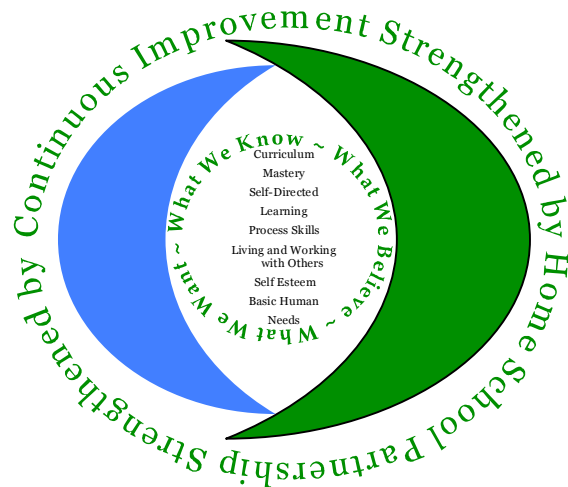


# NEWTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

# PARENT TOOLKIT

*A strong home-school partnership ensures that every child can succeed.*

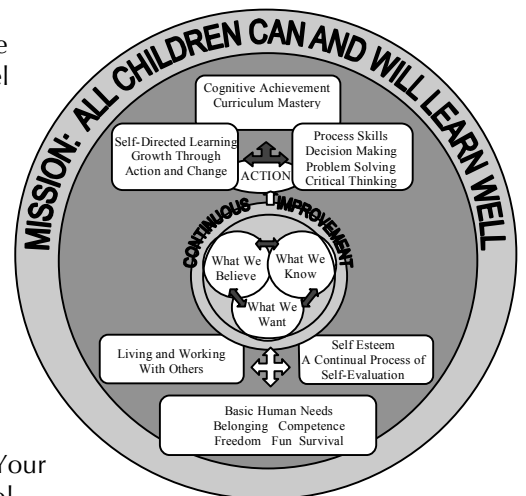
All  
Children  
Can and  
Will  
Learn  
Well



## Grades 2 through 4

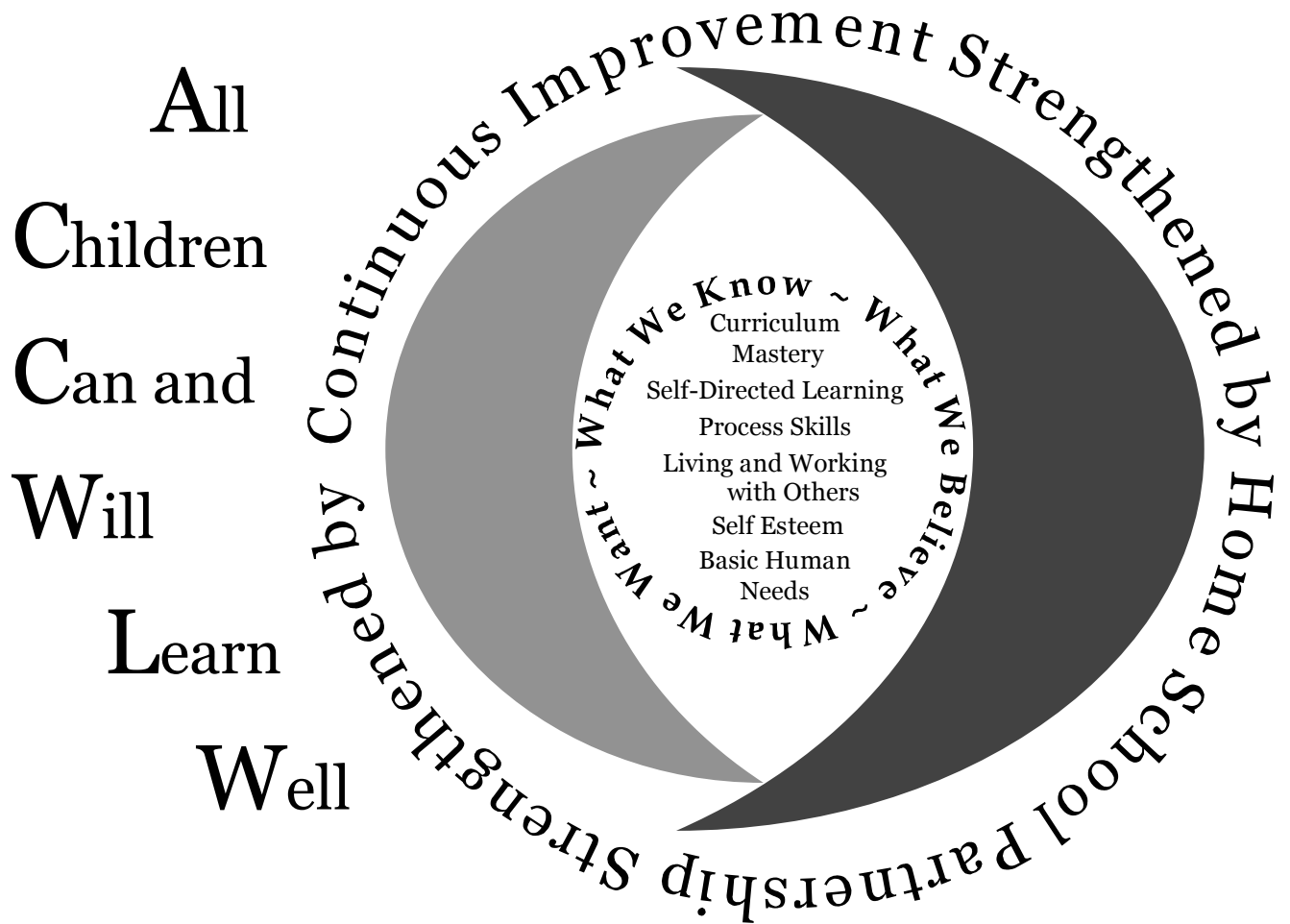
In 1995, the school district collaborated with parents and the community to develop the Newtown Success-Oriented School Model (shown to the right) to represent the core beliefs that are the foundation for nurturing successful learners. These core beliefs, which are based on Glasser’s Model and the quality school movement, guide our decision-making in the school district as we work together to create a quality education for our students.

Parental involvement is key to our success in accomplishing this goal. Research has shown that when parents are involved in their child’s education, there is greater likelihood of higher achievement. With this in mind, the model has been redesigned to be more “parent friendly” and emphasize our desire to collaborate with parents through a strong home-school partnership. Your involvement and support can make a difference in your child’s school performance. This booklet was created to give you a greater understanding of the district’s mission *All Children Can and Will Learn Well*. In it, you will find ideas and suggestions about things you can do at home to support your child’s school experience.



