

STRATEGIC SCHOOL PROFILE 2011-12

Newtown School District

JANET ROBINSON, Superintendent

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Newtown,
Connecticut

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This profile was produced by the Connecticut State Department of Education in accordance with CT General Statutes 10-220(c) using data and narratives provided by the school district, testing services, or the US Census. Profiles and additional education data, including longitudinal data, are available on the internet at www.sde.ct.gov.

COMMUNITY DATA

County: Fairfield	Per Capita Income in 2000: \$37,786
Town Population in 2000: 25,031	Percent of Adults without a High School Diploma in 2000*: 8.2%
1990-2000 Population Growth: 20.5%	Percent of Adults Who Were Not Fluent in English in 2000*: 1.0%
Number of Public Schools: 7	District Enrollment as % of Estimated. Student Population: 90.2%

*To view the Adult Education Program Profiles online, go to www.sde.ct.gov and click on Adult Education, then Reports.

District Reference Group (DRG): B DRG is a classification of districts whose students' families are similar in education, income, occupation, and need, and that have roughly similar enrollment. The Connecticut State Board of Education approved DRG classification for purposes of reporting data other than student performance.

STUDENT ENROLLMENT

Enrollment on October 1, 2011	5,282
5-Year Enrollment Change	-6.8%

DISTRICT GRADE RANGE

Grade Range	K - 12
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INDICATORS OF EDUCATIONAL NEED

Need Indicator	Number in District	Percent		
		District	DRG	State
Students Eligible for Free/Reduced-Price Meals	349	6.6	9.1	35.2
K-12 Students Who Are Not Fluent in English	13	0.2	2.0	5.6
Students Identified as Gifted and/or Talented*	215	4.1	6.8	4.0
PK-12 Students Receiving Special Education Services in District	418	7.9	10.0	11.5
Kindergarten Students who Attended Preschool, Nursery School or Headstart	262	96.3	91.3	79.8
Homeless	0	0.0	0.1	0.3
Juniors and Seniors Working 16 or More Hours Per Week	52	9.0	11.3	13.0

*49.3 % of the identified gifted and/or talented students received services.

SCHOOL DISTRICT DIVERSITY

Student Race/Ethnicity		
Race/Ethnicity	Number	Percent
American Indian	2	0.0
Asian American	193	3.7
Black	66	1.2
Hispanic	244	4.6
Pacific Islander	0	0.0
White	4,715	89.3
Two or more races	62	1.2
Total Minority	567	10.7

Percent of Minority Professional Staff: 3.3%

Non-English Home Language:

1.8% of this district's students (excluding prekindergarten students) come from homes where English is not the primary language. The number of non-English home languages is 27.

EFFORTS TO REDUCE RACIAL, ETHNIC AND ECONOMIC ISOLATION

Below is the description submitted by this school of how it provides educational opportunities for its students to interact with students and teachers from diverse racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds.

The Newtown Public Schools through the Board of Education, community members, parents, students, teachers, and administrators are committed to fostering understanding of various groups in our society and world, promoting equity and respect among people, and providing learning experiences for students to become more familiar with people from different races, ethnic groups, and economic backgrounds. Since Newtown is a school district with a small minority population, it is important that students be given educational opportunities to understand and appreciate the diversity existing in the larger society. Newtown sends 40 elementary students to the Western Connecticut Academy for International Studies (AIS) Elementary Magnet School in Danbury. After-school Spanish, French and Mandarin classes are offered at various district schools. The elementary schools arrange performances and programs to expose students to cultural activities, provide literature that sensitizes them to human differences, engage students in learning experiences that immerse them in other ways of life, and give students opportunities to help others with various economic and social needs. The elementary schools consciously teach children interpersonal skills that help students to empathize with others, understand their perspectives, and work through conflicts in group meetings using the Responsive Classroom model and through conflict resolution training at kindergarten, 2nd, 4th and 6th grades. Each year new teachers are trained in these programs to ensure continuity. The intermediate and middle schools have developed and refined a “respect for diversity” theme based on the principle that students must confront issues of diversity in early adolescence through both intense study and careful reflection including a student personal mission statement. The high school has a student exchange program with Danbury that fosters a sharing learning environment between Newtown students and young people from diverse urban settings. Online learning opportunities allow students access to World Languages not currently offered at our high school. Three Newtown schools have established partnerships with two schools in Liaocheng China. High school students and staff from three district schools traveled to our sister schools, visiting and teaching classes and staying with families. Newtown families continue to host Chinese delegations during their visits to the district. Additional interest in collaboration has been shown by post secondary Chinese institutions. While the China initiative is entering its fourth year, Newtown is seeking to expand its international connections by establishing an on-going conversation with educators in Japan and France. Additional information can be found at the district website at N.I.C.E. (Newtown International Center for Education).

STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Connecticut Mastery Test, Fourth Generation, % Goal. The Goal level is more demanding than the Proficient level, but not as high as the Advanced level, reported in the No Child Left Behind Report Cards.

Grade and CMT Subject Area	District	State	% of Districts in State with Equal or Lower Percent Meeting Goal
Grade 3 Reading	80.8	59.2	90.0
Writing	84.1	62.7	92.5
Mathematics	89.7	66.5	93.1
Grade 4 Reading	84.5	64.1	88.8
Writing	87.5	65.3	93.8
Mathematics	90.4	68.0	90.0
Grade 5 Reading	86.6	67.6	82.5
Writing	92.0	68.1	98.8
Mathematics	89.2	71.6	81.5
Science	82.2	63.9	73.2
Grade 6 Reading	92.3	74.1	91.0
Writing	90.8	67.4	95.8
Mathematics	93.0	69.3	96.4
Grade 7 Reading	96.2	79.8	96.9
Writing	88.6	65.6	93.8
Mathematics	95.3	68.1	100.0
Grade 8 Reading	95.5	76.8	95.6
Writing	93.0	68.3	94.4
Mathematics	94.5	67.2	97.5
Science	88.3	61.9	93.1

These results reflect the performance of students with scoreable tests who were enrolled in the district at the time of testing, regardless of the length of time they were enrolled in the district. Results for fewer than 20 students are not presented.

For more detailed CMT results, go to www.ctreports.com.

To see the NCLB Report Card for this school, go to www.sde.ct.gov and click on “No Child Left Behind.”

Connecticut Academic Performance Test, Third Generation, % Meeting State Goal. The CAPT is administered to Grade 10 students. The Goal level is more demanding than the state Proficient level, but not as high as the Advanced level, reported in the No Child Left Behind Report Cards. The following results reflect the performance of students with scorable tests who were enrolled in the school at the time of testing, regardless of the length of time they were enrolled in the school. Results for fewer than 20 students are not presented.

CAPT Subject Area	District	State	% of Districts in State with Equal or Lower Percent Meeting Goal
Reading Across the Disciplines	69.1	47.5	83.5
Writing Across the Disciplines	85.0	63.0	85.8
Mathematics	75.6	49.2	88.0
Science	75.4	47.1	91.8

For more detailed CAPT results, go to www.ctreports.com. To see the NCLB Report Card for this school, go to www.sde.ct.gov and click on “No Child Left Behind.”

Physical Fitness. The assessment includes tests for flexibility, abdominal strength and endurance, upper-body strength and aerobic endurance.

Physical Fitness: % of Students Reaching Health Standard on All Four Tests	District	State	% of Districts in State with Equal or Lower Percent Reaching Standard
	73.8	50.6	95.3

SAT® I: Reasoning Test Class of 2011		District	State	% of Districts in State with Equal or Lower Scores
% of Graduates Tested		88.6	77.3	
Average Score	Mathematics	541	505	74.8
	Critical Reading	534	502	74.8
	Writing	541	506	78.6

SAT® I. The lowest possible score on each SAT® I subtest is 200; the highest possible score is 800.

