

SQUADRON LINE ELEMENTARY SHOOOL

2018 ~ 2019

Continuous Improvement Plan



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Part I: Purpose and Overview

This document outlines Squadron Line Elementary School's Continuous Improvement Plan. It includes the District Vision and Core Beliefs, school mission, school description, leadership structures, as well as progress and quality indicators.

The Continuous Improvement Plan is created to give a framework and provide direction for the work of improving our school throughout the year. Goals are established through analysis of state and district student assessment data, dialogue with Grade K-12 and district administrators, and review of staff and community survey results. In addition, goals are closely aligned with and are in support of the Simsbury Public Schools District Vision and Core Beliefs. Throughout the year, teachers work in collaborative teams to assess student achievement, monitor student progress, and refine instructional practices. Professional development will be ongoing at the district and building levels to further support our improvement indicators. The results of our progress toward our school improvement goals and quality indicators will be summarized in an annual report during the summer of 2018.

The academic improvement indicators for the 2017-2018 school year will be:

- All students will read on grade level by the end of Grade 3
- All students will perform on grade level in reading, writing, and math by the end of Grade 6
- All students will demonstrate positive social choices at the elementary, middle, and high school
- Highly effective teaching in every classroom will be supported by highly effective instructional leaders in all school buildings
- Stakeholders will express satisfaction in the districts efforts related to safety and social/emotional well being

Each grade level team will collaboratively develop action plans to target improvement in specific instructional areas and every educator has set specific Student Learning Objectives. The teams will monitor their progress throughout the year, adjust their plans to address needs that arise, and report their progress to administration at regular intervals throughout the year. As we make the transition to a new state test, we are relying more on our district data to measure the academic progress of our students, as well as track data related to attendance and physical fitness.

At Squadron Line, we work together as a school community so every child experiences continuous improvement in a positive, inclusive learning environment. We celebrate our individual and collective strengths, diversity, and the essential character traits of Respect, Responsibility and Kindness. Collaboratively, we work with stakeholders to ensure that our credo "**We all SHINE at Squadron Line!**" is a reality for all students.



Meg Evans
Principal



Jacqueline Petrella
Assistant Principal

Part II: District Vision and Core Beliefs

District Vision for the Simsbury Public Schools

The Simsbury Public Schools cultivate the mind, body, and character of each student. We engage students with a meaningful and rigorous academic foundation so that they can contribute to a global society with integrity, compassion, and resilience.



Core Beliefs

We believe in...

- ★ Challenging expectations
- ★ High standards
- ★ Passion for lifelong learning
- ★ Academic and extracurricular experiences that emphasize intellectual, physical, artistic, and social/emotional well-being
- ★ Collaboration and communication among families and school personnel
- ★ Building relationships between staff, students, and community
- ★ Family and community partnerships
- ★ Continuous improvement and excellence

Part III: School Mission

Squadron Line Elementary School is a school in which students, staff, administrators, parents, and the community of Simsbury work together in a supportive partnership.

Our mission is to provide everyone with the knowledge and skills necessary to build a foundation for life-long learning. This includes the ability to solve problems, communicate with others, and the desire to be intellectually curious.

Squadron Line Elementary School is a positive and safe environment that values the development of character, which is essential in creating respectful and responsible citizens.

In pursuit of this mission, we believe that:

- All students will be successful learners.
- Everyone is accountable for their own behaviors and efforts.
- All abilities, talents, and learning styles will be recognized, respected, and addressed.
- Everyone will be treated in a fair and consistent manner.
- Continuous improvement for all is our standard practice.
- A sense of pride in accomplishment will be present in every learner.
- Communication is an integral part of the educational process.
- Racial and cultural diversity will be respected.
- Parent/guardian participation will be encouraged in the educational process.

Part IV: School Description

At Squadron Line, we understand that if students are going to be successful, in addition to mastering a rigorous curriculum, they need to learn skills that will allow them to succeed in a rapidly changing society. Our work throughout the school year focuses on achieving Simsbury's mission of cultivating the mind, body, and character of each student so that they can contribute to a global society with integrity, compassion, and resilience.

The SHINE program is our highly successful character education program. Through class meetings, school celebrations, and proactive grade-level lessons, SHINE provides the entire school community with a common language regarding academic, behavioral, and civic expectations. All faculty, staff members, and bus drivers, reinforce students' positive choices and actions which create an inclusive, accepting environment. The SHINE traits of Respect, Responsibility, and Kindness assist us in preparing our students to act knowledgeably, lead thoughtfully, share generously, and contribute meaningfully as global citizens.

