each month the committee is apprised of Wintergreen activities and are invited to partake in all. Every year we hold an International Fair that is completely open to the public, we take every opportunity to share what we do at WIMS with other schools via classroom buddy projects, social media, our partnership with Southern Connecticut State University, and our ongoing conversations with other local universities. In addition this year, WIMS was identified by the State department of Education as an exemplar site for the "commissioner's turn around network" site visit. Personnel from various turn around schools visited WIMS to hear about our social/emotional learning efforts, PLCs, school improvement plan, and school climate efforts. We will continue to expand that effort in the 2014-15 school year.

- 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.

Of course funding and time are two obstacles that impede progress. We need both funding and time to align our pedagogy and materials to best support mastery of CCSS. We need the funding for professional development and the purchase of appropriate materials, and the time to practice before we are held to task via SBAC. We need funding to support all students and families on their educational journey. The challenges that come with environmental stressors like poverty are great and many families need resources that our beyond what our current school budget can support. Many of our students enter school in Kindergarten without having had a solid PreK experience. Many of our students enter school without the social/emotional skills necessary to be successful in a classroom setting, and some enter school having experienced some trauma. We have part-time teaching assistants in our Kindergarten classes, but to accelerate learning we should have full-time teaching assistants in all classes K-2.

We need funding to be able to offer a free after-school program which must include transportation to all of our sending districts. We have applied for a grant but have been turned down. Hopefully this year we will receive funding.

- 6) Provide the number of applications received by grade and town of residence; as of date of lottery.
- 7) Provide the number of students on wait list/pool by grade, race and residence; as of October 1, 2013, (see note)

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 inter-district magnet school.

**Hamden
2013-2014**

	Appli-		On
Grade	cations	Placed	Wait
			List
K	112	41	71
1	36	3	33
2	28	9	19
3	22	8	14
4	23	9	14
5	19	11	8
6	16	0	16
7	8	8	0
8	0	0	0
TOTALS	264	89	175

**Hamden 2013-2014
Wait List by Grade/Race**

						American
Grade	Other	Black	White	Hispanic	Asian	Indian
K	6	28	17	13	6	1
1	1	14	9	3	3	3
2	0	12	3	2	2	0
3	0	9	2	1	2	0
4	0	4	6	3	1	0
5	0	5	2	1	0	0
6	0	5	8	3	0	0
7	0	0	0	0	0	0
8	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	7	77	47	26	14	4

**Meriden
2013-2014**

	Appli-		On
Grade	cations	Placed	Wait
			List
K	26	3	23
1	36	0	36
2	34	0	34
3	12	0	12
4	14	0	14
5	8	0	8
6	13	0	13
7	2	0	2
8	2	0	2
TOTALS	147	3	144

Wait List Race/Grade information not available

**Wallingford
2013-2014**

	Appli-		On Wait
Grade	cations	Placed	List
K	20	9	18
1	14	2	31
2	4	3	14
3	9	1	39
4	5	2	32
5	0	3	22
6	5	2	23
7	3	0	2
8	0	0	1
TOTALS	60	22	182 *

Wait List Race/Grade information not available

* Includes carried over wait list students from previous years

**Parent Choice Program
2013-2014**

	Appli-		On Wait
Grade	cations	Placed	List
K	17	6	8
1	6	5	5
2	6	1	3
3	6	0	6
4	3	0	2
5	6	0	5
6	2	0	2
7	2	0	1
8	2	1	0
TOTALS	50	9	32

**Parent Choice Program 2013-2014
Wait List by Grade/Race**

						Am
Grade	Other	Black	White	Hisp	Asian	Ind
K	0	2	4	2	0	0
1	0	5	0	0	0	0
2	0	2	1	0	0	0
3	1	4	1	0	0	0
4	0	1	1	0	0	0
5	0	2	3	0	0	0
6	1	1	0	0	0	0
7	0	1	0	0	0	0
8	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	2	18	10	2	0	0

**New Haven
2013-2014**

	Appli-		On
Grade	cations	Placed	Wait
			List
K			
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
TOTALS			

Wintergreen Interdistrict Magnet School 2013 - 2014 by District and Grade as of 10/1/13							
Grade	Hamden	Meriden	New Haven	Wallingford	Woodbridge	Parent Choice	Total
K	33	3	10	8	0	6	60
1	38	8	9	8	0	3	66
2	41	8	15	7	0	2	73
3	25	24	13	7	0	6	75
4	35	16	16	5	0	3	75
5	37	11	12	13	0	2	75
6	40	7	17	7	0	4	75
7	37	8	16	4	0	3	68
8	35	6	16	1	0	6	64
TOTALS	321	91	124	60	0	35	631



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.