Graduation and Dropout Rates	District	State	% of Districts in State with Equal or Less Desirable Rates
Graduation Rate, Adjusted Cohort Rate 2011	93.7	82.7	73.7
2010-11 Annual Dropout Rate for Grade 9 through 12	0.4	2.6	79.7

Activities of Graduates	District	State
% Pursuing Higher Education (Degree and Non-Degree Programs)	95.2	84.5
% Employed (Civilian Employment and in Armed Services)	3.6	9.7

RESOURCES AND EXPENDITURES

DISTRICT STAFF

Full-Time Equivalent Count of School Staff	
General Education	
Teachers and Instructors	333.51
Paraprofessional Instructional Assistants	33.32
Special Education	
Teachers and Instructors	37.02
Paraprofessional Instructional Assistants	78.60
Library/Media Specialists and/or Assistants	12.60
Staff Devoted to Adult Education	0.00
Administrators, Coordinators, and Department Chairs	
District Central Office	4.00
School Level	18.20
Instructional Specialists Who Support Teachers (e.g., subject area specialists)	12.65
Counselors, Social Workers, and School Psychologists	22.74
School Nurses	11.20
Other Staff Providing Non-Instructional Services and Support	272.85

In the full-time equivalent (FTE) count, staff members working part-time in the school district are counted as a fraction of full-time. For example, a teacher who works half-time in the district contributes 0.50 to the district's staff count.

Teachers and Instructors	District	DRG	State
Average Years of Experience in Education	13.0	14.5	13.9
% with Master's Degree or Above	88.6	86.9	79.6

Average Class Size	District	DRG	State
Grade K	16.0	17.9	18.5
Grade 2	18.4	19.8	19.7
Grade 5	23.9	21.9	21.6
Grade 7	21.8	20.9	20.3
High School	20.1	20.1	19.6

Hours of Instruction Per Year*	Dist	DRG	State
Elementary School	975	973	993
Middle School	988	1,019	1,024
High School	955	999	1,024

*State law requires that at least 900 hours of instruction be offered to students in grade 1-12 and full-day kindergarten, and 450 hours to half-day kindergarten students.

Students Per Academic Computer	Dist	DRG	State
Elementary School*	3.6	2.8	2.8
Middle School	3.3	2.1	2.2
High School	3.5	2.3	2.1

*Excludes schools with no grades above kindergarten.

DISTRICT EXPENDITURES AND REVENUES, 2010-11

Expenditures may be supported by local tax revenues, state grants, federal grants, municipal in-kind services, tuition and other sources. DRG and state figures will not be comparable to the district if the school district does not teach both elementary and secondary students.

Expenditures All figures are unaudited.	Total (in 1000s)	Expenditures Per Pupil			
		District	PK-12 Districts	DRG	State
Instructional Staff and Services	\$38,984	\$7,152	\$8,464	\$8,216	\$8,469
Instructional Supplies and Equipment	\$1,124	\$206	\$267	\$249	\$271
Improvement of Instruction and Educational Media Services	\$1,648	\$302	\$487	\$541	\$482
Student Support Services	\$4,985	\$914	\$901	\$970	\$901
Administration and Support Services	\$6,660	\$1,222	\$1,468	\$1,434	\$1,490
Plant Operation and Maintenance	\$9,411	\$1,726	\$1,471	\$1,420	\$1,463
Transportation	\$5,059	\$877	\$735	\$649	\$724
Costs for Students Tuitioned Out	\$2,190	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other	\$838	\$154	\$165	\$166	\$165
Total	\$70,900	\$12,856	\$14,238	\$13,971	\$14,140
Additional Expenditures					
Land, Buildings, and Debt Service	\$13,126	\$2,408	\$1,290	\$1,120	\$1,331

Special Education Expenditures	District Total	Percent of PK-12 Expenditures Used for Special Education		
		District	DRG	State
	\$13,058,823	18.4	20.9	21.7

Revenue Sources, % of Expenditures from Source. Revenue sources do not include state funded Teachers' Retirement Board contributions, vocational-technical school operations, SDE budgeted costs for salaries and leadership activities and other state-funded school districts (e.g., Dept. of Children and Families and Dept. of Corrections).