Squadron Line proudly participates in the Hartford Region Open Choice Program. This wonderful opportunity is part of a statewide program that offers students the opportunity to attend public schools in suburban towns, and suburban students the opportunity to attend public schools in Hartford at no cost to the student's family. Communication between families, teachers, and administrators remains constant to ensure an inclusive and positive experience for all students. In addition, we participate in Inter-district Grant programs to develop learning partnerships with neighboring community elementary schools.

Squadron Line School has a rich fine arts program. All students participate in a vocal music program. Beginning in fourth grade, students have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument. Band, orchestra, jazz band, and choral performances by our fifth and sixth grade students are widely attended and enjoyed by the entire school community. Our visual art program implements a discipline-based art education model which culminates with an annual art show showcasing over 2000 pieces of artwork exemplifying student skill and creative expression. Our physical education program provides students with knowledge and skills to maintain an active and healthy lifestyle.

Continuous improvement is at the core of our work as a district and school community. We are committed to improving the academic achievement of all students. In our continuous improvement plan, we identify school goals and action plans that focus our collaborative efforts throughout the school year. Teachers meet weekly as Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to share instructional strategies, review and refine lessons within units of study, and collectively analyze student work and assessments. Through open, reflective dialogue and continuous cycles of inquiry, staff members and administrators dedicate themselves to creating a learning environment that meets the needs of all students.

Squadron Line students SHINE due to the strong support from family and community members. We recognize that student success is maximized when there is active involvement from parents, guardians, and school community members. We are fortunate to have a long standing tradition of a collaborative partnership between the school and our dedicated Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO). Parent/guardian volunteers support teachers and enhance the educational experience of all Squadron Line students.

The success of Squadron Line School depends upon the collaborative efforts of the entire school community – students, teachers, administration, parents, guardians, and community members. By working together, we create a community characterized by respect, responsibility, and kindness, allowing all children to SHINE at Squadron Line.

Part IV: Leadership Teams

Squadron Line Elementary School Leadership Teams

The **School Leadership Team** is a collaborative representation of teachers and administration who act as a liaison to support faculty with implementing the vision of Squadron Line School. The team serves as a forum to brainstorm, share, and explore best practices and initiatives that impact and improve teacher and student learning.

The **Instructional Leadership Team** is a team of instructional leaders and teachers across the school. They engage in high quality *cycles of rounds* that provides professional colleagues the opportunity to: work together to reflect on current practices; refine and build new skills; share ideas; teach one another; conduct classroom research; and/or solve problems of practice. This process will result in the team documenting the effective instructional strategies and methodologies that positively impact student learning across the school.

The **SHINE/ School Climate Committee** oversees our highly successful character education program. The team, which includes teachers, administrators, and a parent representative, meets regularly to set the direction for our program, analyze trends in our character education/discipline data, and evaluate the effectiveness of initiatives. The team follows an action plan that was developed to continuously improve our character education program.

Squadron Line, in conjunction with the Simsbury Public Schools, is committed to the health, safety and security of students, faculty, staff, and visitors. In order to support this commitment the **School Security and Safety Committee/Team H** was established. Representation from administration, teachers, nurses, custodians, school resource officers, and town emergency management are responsible for assisting in the development and administration of our school security and safety plans.

The **Student Intervention Team (SIT)** is comprised of administration, teachers, special education and other support staff. The team's focus is on the early identification of students with academic and/or behavioral challenges. A problem solving model is used to identify an area of weakness, gather relevant data, form a hypothesis, develop interventions, and assess the effectiveness of the interventions. This process is used to support students' needs in the general education setting.

The **Student Reading Intervention Program (SRIP) Data Team** provides research-based reading intervention to address specific reading weaknesses based on universal screenings, as well as curriculum based and district assessments. During these Data Team Meetings, assessments, instructional strategies, and interventions are discussed and adjusted based upon student progress.

The **PTO Executive Board** meets monthly with school administration prior to PTO meetings to discuss matters related to ensuring a strong home-school connection. Administration attends all PTO meetings.

The **Student Council**, organized by two Squadron Line teachers, provides students with multiple leadership opportunities. The Student Council oversees school-wide service learning and character building activities. They also bring suggestions to administration for school-wide improvements.