Quality education is possible if we all work together towards the common goal of continuous improvement in the teaching and learning process. A strong home-school partnership insures that every child can succeed. Parents, teachers and administrators all share the same goal - wanting the best for our children.

## NEWTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS



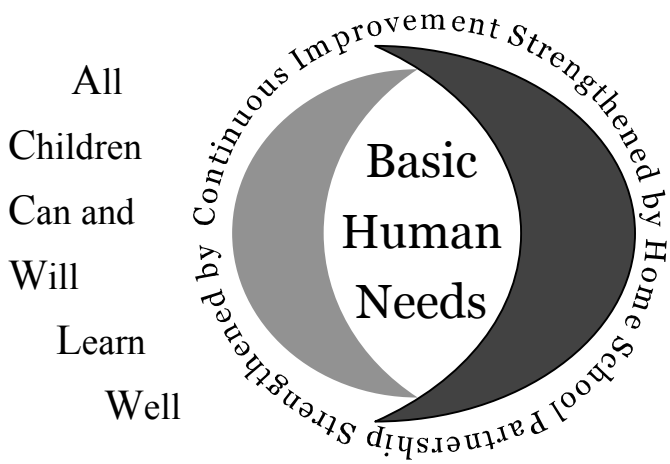
Our success depends on recognizing and understanding what we know, what we believe, and what we want. By meeting our children's basic needs in school and at home, while continuously working to improve the learning environment and curriculum, we will foster the development of students who are responsible, self-directed, and active participants in the educational process.

Together, we will make a difference for our children.

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## Grades 2 through 4

*Children want a close relationship with others, to feel important and able to do what needs to be done, have freedom to make choices, have basic needs satisfied and have fun each and every day.*

Parents and teachers can work together to provide an environment that meets a child's basic needs. There are so many things we can do at home and at school to give our children a solid foundation. Here are some ways to do that...

---

### Children need to feel loved and have a sense of belonging.

*At home,*

- Demonstrate love and attention.
- Read and/or sing together.
- Eat dinner together.
- Have family activities such as game night, family portraits.
- Have your child join a group (such as scouts, a team, or a religious group) that has values like those of your family.

*At school,*

- Hold morning meetings to interact and teach children to communicate effectively with peers, including both speaking and listening.
- Have class jobs so that children can help make the classroom work.
- Provide opportunities for varying personalities to work together.
- Provide opportunities to share achievements.
- Have cross grade level experiences such as book buddies.

### Children need to feel competent...I can do this!

*At home,*

- Establish family routines and organization.
- Have a family meeting to plan who will do what.
- Give children increasing responsibility with age – clearing the table, bedtime routine, getting ready for school.
- Provide affirmation and praise. Sometimes they aren't doing exactly what you want – praise their *effort* toward the goal or the aspect that they did do well.
- Let them take care of siblings.
- Encourage children into trying new things.

## **Basic Human Needs**

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### **Grades 2 through 4**

#### **Children need to feel competent...I can do this!**

*(continued)*

*At home,*

- Teach communication – both talking and listening.
- Manage the communication between home and school, but don't take it over and do it for your child. Instead, encourage your child to communicate directly with his/her teacher.

*At school,*

- Teach the writing process and share published work.
- Teach student strategies that they can use to work through problems.
- Use a variety of instructional methods, such as the use of manipulatives.
- Communicate with home using home folder, backpack, school projects, etc.
- Provide opportunities for affirmations and praise.

#### **Children need the freedom to make choices that are developmentally appropriate...I am responsible for myself!**

*At home,*

- Increase decision-making abilities by giving two or three choices to pick from. Children at this age should be selecting what to wear and learning to relate it to outside temperature or weather conditions.
- Reward good choices with increased privileges.
- Play games where you predict the result of choices.

*At school,*

- Offer structured choices such as books to read, writing topics, and which center or activity to do first.
- Provide opportunities to reflect on work and choose the best work.
- Have students predict what happens as the result of choices.
- Read stories where children make choices and predict what will happen next and why.

#### **Children need to have fun! This can include the fun of making new discoveries or of learning something new and interesting.**

*At home,*

- Provide opportunities for socializing including parties and sleepovers.
- Go on family outings.
- Work on crafts and projects.
- Have a family game night. Focus on having a good time and laughing – not just winning.
- Some play should be spontaneous – allow for free, unstructured time.

# Basic Human Needs

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## Grades 2 through 4

### **Children need to have fun!**

*(continued)*

*At school,*

- Use games to practice and reinforce skills instead of drill.
- Have evening events with families.
- Provide interesting content in lessons.
- Sing, dance and move around.
- Play with words. At this age, children love riddles and “knock-knock” jokes.

### **Children need warmth, sleep, and good nutrition**

*At home,*

- Provide healthy activities and good nutrition and help your child understand why you are making the choices you do.
- Provide adequate sleep and a routine bedtime of 8:00p.m.
- Help your child know how to dress for the weather and be careful not to overdress.
- Send healthy snack and lunch for school – not sweets or sweetened drinks.
- Teach and provide personal safety such as bike safety, fire safety, telephone safety, Internet safety, stranger awareness, and drug awareness.

*At school,*

- Make snacks available for children who don't have food.
- Handle free/reduced lunch discreetly.
- Have water available and encourage drinking it regularly.
- Call home if sleepiness is noticeable more than once.
- Practice drills for fire, wind and bus emergencies.
- Review playground safety lessons.
- School nurse provides the teaching staff with information about allergies/medical issues.

## Basic Human Needs

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Grades 2 through 4



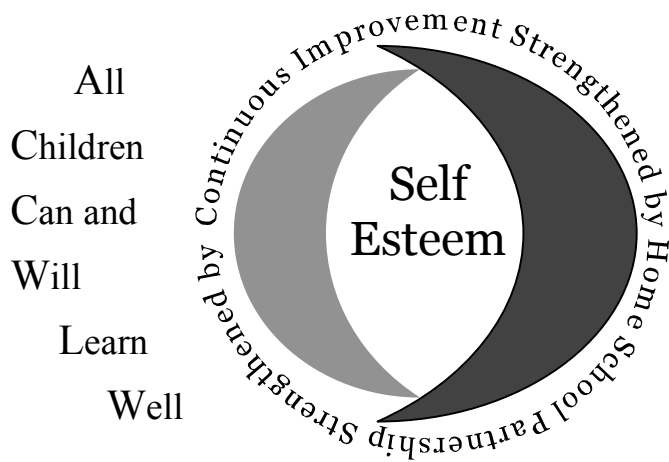
### Internet Safety

Children in the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> grade age range are beginning to look outside their families for social interaction and for information. It is a good idea for them to begin exploring the use of the computer, but important for you as parents to restrict computer use and stay involved.