District Expenditures	Local Revenue	State Revenue	Federal Revenue	Tuition & Other
Including School Construction	79.6	17.4	2.8	0.2
Excluding School Construction	88.7	7.8	3.3	0.2

EQUITABLE ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES AMONG DISTRICT SCHOOLS

Below is the description submitted by this district of how it allocates resources to insure equity and address needs.

The Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools ensure that there is equitable distribution of resources among district schools. Each of the four elementary schools is allotted the same per pupil amount for regular instruction and staff support services during each budget year. The intermediate, middle, and high schools are also allotted a per pupil amount for regular instruction, staff support services, and guidance services for students. The district follows consistent guidelines for class size in the elementary schools, the intermediate school, the middle school, and the high school. Obsolete computers are replaced ensuring a common platform and technology at all district schools as the district budget allows. The Board of Education, the Superintendent, and parent groups are vigilant about assuring equitable class size and staffing throughout the district. During the budget process, principals may present special requests to the Superintendent of Schools about equipment purchases and staffing resources that enhance the delivery of the educational program. The Superintendent and the Board consider such requests for inclusion in the Board of Education’s Budget after weighing their merit and impact on equitable allocation of resources among district schools. The use of interactive whiteboards is standard and additional technologies (iPads, Kindles, mimeos, etc) are piloted on a lesser scale. Transportation software is used to effectively and efficiently manage routes throughout one of the largest districts in the state.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Number of K-12 Students with Disabilities for Whom the District is Financially Responsible 406
 Of All K-12 Students for Whom the District is Financially Responsible, the Percent with Disabilities 7.7%

Of All K-12 Students for Whom District is Financially Responsible, Number and Percentage with Disabilities				
Disability	Count	District Percent	DRG Percent	State Percent
Autism	75	1.4	1.3	1.2
Learning Disability	105	2.0	3.2	3.9
Intellectual Disability	14	0.3	0.3	0.4
Emotional Disturbance	18	0.3	0.6	1.0
Speech Impairment	95	1.8	1.7	2.1
Other Health Impairment*	65	1.2	2.2	2.2
Other Disabilities**	34	0.6	0.7	1.0
Total	406	7.7	10.0	11.7

*Includes chronic health problems such as attention deficit disorders and epilepsy

**Includes hearing, visual, and orthopedic impairments, deaf-blindness, multiple disabilities, traumatic brain injury, and developmental delay

Graduation and Dropout Rates of Students with Disabilities for Whom District is Financially Responsible	District	State
% Who Graduated in 2010-11 with a Standard Diploma	83.7	62.4
2010-11 Annual Dropout Rate for Students Aged 14 to 21	0.0	5.1

STATE ASSESSMENTS

Percent of Students with Disabilities Meeting State Goal. The Goal level is more demanding than the Proficient level, but not as high as the Advanced level, reported in the No Child Left Behind Report Cards. These results are for students attending district schools who participated in the standard assessment with or without accommodations for their disabilities. Results for fewer than 20 students are not presented.

- **Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT), Fourth Generation.** The CMT reading, writing and mathematics tests are administered to students in Grades 3 through 8, and the CMT science test to students in Grades 5 and 8.
- **Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT), Third Generation.** The CAPT is administered to Grade 10 students.

State Assessment		Students with Disabilities		All Students	
		District	State	District	State
CMT	Reading	58.7	36.0	89.6	70.4
	Writing	36.2	21.5	89.5	66.3
	Mathematics	58.0	31.8	92.1	68.4
	Science	40.8	23.0	85.3	62.9
CAPT	Reading Across the Disciplines	13.6	14.5	69.1	47.5
	Writing Across the Disciplines	25.0	18.2	85.0	63.0
	Mathematics	8.7	15.4	75.6	49.2
	Science	3.3	13.6	75.4	47.1

For more detailed CMT or CAPT results, go to www.ctreports.com. To see the NCLB Report Card for this school, go to www.sde.ct.gov and click on “No Child Left Behind.”