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.										
										OBJECT**
LINE	CODE	FUNCTION (Program Area)**	Total *	Salaries	Employee Benefits	Purchased Services	Supplies	Property	Other	
			(Col. 1)	(Col. 2)	(Col. 3)	(Col. 4)	(Col. 7)	(Col. 8)	(Col. 9)	
1202	1000	Program Expenditures	4,369,118	3,270,198	733,206	263,142	100,646	1,926		
1203	2100	Support Services – Students	616,300	448,431	79,086	88,140	643			
1204	2200	Improvement of Instructional Services	368,169	269,756	92,611	5,480	322			
1205	2300	Support Services - General Admin.								
1206	2400	School Based Administration	449,626	347,315	101,686	250	375			
1207	2600	Operation and Maintenance of Plant Svc.	1,308,090			1,308,090				
1208	2700	Student Transportation Services	38,200			38,200				
1209	2500 2900	Support Services								
1210	3100	Net Expenditures for Food Services	24,971	24,971						
1211	3200	Net Expenditures for Enterprise Operations								
1212		Indirect Overhead	221,833							
213		TOTAL	7,396,307	4,360,671	1,006,589	1,703,302	101,986	1,926		

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

**Definitions of objects and functions are to be consistent with those on expenditure report ED001.

Magnet School Name: Wintergreen Interdistrict Magnet

District/School Code: 244

SCHEDULE 2: Revenues by Source		
Include all projected revenues for the school		
LINE	CODE DESCRIPTION	Total Revenue (Col. 1)
220	xxxx State Magnet Operating Grant	\$4,984,900
	xxxx Other State Grants (please list below)	0
221	xxxx Other Federal Grants	0
222	1920 Contributions	0
226	xxxx Other Sources of Revenue (list below, include tuition if applicable)	2,431,874
	Local district tuition	
299	Total	\$7,416,774



September 23, 2014

Stefan Pryor, Commissioner
Connecticut State Department of Education
165 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Commissioner Pryor,

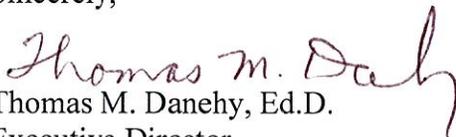
ACES is pleased to submit to the Connecticut State Department of Education the annual report for Wintergreen Interdistrict Magnet School (WIMS) for 2013-2014. The school now has a 16 year history. This is the school of choice for more than six hundred students and their families; and there are always waiting lists of students who want to become part of his vibrant learning community.

The 2013-2014 school year marked its 10th year of operation following the 5-year relationship with Edison Schools, Inc. as a partner in the school. As a result of the extensive transition planning that was done with staff, parents, and students, the past 8 years went very smoothly with some major improvements. The implementation of the early reading and literacy program was a key accomplishment. The staff continued this year with more intensive training and the use of the ELA and Math Common Core.

Parent participation continues to be a strength of ACES Wintergreen Interdistrict Magnet School; more than 200 volunteers worked with teachers and staff during the reporting year. There are so many events which parents help to plan. A major strength of this school is the parent involvement in so many areas from governance, to curriculum committees, to cultural events planning, to classroom volunteers. Community involvement is also an important attribute to WIMS.

ACES Wintergreen Interdistrict Magnet School continues to help children develop their social, academic and artistic skills through high level instruction, attention to social and emotional needs, and instruction in choral and instrumental music as well as Spanish. WIMS has developed a focus on "Making the World a Better Place" in order to provide a concentration on Mindfulness training for staff and students to speak to these needs. We continue to work on recruiting students and staff to meet the need to reduce racial, economic and ethnic isolation. A student waiting list is testimony to the success of the program.

Sincerely,


Thomas M. Danehy, Ed.D.
Executive Director

"Innovators in Education"

The Regional Educational Service Center Serving South Central Connecticut

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