#### Here are some ideas to consider:

- **Put the computer your child will use in a common area** where you will be able to supervise what is happening. Never put it away from the family in the child's room.
- **Establish family rules** by age for computer and Internet use. Web sites such as <http://kids.getnetwise.org> or [www.staysafe.org](http://www.staysafe.org) or [www.netsmartz.org](http://www.netsmartz.org) can give you suggestions for rules to establish.
- **Educate yourself** about Internet safety -- [www.isafe.org](http://www.isafe.org) provides a newsletter for parents to help you stay up to date.
- **Consider using a filtering program**, a child-friendly browser, or restrict sites your child can go to. Most internet browsers have the ability for you to block access to certain sites. You may list specific sites that you feel are inappropriate for your child to reduce the likelihood of them being exposed to inappropriate content or engaging in social networking (blogs, instant messaging, chat rooms, etc.).
- **Talk to your children about the dangers of social networking sites and technology.** Anyone they haven't met in person is a stranger, and the rules of talking to strangers should apply to anyone who tries to contact your child via blogs, email, instant messaging, chat rooms, or similar technologies. If your child wishes to communicate with a stranger, ask to speak with them yourself via telephone prior to communication and monitor any and all discussions between your child and
- **Bookmark child-safe search engines.** Google, Yahoo, and MSN all have "Safe Search" sites to restrict search results to appropriate content.
- **Restrict the amount of time** your child spends on the computer or using computer-type games. Physical activity supports healthy brain development – get them out to play as well as spending time reading and with electronic media.





## Grades 2 through 4

*Children with high self-esteem are competent, honest, responsible, compassionate and loving.*

A student who has high self-esteem is enthusiastic and shows a desire to acquire knowledge. They stay focused to complete a task and are accountable and responsible for their actions. A confident child demonstrates optimism when faced with challenges and works towards self-improvement. They have faith in themselves and their ability to meet challenges head-on. They value themselves.

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Here are some examples of ways that parents and teachers can foster positive self-esteem and help children to become eager and successful learners.

### **A child with positive self-esteem exhibits enthusiasm and a desire for the acquisition of knowledge.**

*At home,*

- Celebrate accomplishments by displaying projects.
- Share accomplishments with other family members and friends.
- Connect family outings to school projects.
- Make learning real by providing experiences at home, i.e. eat food from countries being studied, go to places taught in school, for example, visit Mother Earth during rock study.
- Encourage your child to take risks by acknowledging that first efforts are not usually perfect – we learn from our mistakes

*At school,*

- Provide academic choice in the responsive classroom.
- Give students 3 or 4 choices for how to complete an assignment, i.e. book report or power point or poster (they can present the same information in different ways).
- Give choice in subjects to learn about (book choice, choose research project).
- Teachers show enthusiasm about topics – excitement is catching.

# Self Esteem

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## Grades 2 through 4

### **A child with positive self-esteem stays focused to complete a project.**

*At home,*

- Give limited tasks so completion is possible.
- Make schedules to show what needs to be completed each day on long-term projects (budget your time).
- Model time management as a parent and tell your child how you did it.
- Acknowledge natural consequences, both good and bad; reflect on what you did.

*At school,*

- Give academic choice so children will be more invested in the task (book choice, topic choice, product choice).
- Help children develop a plan for the week of what they will do each night.
- Use rubrics so students and parents will be aware of criteria for completion and expectations for quality work.
- Teachers give parents suggested guidelines or time lines for home projects to reinforce time management.

### **A child with positive self-esteem is accountable and responsible for his or her actions.**

*At home,*

- Give children tasks (chores) to be responsible for and hold them accountable for completing them.
- Tie natural consequences to actions. Explain to children why the consequences are appropriate.
- Be sure your children know what you expect of them and then follow through i.e. you must do homework before extracurriculars and if you don't finish homework, you don't go.
- When a child does not follow through with a responsibility, don't do the task for him and then fuss at him. Instead, praise something he has done right, prompt him to start the first steps of the task, then leave him to do it.

*At school,*

- Give students classroom jobs and hold them responsible for their actions.
- Have clear expectations and consequences i.e. you are quiet in the hall when you work or you can't work in the hall.
- Post classroom rules, and revisit them often.

# Self Esteem

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## Grades 2 through 4

**A child with positive self-esteem exhibits satisfaction with themselves in a variety of situations.**

*At home,*

- Talk through projects with your children in advance to set goals. Reflect on what they have done by asking questions and having the child explain the process and what they learned.
- Children share successes and projects with extended family.
- Ask questions that help children express their view of their work, such as “What do you think you did best this time? What would you do different next time?”

*At school,*

- Allow students the opportunity to do self-reflections by considering what they have done well and what they can do better, i.e. find beautiful written language in a piece and tell why it’s terrific.
- Ask students what they think about their own work, so they will talk about it.
- Ask questions that help children express their view of their work.
- Have students score their own work against a rubric or checklist.

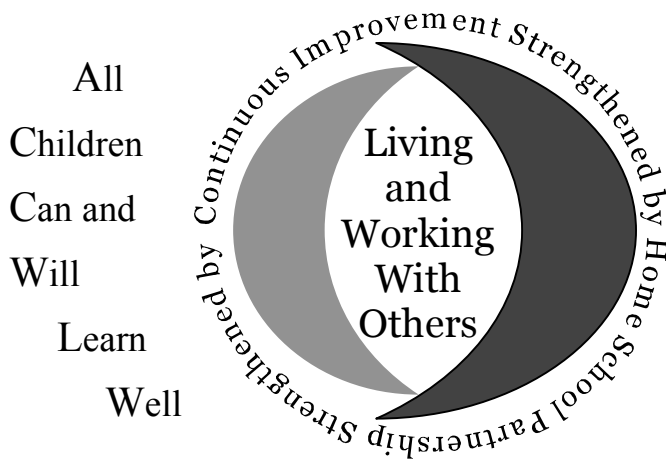
**A child with positive self-esteem seeks challenges and is accountable for individual and group decisions.**

*At home,*

- Recognize that achievers link the results with their own effort and non-achievers link the result with chance. Help your child link cause with effect.
- Give children opportunity to make decisions, i.e. what should we make for dinner? Where should we go for a day outing?
- Allow children to have logical consequences for their actions.
- Recognize that we don’t always reach the challenge and encourage and praise the effort.

*At school,*

- Provide support and opportunity to participate in challenging activities, i.e. tell students how they can exceed the standard. Give choices.
- Give students opportunities to do peer and self-evaluations of participation in group projects.



## Grades 2 through 4

*Children learn about themselves and others in everything they do. Parents and teachers can help them understand the value and importance of living and working with others.*

“During our morning meeting, I noticed that you were talking to Sara during Annie’s share time. How do you think Annie felt that you weren’t listening?” It’s often hard for a child to sit quietly and give their full attention to a friend. But learning to listen attentively and show respect for others is an important skill to master. With some gentle reminders and discussion, children realize we are all valuable members of society.