Participation in State Assessments of Students with Disabilities Attending District Schools		
CMT	% Without Accommodations	47.1
	% With Accommodations	52.9
CAPT	% Without Accommodations	94.1
	% With Accommodations	5.9
% Assessed Using Skills Checklist		12.0

Accommodations for a student’s disability may be made to allow him or her to participate in testing. Students whose disabilities prevent them from taking the test even with accommodations are assessed by means of a list of skills aligned to the same content and grade level standards as the CMT and CAPT.

Federal law requires that students with disabilities be educated with their non-disabled peers as much as is appropriate. Placement in separate educational facilities tends to reduce the chances of students with disabilities interacting with non-disabled peers, and of receiving the same education.

K-12 Students with Disabilities Placed in Educational Settings Other Than This District’s Schools		
Placement	Count	Percent
Public Schools in Other Districts	0	0.0
Private Schools or Other Settings	31	7.6

Number and Percentage of K-12 Students with Disabilities for Whom District is Financially Responsible by the Percentage of Time They Spent with Their Non-Disabled Peers				
Time Spent with Non-Disabled Peers	Count of Students	Percent of Students		
		District	DRG	State
79.1 to 100 Percent of Time	340	83.7	75.7	72.1
40.1 to 79.0 Percent of Time	36	8.9	16.5	16.3
0.0 to 40.0 Percent of Time	30	7.4	7.8	11.7

SCHOOL DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT PLANS AND ACTIVITIES

The following narrative was submitted by this district.

Newtown Public Schools continues to address strategic plan goals identified in 2008-09 and revised during spring and fall 2011. Subcommittee work is on-going and each school's improvement plan is aligned with the strategic plan. Inspiring all students to excel is the impetus for our work and has resulted in new initiatives throughout the school system. The district's Theory of Action defines school and district improvement, ensuring a systemic through line. Instructional round teams have expanded to include more building-level educators, and in the coming year continued opportunities for more staff to be involved in the teaching/learning dialog as building-level instructional rounds take place. District conversations around practice are enhanced through book studies involving the entire leadership team. After three years of research and discussion, elements of a draft teacher professional growth plan were piloted with the intent of promoting increasing and more effective levels of professional practice in direct alignment with the district philosophy of continuous improvement for all. Newtown has a high percentage of teachers trained as TEAM mentors and reflection paper reviewers. District professional learning communities (preK-12) met on a regular basis during the 2011-12 school year on early release days and, through the use of protocols, reviewed data and instructional strategies to improve student writing. In addition to 2012 CMT writing, reading and math scores being up across all grade levels, this professional development opportunity has increased the district dialogue around teaching, student learning and assessment and serves as the starting point for district PLCs in 2012-13. Excellent teaching and learning depends heavily on a quality, rigorous curriculum. Newtown is in the process of transitioning its curricular format and instructional approach to a concept-based model and embedding Common Core State Standards. Social studies teachers, science and English/Language Arts teachers have been working with experts in this field. Assessments are being revised to reflect expectations in the Smarter Balanced proposal and are part of the process around interventions and enrichment decisions. On the affective side, educators were trained in Positive Behavior Instruction and Support (PBIS) and the district committee continues to meet to support program efforts and the implementation of a safe school climate. All schools have embraced the core character traits identified in the district strategic plan. Implementation of the Parent Portal module of PowerSchool has enabled high school, middle school and intermediate school parents and high school students to be more engaged in student achievement. Active use of Naviance by Newtown students in grades 5-12 for multiple educational purposes, including goal setting. Efforts to reduce truancy included home visits, staff-parent-student meetings, student counseling and the incorporation of church/community services to assist with student motivation. In addition, scheduled morning meetings that provided students with breakfast items, behavioral-attendance contracts, and provision of a student/teacher/adult mentor were also implemented. There were scheduled daily check-ins with students, after-school job placement, after-school tutoring, and collaboration with community services to obtain financial support and/or medical treatment.