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Home and school are the natural environments for our children to learn about themselves and each other. What are our goals? Parents and teachers can work together to help children consistently:

Show respect and concern for others.

Understand the impact of his/her behavior on others.

Understand the needs of others and be able to respond to those needs.

Understand and respect individual differences.

### **Children will learn to show respect and concern for others.**

*At home,*

- Model respectful behavior – encourage children to ask how others are feeling.
- Talking at the dinner table provides an excellent opportunity to interact with the rest of the family in a respectful and caring manner.
- Praise good behavior and showing respect.
- Encourage children to feel comfortable and open up to you during bedtime or other quiet time.

*At school,*

- Teach conflict resolution and how to get along with others and treat them the right way.
- Teacher should always be respectful towards students and other teachers.
- Compliment students for showing respect.
- Encourage students who come to teachers with issues to talk it over with friends.
- Have a grade-level presentation on bullying and teach children how to respond when they are bullied or observe bullying.

# Living and Working With Others

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## Grades 2 through 4

**Children will understand how their behavior impacts others and learn to respond to the needs of others.**

*At home,*

- Ask your child to articulate what they did. How did it make them feel? How did it make the other person feel?
- Become involved with charity work, donations, good will projects, participate in walks or drives.
- Help siblings (reach something too high) and work together (pick up toys).
- Practice listening to others.

*At school,*

- Use restitution – help a child who has misbehaved “repair the damage” by doing some act for the person or by fixing what was broken.
- Share school supplies – tissues, post-it notes.
- Help a friend in the class in different situations (look for a lost mitten, pick up a dropped item).
- Ask a student to help a friend to the nurse.

**Children will understand and respect individual differences and respect differences of opinion.**

*At home,*

- Encourage children to play with others with different ethnicity, religion, interests or strengths.
- Try different foods and go to different restaurants.
- Moms and Dads have different opinions – discuss and compromise so everyone can benefit.
- Presidential debates – talk about how they both have different opinions, but both are good people.

*At school,*

- Read books with characters who have different cultures and customs.
- Be aware of peanut free classroom and what it means.
- Learn about other countries and their similarities and differences to ours.
- Encourage students to work with all classmates, not just friends.
- Allow many correct answers for discussion questions.
- Encourage discourse during literature (book) discussions; explain all opinions are valid as long as you back them up.

# Living and Working With Others

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## Grades 2 through 4

### **Children learn to work cooperatively with others.**

*At home,*

- Play games inside and outside. Practice taking turns, accepting not winning gracefully and not gloating when the game is won. The purpose is the fun together.
- Give tasks that require more than one person to complete (plant a garden).
- Clean the house (everybody – Dad too!)

*At school,*

- Use Literature Circle discussion groups in grades 3 and 4 with mature students.
- Assign group projects.
- Clean the classroom together.
- Assign buddies on field trips.
- Have your students be reading buddies with younger children.

### **Children learn to deal with consequences and understand why we need rules.**

*At home,*

- Talk with children about why their behavior was unacceptable and ask them to articulate what they did wrong.
- Talk about community laws and why they are important.
- Post “to do” charts at home so expectations are clear. Follow through when expectations are not met

*At school,*

- Have clear expectations for behavior and follow through consistently by posting classroom rules stated in positive terms. The class should brainstorm this list together.
- Role-play examples of what happens when rules get broken.
- Hold class meetings to resolve problems.
- Assign class jobs so students experience taking responsibility.

### **Children will demonstrate sensitivity and kindness.**

*At home,*

- Send cards of thanks, celebration, and sympathy.
- Visit friends in hospital or in general.
- Bake for new neighbors.
- Visit elderly relatives or neighbors.
- Write letters to relatives or friends.

*At school,*

- Share with others (supplies) and include anyone who wants to play in games.
- Send cards of thank you, get well, and sympathy.
- Create stories and share with others
- Help children learn to “read” the feelings of others by asking “How do you think he/she is feeling?”

# Living and Working With Others

Grades 2 through 4



## Bullying

Board of Education Policy 8-605 prohibits bullying in schools. Bullying among children is aggressive behavior that is intentional and is repeated over time. Bullying in 2<sup>nd</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup> grades usually involves hitting or name calling or not allowing a child to play with the group. Bullying may cause children to feel lonely, anxious, or sick. Sometimes children do not tell the school or their parents they are being bullied.

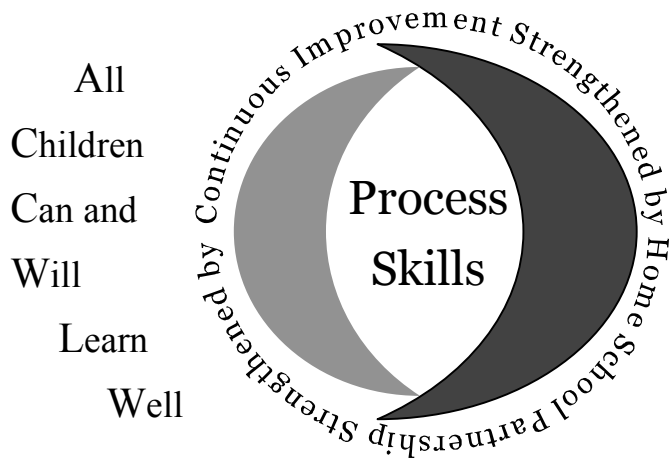
### If your child tells you he/she is being bullied.

- Be supportive and gather information about the bullying. Never tell your child to ignore the bullying. Find out who was involved, what happened, and where it occurred. Do not encourage physical retaliation as a solution.
- Contact your child's teacher and/or principal. Keep your emotions in check. A parent's protective instincts stir strong emotions. Give the school person the basic information you have gathered. Expect the person from school to get back to you. If the bullying doesn't stop, contact school authorities again.
- Help your child become more resilient to bullying. Teach him/her how to seek help from an adult when he/she feels threatened. Help your child to develop a sense of self-worth by developing talents or positive attributes. Encourage your child to make contact with friendly students in his class. Ask yourself, "Is my child being bullied because of a lack of social skills? If your child easily irritates people, help him/her learn the social rules of his/her peer group."

### What if your child is the bully?

Children who bully their peers tend to be impulsive, be easily frustrated, lack empathy, have difficulty following rules, and view violence in a positive way.

- Make it clear to your child that you take bullying seriously and that you will not tolerate this behavior. Develop clear and consistent rules – then praise and reinforce your child for following rules. Do not use physical punishment for discipline. Instead, remove privileges or add jobs around the house.
- Provide as much parental or adult supervision as possible. Put an immediate stop to any bullying you observe. Then have the child act in a more appropriate way.
- Emphasize praise and positive feedback. Reward the child for caring and appropriate behaviors.



## Grades 2 through 4

*When children grow as critical thinkers, problem solvers, and decision makers, they master the curriculum and become accomplished learners.*

Parents and teachers can work collaboratively to teach children how to think critically, solve problems and make decisions. What's the result? Children who can imagine, invent, elaborate, predict, reason, reflect, take risks and justify solutions.

---

Here are some examples of how parents and teachers can provide ways for children to develop process skills.

### **Problem Solving**

When faced with a situation where no clear answer is evident, students recognize there is a problem, generate solutions, and select one to try.

*At home,*

- Talk about what you are doing when you are solving straightforward problems. For example, "I think I have a problem here. I've made dinner for four people and now six are coming. Let's see, what could I do? (Generate solutions, evaluate them, and pick one, giving the reason why.)"
- Talk about the problem solving that you see others do in the neighborhood or on television.
- Don't solve problems that your child can solve himself/herself. Say, "I think you can figure that out." If they need help, guide by asking, "What's the problem? What are some things you might do? Which one seems best and why? What is your plan?"

*At school,*

- Hold class meetings or subgroup meetings to solve problems that come up. Guide students to identify the problem (be careful that the problem is the source, not "you won't do my solution.") Encourage them to generate and evaluate multiple solutions before choosing the one to use.
- Help students recognize that they are solving problems in science, in math, and when they are trying to understand what they are reading. Each of these disciplines has strategies for solving problems.
- When solving social problems, consider role-playing relevant solutions to help children select the most effective one.



## Process Skills

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### Grades 2 through 4

#### Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is the analysis of various points of view, the evaluation of data, and synthesizing this information with prior knowledge to move towards a conclusion.

*At home,*

- Talk about different points of view. When you watch television programs or read stories together, try to figure out the points of view of different characters.
- Gather data to make decisions. If the child says, “everybody is doing it” conduct a survey of his/her friends to see what the data says.
- Play at guessing how different family members or favorite characters would react to a situation. Try to think about what you know about them that makes you think they will react that way.

*At school,*

- Read stories and ask children to talk about each character’s point of view about what is happening.
- Gather data and bar graphs or tally information to show opinions or viewpoints of class members (for example, what they like for snack, favorite music).
- Teach children to listen to each other and tell what another person has said.
- In reading, help children learn to support their opinion with evidence from the text.

#### Decision Making

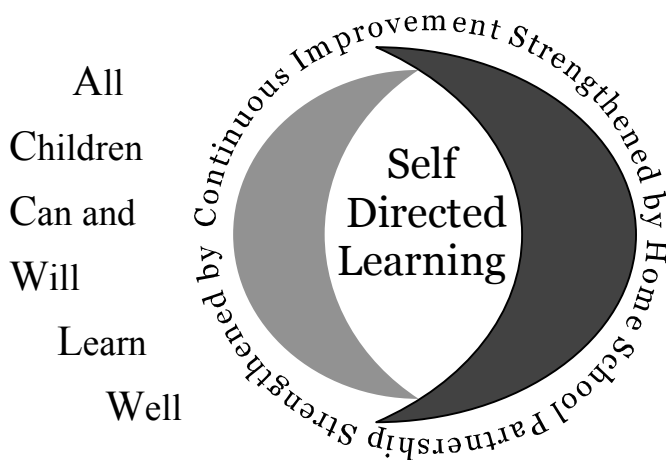
Decision-making is the process of considering alternatives in order to draw conclusions and make thoughtful choices.

*At home,*

- Offer choices; at this age three options are appropriate – it might be what to do on the weekend, where to go on a special day, or how to spend some special money. Then help your child weigh the positives and negatives of each choice before deciding.
- Talk about decisions that you are making and what you are thinking.
- Make predictions of what would likely happen next in various situations.

*At school,*

- As a class, brainstorm choices or solutions to a problem, then discuss the pros and cons of each.
- Examine the decision-making of characters in stories.
- Guide children to make predictions about what they think will happen next, then read on to validate/invalidate their prediction.



## Grades 2 through 4

*Children become self-directed learners by actively participating in the learning process and taking responsibility for their learning.*

In order for students to learn, they must be actively engaged in the learning process. When this occurs, children become imaginative, open-minded, confident, curious and independent.

---

The way you help your child in school can affect his/her sense of competence and motivation in the later grades. It is instinctive for parents to want to sit with your child and help him/her do homework. You notice what he is doing wrong, tell him, show him how to do it right, and then stand or sit there to make sure he does it correctly. What you are actually teaching him is that he is helpless, that if he wants attention he should get things wrong. Children who have this support at home often sit and wait in school for the teacher to come and get them started. They often sit with their hands raised and wait for the teacher. When the teacher finally arrives, they say, "I don't understand what to do." They become more and more passive about learning because they believe that they just need to wait to be told what to do.

Now what do I do? There are three things that you can do to help your child become motivated and learn to feel competent. PRAISE , PROMPT, and LEAVE.

### **PRAISE**

To start with, you are going to change the way you approach what your child is doing. Find something specific that he/she is doing right and make a positive comment such as, "Good, you're getting ready to do your homework." or "I see you're looking up your assignments." Every time you approach your child to see how he is doing, you are going to START WITH A POSITIVE COMMENT. It is usually about something that he has done right so far.

### **PROMPT**

If your child is doing, fine, then just say, "Keep up the good work!" If you have noticed something that needs support or your child appears stuck, give a brief, clear prompt of the next step to take. It should be brief and not start with the words "But," "However," or "Instead of." Begin with, "The next thing to do is..." Your prompt should be short and sweet – not a long, drawn-out explanation that will only confuse him.

### **LEAVE**

If you hang around, you are communicating to your child that you believe that he will need more help. This leads him to believe he can't do it without you. So you are going to smile, turn, and leave. This is a good time to take out the trash or load the dishwasher or check an e-mail or fix a cup of tea.

# Self Directed Learning

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## Grades 2 through 4

This process is explained more fully in Chapter five of Fred Jones' book *Tools for Teaching* that is given to all new teachers or in the *Tools for Teaching, Parent Edition* DVDs that can be found in the town library or on the website [www.fredjones.com](http://www.fredjones.com).

### **Some ways to help a child grow into a self-directed learner:**

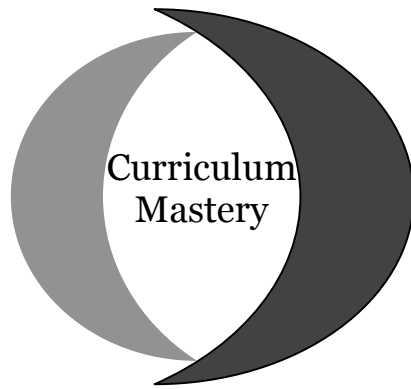
*At home,*

- Expect your child to come home each day with a list of assignments.
- Provide a comfortable setting and the materials they need for daily assignments. Give them a work area free of distractions that is well lit and equipped with pencils and erasers.
- Give them help in understanding directions when they need it. Have them read the directions aloud and explain back to you what needs to be done.
- Encourage your child's efforts to explore his world. Listen carefully to their discoveries and natural curiosities. Help them make connections between what they just discovered to what they already know.

*At school,*

- Give students opportunities to examine their efforts and accomplishments. Have them reflect on their work and ask what they might change, if anything.
- Introduce ways to find and use resources. Have them use the library to research a specific animal, look on the Internet for the daily weather report.
- Set goals and plans. During morning meeting, talk about one task that needs to be accomplished in class today and brainstorm a plan to accomplish that task.
- Act amazed and truly appreciative when children start to work without being told.

All  
Children  
Can and  
Will  
Learn  
Well



## Grades 2 through 4 Curriculum Overview

*Curriculum mastery, also referred to as cognitive achievement, results from quality instruction, an opportunity to learn, prior knowledge, and a willingness to persevere.*

Curriculum mastery is a continuous process that begins in kindergarten and continues throughout your child’s formal education. The essential knowledge and skills that your child acquires becomes the basis for new learning. Enduring knowledge is our shared goal. Standards and objectives are used in every subject at every grade level and aid in measuring progress. Mastery of the curriculum depends not only upon a student’s ability, but also by the effort and persistence of our children, their parents and teachers.

Presented on the following pages are summaries of the content standards and expected performances for Grade 2 through 4.

### Second Grade Curriculum Overview

This table gives some general information about what is taught in the second grade program. The specific objectives are listed in the curriculum documents posted on the district website [www.newtown.k12.ct.us](http://www.newtown.k12.ct.us). Our district is committed to helping every child learn well through differentiating the curriculum whenever possible.

<b>Art</b>	Students in first and second grade attend art classes once each week. In these classes they explore line, shape, color, balance and pattern. They try out a variety of media and techniques. Students begin to explore what makes a piece of art effective, think about their responses to various works, and learn about a few artists.	
<b>Health</b>	Safety	Children learn safe practices and laws for common activities (biking, crossing streets, etc) and develop strategies for identifying threatening situations and responding appropriately.
	Social/Emotional	Children learn to recognize a variety of feelings within themselves and others and practice problem-solving skills in social situations.
	Substance Use/Abuse	Children tell how alcohol and tobacco can change a person’s behavior and affect his/her body. They compare and contrast things they eat/drink that are good for you and things that are not.

## Second Grade Curriculum Overview

<b>Health</b>	Healthy Body	Children link food to energy, classify food into food pyramid groups, choose healthy snacks, and describe how exercising daily makes a person feel better.
	Disease Prevention	Children develop practices to prevent lyme disease, practice personal hygiene, and become aware of safe food storage and preparation.
<b>Information Literacy</b>	Gather Information for a Specific Purpose	Children generate and organize questions about a topic and gather information from teacher-selected materials.
	Analyze and Evaluate Information	Children put new information into their own words to create reports that are organized into a logical sequence. They document their sources by giving author, title, and publication date.
	Evaluate both the Process and the Product	Children reflect on the process used, analyze their products for quality, and identify improvements for the future.
<b>Mathematics</b>	Algebraic Reasoning: Patterns and Functions	Children use understanding of patterns and graphic organizers to solve logic, classification, and number problems. They learn to form and respond to number sentences, learn the addition and subtraction facts for sums to 18, and identify reasonable answers to real world problems.
	Numerical and Proportional Reasoning	Children work with place value for three-digit numbers using models and money, use estimation strategies to determine if an answer is reasonable. They study the relationship of multiplication and division using models and arrays. They model and describe the fractions from $\frac{1}{2}$ through $\frac{1}{10}$ and explain what the denominator means. They begin to describe simple ratios.
	Geometry and Measurement	Children identify shapes in different positions, combine and subdivide polygons and solids from memory. They build and identify shapes that have one or more lines of symmetry or that can be divided into two congruent parts. They use the calendar to solve time problems and tell time to the half-hour, exploring time to the quarter hour. They measure using standard and non-standard objects, and begin to explore the concepts of area and perimeter.

## Second Grade Curriculum Overview

<b>Mathematics</b>	Working with Data	Children pose questions, collect, organize and record data using tallies, tables, real graphs, picture graphs, and bar graphs. They begin to learn vocabulary to describe the likelihood of various events and to conduct simple probability experiments.
<b>Music</b>	Children become aware of their singing voices, discriminate pitch and sing rhythmically together a varied repertoire of songs representing genres and styles from diverse cultures and songs using varying dynamics and tempi.	
<b>Physical Education</b>	Children develop physical fitness and motor skills, learn to play responsibly and respectfully with other people and develop awareness of the positive aspects of physical activity.	
<b>Reading</b>	Read for Information and Understanding	Children learn to distinguish relevant from irrelevant information in text, give main ideas or story elements in sequence, use charts and graphs to support understanding, make personal connections to text, make inferences and support with details from the text.
	Read for Critical Analysis and Evaluation	Children talk about the author's message and point of view. They begin to support their opinions with evidence from the text.
	Read for Aesthetic and Personal Response	Children study authors to look at how the author's experience affects his/her writing, and talk about how the author's use of language and structure enhances the meaning and beauty of the work.
	Read Strategically	Children develop strategies to use their background (prior) knowledge to bring meaning to the text, learn about genres, and differentiate narration and exposition. They use sounds, syllables, and word chunks (such as suffixes) to decode words, develop strategies to clarify vocabulary, and learn to monitor and adjust their reading.
<b>Science</b>	Children study the properties of matter – solids and liquids. They examine the life cycles of flowering plants and the effects of light and water on seed germination and plant growth, as well as the effects of various soils on plants. They sort foods into the common food groups.	
<b>Social Studies</b>	Children study their community and learn about the geography and history of Newtown.	

## Second Grade Curriculum Overview

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<b>Technology</b>	Children learn to create documents with text and graphics and print them, use technology resources to illustrate thought, ideas, and stories, and create simple multimedia projects.	
<b>Writing</b>	Technical Practical Writing	Children learn to use structure to organize their writing, and use facts, details, information, and specific vocabulary to communicate about a topic.
	Range and Versatility of Writing	Children write for a variety of audiences, use their prior knowledge to enrich their writing, and form a written opinion and support it with evidence. They learn to elaborate ideas with specific and descriptive language.
	Reflective Writing	Children compare and contrast prior and current pieces of writing to see their own growth and set personal goals.
	Writing Strategically	Children develop stamina for writing, use a variety of strategies to organize ideas, incorporate transitional words, and use the writing process to develop and publish pieces.
	Mechanics/Conventions of Print	Children spell high frequency words correctly in daily writing and apply spelling patterns to spell unfamiliar words. They add endings appropriately, write complete and grammatically correct sentences, and use the basic conventions of capitalization and punctuation.

## Third Grade Curriculum Overview

This table gives some general information about what is taught in the third grade program. The specific objectives are listed in the curriculum documents posted on the district website at [www.newtown.k12.ct.us](http://www.newtown.k12.ct.us). The district is committed to helping every child learn well through differentiating the curriculum whenever possible.

<b>Art</b>	Students in third grade attend art classes once each week. In these classes they explore line, shape, form value, color, texture, balance, pattern, and emphasis. They try out a variety of media and techniques. Students begin to explore what makes a piece of art effective, recognize connections between the visual arts and other disciplines in the curriculum, and discuss specific works of art from several time periods. They discuss different responses to artworks and assess their own work.	
<b>Health</b>	Safety	Children develop strategies for identifying threatening situations and responding appropriately particularly good/bad secrets and good/bad touches.
	Social/Emotional	Children practice positive behaviors for getting along with others and how to respond in bullying situations.
	Substance Use/Abuse	Children describe the harmful effects of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs and talk about why there are laws to protect them.
	Healthy Body	Children learn about energy nutrients, how to balance energy in (food) with energy out (exercise) and think about daily health habits.
	Disease Prevention	Children look at how communicable diseases are transmitted and prevented and are made aware of simple HIV transmission.
	Growth and Development	Children learn in a simple way that a baby grows in the mothers womb until birth.
<b>Information Literacy</b>	Gather Information for a Specific Purpose	Children follow a structured plan for research and understand how information may be organized in various sources.
	Analyze and Evaluate Information	Children communicate research information in a variety of ways. They document their sources by giving author, title, city of publication, publisher, and copyright date and/or web address.



## Third Grade Curriculum Overview

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<b>Information Literacy</b>	Evaluate both the Process and the Product	Children reflect on the process used, analyze their products for quality, and identify improvements for the future.
<b>Mathematics</b>	Algebraic Reasoning: Patterns and Functions	Children use understanding of patterns and graphic organizers to solve logic, classification, geometric and number problems. They understand the = sign and explore inequalities.
	Numerical and Proportional Reasoning	Children develop understanding of place value, identifying, and comparing the magnitude and value of digits in 2- and 3- digit numbers. They give change for a dollar using pennies, nickels, dimes, quarters, and half-dollars. They solve problems using 1 and 2-digit numbers and are expected to know their addition and subtraction facts to 18. They build the concept of multiplication and division using models and pictures. They use a variety of manipulative models to represent fractions and mixed numbers, finding equal parts of a set of objects, and adding fractions with like and unlike denominators.
	Geometry and Measurement	Children identify acute, right, and obtuse angles, build and describe polygons, work with tessellations, and draw and describe line symmetry. They use coordinate systems to draw and interpret maps, tell time to the minute, and solve elapsed time problems involving calendars and clocks. They estimate and measure length to the nearest inch and centimeter.
	Working with Data	Children pose questions and use a variety of ways to collect, sort, record, organize, analyze, and compare data from samples and surveys. They describe data trends using range (least to greatest) and mode (most frequently). They conduct simple probability experiments.

## Third Grade Curriculum Overview

<b>Music</b>	Students learn to improvise melodies and accompaniments with voice and classroom instruments and respond through movement to rhythm, tempo, pitch, mood, dynamics, and patterns. They begin to compose short musical phrases, learn to sing 3 and 4-part rounds, sing some types of harmonies, and demonstrate a steady beat. They begin to read music notation using note names and identifying the parts of the staff. They begin to describe music, using terms such as melody, harmony, theme and variation and develop an understanding of how music relates to the world around them.	
<b>Physical Education</b>	Children take the Connecticut Fitness Assessment and set personal goals for improvement. They learn to play a variety of games, learning to work cooperatively and productively with peers of varying skill levels, resolving conflicts, and displaying good sportsmanship.	
<b>Reading</b>	Read for Information and Understanding	Children summarize stories in sequence and organize facts from expository text. They make relevant connections between the text and their own experiences, identify the theme in stories, and use text features to make inferences. They use subject vocabulary when speaking and writing.
	Read for Critical Analysis and Evaluation	Children discuss bias and points of view by reading multiple texts on a given topic to compare and contrast different points of view. They look at how an author's life experience affects what he/she writes. They support an opinion with evidence from the text, analyzing the relationship between characters and their actions and feelings.
	Read for Aesthetic and Personal Response	Children study how the author's use of language and structure affects the reader, empathize with characters, and explain their personal thought and feelings, giving relevant information to support their reactions.
	Read Strategically	Children are applying many of the skills they learned in the lower grades by using understanding of text structure to help construct meaning and by asking questions to clarify meaning while they read. They expand their vocabulary through use of context and understanding of word parts.

## Third Grade Curriculum Overview

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<b>Science</b>	Children study the properties of matter – dissolving, sinking and floating, conducting heat, and attraction to magnets. They experiment with plan and animal adaptation, explore the properties of rocks, and explore ways to conserve earth materials.	
<b>Social Studies</b>	Children study their ancestry and explore how the land affects how people live.	
<b>Technology</b>	Children learn to touch type without looking at the keys, gather information and create projects and a multimedia presentation. They revise documents using word process features including spell check. They learn about safe use of the internet and gather information from teacher-identified websites.	
<b>Writing</b>	Technical Practical Writing	Children create simple reports by gathering information from a variety of sources and organizing it into a presentation or report that acknowledges the source and includes vocabulary appropriate to the topic.
	Range and Versatility of Writing	Children write for a variety of audiences and purposes using author as models for writing. They learn to elaborate ideas with specific and descriptive language.
	Reflective Writing	Children compare and contrast prior and current pieces of writing to see their own growth and set personal goals.
	Writing Strategically	Children develop stamina for writing, and independently use a variety of strategies to organize ideas, incorporate transitional words, and use the writing process to develop and publish pieces. They are expected to write to a prompt in a given amount of time, drawing from personal experiences for ideas.
	Mechanics/Conventions of Print	Children spell high frequency words correctly in daily writing and apply spelling patterns to spell unfamiliar words. They add endings appropriately, write complete and grammatically correct sentences, and use the basic conventions of capitalization and punctuation, including quotation marks and apostrophes.

## Fourth Grade Curriculum Overview

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This table gives some general information about what is taught in the fourth grade program. The specific objectives are listed in the curriculum documents posted on the district website at [www.newtown.k12.ct.us](http://www.newtown.k12.ct.us). The district is committed to helping every child learn well through differentiating the curriculum whenever possible.

<b>Art</b>	Students in fourth grade attend art classes once each week. In these classes they explore line, shape, form value, color, texture, balance, pattern, and emphasis. They try out a variety of media and techniques. Students begin to explore what makes a piece of art effective, recognize connections between the visual arts and other disciplines in the curriculum, and discuss specific works of art from several time periods. They discuss different responses to artworks and assess their own work. They discuss different responses to artworks and assess their own work.	
<b>Health</b>	Safety	Students identify potentially dangerous situations and practice responses
	Social/Emotional	Students develop strategies for setting high standards without becoming a perfectionist and learn to respect individual differences.
	Substance Use/Abuse	Students develop impulse control to consider the consequences when making decisions. They discuss with their families what the family values are about alcohol and tobacco use.
	Healthy Body	Students learn to use exercise as stress management, and learn about nutrients in foods.
	Disease Prevention	Students learn the difference between communicable and non-communicable disease and describe ways to prevent communicable diseases.
<b>Information Literacy</b>	Gather Information for a Specific Purpose	Students follow structure plans for research and use teacher-selected resources.
	Analyze and Evaluate Information	Students distinguish between fact and opinion and put new information into their own words to write summaries and reports. They document their sources giving author, title, city of publication, publisher, copyright date, and/or web address.

## Fourth Grade Curriculum Overview

<b>Information Literacy</b>	Evaluate both the Process and the Product	Students use teacher checklists and/or rubrics to determine if all requirements are included and analyze their products for quality, identifying improvements for future products.
<b>Mathematics</b>	Algebraic Reasoning: Patterns and Functions	Students recognize, extend, and use understanding of patterns to make and test generalizations. They develop deep understanding of equivalence of whole numbers and they use a variable as an unknown quantity in simple equations.
	Numerical and Proportional Reasoning	Students use place value patterns and commutative and associative property to estimate, do mental computation as well as pencil and paper computation. They continue to work with multiplication and division using models and arrays, beginning to identify prime and composite numbers. They use models and pictures to develop deep understanding of fractions and equivalent fractions and ratios.
	Geometry and Measurement	Students identify congruence, line symmetry, and rotational symmetry. They describe properties of polygons and solids using the language acute, parallel, perpendicular, right, and obtuse. They convert customary units of length in both standard and metric, using estimation to predict reasonable answers to measurement problems.
	Working with Data	Students collect, organize, record, and analyze data. They construct and interpret a variety of types of graphs. They use the terms range, mode, median, and mean to describe a data set and conduct probability experiments to identify fair situations and good choices.

## Fourth Grade Curriculum Overview

<b>Music</b>	Students learn to read and play music notation and create and improvise melodies using the recorder. They sing partner songs, rounds, and simple harmony, keep a steady beat, and perform on a variety of instruments. They listen to music of various styles and cultures, learning some music terminology. They learn to evaluate their own performance and those of their peers.	
<b>Physical Education</b>	Children take the Connecticut Fitness Assessment and set personal goals for improvement. They learn to play a variety of games, learning to work cooperatively and productively with peers of varying skill levels, resolving conflicts, and displaying good sportsmanship.	
<b>Reading</b>	Read for Information and Understanding	Students learn to connect what they are reading to their own knowledge, select and use relevant information to write a summary, and identify the main idea or theme.
	Read for Critical Analysis and Evaluation	Students recognize that an author's bias may influence the reader's opinion, to share their own reactions with others. They also learn to make inferences and support what they think with relevant references.
	Read for Aesthetic and Personal Response	Students study techniques used by authors including powerful language (imagery, rhythm, sentence structure, word choice) and literary devices (alliteration, flashback, humor, onomatopoeia, personification, and simile). They look at some text in the historical context.
	Read Strategically	Students practice surveying text to identify what it is about, making predictions, and asking questions as they read, adjusting their speed by slowing down when they don't understand. They apply knowledge of root words, prefixes, suffixes, antonyms, idioms, and words with multiple meanings to make sense of what they read.
<b>Science</b>	Students study matter and energy in ecosystems and the water cycle. They explore pushes, pulls, and the effect of mass of forces and motion. They build electric circuits, study the transfer of energy and the properties of magnets.	

## Fourth Grade Curriculum Overview

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<b>Social Studies</b>	Students study world cultures, comparing what they learn to cultures in the United States. They learn to read and use maps and globes	
<b>Technology</b>	Students use keyboarding skills, cut, copy, and past text and/or images in a document, and switch back and forth among more than one open application. They find and organize information to create a project and a multimedia presentation. Students create simple spreadsheets and use technology to show the data as a graph. They use technology to communicate with experts about topics they are studying.	
<b>Writing</b>	Technical Practical Writing	Students polish their skills for writing narration and begin to focus on expository writing, providing support for main ideas with accurate details.
	Range and Versatility of Writing	Students write in journals, compose a variety of expository pieces including essays and reports, write narrative pieces and poetry.
	Reflective Writing	Students learn to evaluate their own work and set goals for future written works.
	Writing Strategically	Student use a variety of strategies to organize their writing and revise their work for topic sentences, supporting details, extraneous material and tone. They also revise for syntax and word choice (redundancy, transition words, and generality/specificity).
	Mechanics/Conventions of Print	Students are expected to write in cursive, capitalize correctly, use commas, quotation marks, and apostrophes correctly, and correctly spell most of what they write. They learn to use proper subject/verb agreement, verb tense, and pronoun references.

District Quality Council is a committee made up of parents, teachers, administrators, and a Board of Education member who provide leadership for implementation of the Success-Oriented School Model. This document is a product of many hours of work by the following committee members:

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Lisa Chaloux, Parent  
Karen Craig, Parent  
Kristen Delgado, Teacher  
Stephanie Demore, Teacher  
Al Finelli, Teacher  
Michelle Hankin, Parent  
Alice Jackson, Asst. Superintendent  
Mark Mahoney, Teacher  
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Helen Miller, Teacher  
Jeanetta Miller, Teacher  
Fran Peters, Parent  
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**NEWTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**CORE BELIEFS**

**TRUST**

confidence in the actions of others

**RESPECT**

preservation of dignity and acceptance of individual differences

**FLEXIBILITY**

exploration of alternatives, adaptation to new situations  
acceptance of change

**RESPONSIBILITY**

accountability for individual and collective action  
self direction

**INCLUSION**

the opportunity to learn is an entitlement that will not be  
determined by individual differences  
high expectations and high standards for all

**INTERDEPENDENCE**

community, parents, teachers and students working together for success  
students, parents and teachers learning from each other

**COMMUNICATION**

open exchange of thought  
clear definition of goals and expectations

**SUCCESS**

continuous improvement and quality achievement

**RISK TAKING**

daring to take action  
the right to make mistakes