The **Take Action Club** is a service-learning club for 4th, 5th, and 6th graders dedicated to raising awareness of local social issues including poverty, homelessness, hunger, environmental care and global issues including food security, poverty and access to education, clean water, and health care. The club is a partner with an international charity called Free the Children and is one of 4,000 such clubs around the world. The club's overarching goal is to conduct at least one local and one global campaign per year.

Part V: Progress Indicators

Indicator #1: Student Achievement ~ Grade 3

Focus Area 1:

All students will read on grade level at the end of grade 3, as measured by:

- DRA2: percentage of students scoring at/above Level 38 NF, and
- DRP: percentage of students scoring at/above 47

Strategy/What must change to accomplish the goal:

- If we use the *eight best practices* from the National Reading Panel to guide and focus all resource, scheduling, and program decisions, then literacy proficiency in the early grades will rise.
 - If we ensure the implementation of a balanced literacy model at each grade level, then DRA levels will increase.
 - If we implement research based instructional strategies to meet the individual needs of all learners with an emphasis on comprehension, then overall grade level reading performance will improve.
 - If we use Professional Learning Community (PLC) time to analyze data and to monitor the effectiveness of interventions and instructional strategies across all tiers, then reading instruction and student performance will improve.
 - If we clearly define highly effective teaching along with a system to regularly monitor it –*PLC-Based rounds model*, then teachers will have greater focus in identifying a problem of practice, observing colleagues, collecting evidence, providing feedback, and ongoing reflection for improvement.
 - If we utilize data teams and the Student Intervention Team (SIT) process to monitor the effectiveness of interventions then student reading will improve.

SMART Goal (Specific/Measureable/Aggressive yet Achievable/Relevant/Time-bound)

- 85% - 90% of Kindergarten students will score a DRA2 level 4 by June
- 85% - 90% of 1st grade students will score a DRA2 level 18 or better by June
- 83% - 88% of 2nd grade students will score a DRA2 level 28 or better by June
- 85% - 90% of 3rd grade students will score a DRA2 level 38 or better by June
- 78% -83% of 3rd grade students will score a 47 or better on the DRP by June
- 75% - 80% of 3rd grade students will score a DRA2 level 38 and a 47 on the DRP or better by June

Part IV: Progress Indicators

Indicator #2: Student Achievement ~ Grade 6

Focus Area 2:

All students will perform on grade level in reading, writing, and math by the end of grade 6, as measured by:

- **Reading:** Increased percentage of grade six students scoring at or above 62 on the spring Degrees of Reading Power (DRP). All students take the STAR Reading Assessment three times during the school year to gather data for instructional purposes and monitor growth over time.
- **Writing:** Increased percentage of grade six students will meet or exceed grade level writing standard by achieving a minimum cumulative score of 50 on the SPS analytic writing rubric or two scores of 17 or higher on the three district writing assessments
- **Math:** All students take the STAR Math Assessment three times during the school year to gather data for instructional purposes and monitor growth over time.

Strategy/What must change to accomplish the goal:

Reading

- If we implement research based instructional strategies to meet the individual needs of all learners with an emphasis on comprehension, then overall grade level reading performance will improve.
- If we implement a standardized math assessment (STAR Reading) then teachers will have actionable results from which to base student learning plans.
- If we use Professional Learning Community (PLC) time to analyze data and to monitor the effectiveness of interventions and instructional strategies across all tiers, then reading instruction and student performance will improve.
- If we clearly define highly effective teaching along with a system to regularly monitor it –*PLC-Based rounds model*, then teachers will have greater focus in identifying a problem of practice, observing colleagues, collecting evidence, providing feedback, and ongoing reflection for improvement.
- If we utilize data teams and the Student Intervention Team (SIT) process to monitor the effectiveness of interventions then student reading will improve.

Writing

- If we utilize our workshop model to teach students the traits of writing (focus, elaboration, organization, voice, and conventions), and provide frequent feedback by conferring with students, then students will be skilled writers.
- If we implement research based instructional strategies aligned with the SPS trait-based analytic writing rubric, then overall grade level writing will improve.
- If we interpret student writing with consistency using the analytic writing rubric, then we will have increased reliability among scorers.
- If we utilize PLCs to monitor the effectiveness of interventions and instructional strategies across all tiers, then writing instruction and student performance will improve.

Math

- If we implement a standardized math assessment (STAR Math) then teachers will have actionable results from which to base student learning plans.
- If teachers collaborate in PLCs and with district math support staff to analyze results and plan instruction then student math performance will improve.

SMART Goal (Specific / Measureable / Aggressive yet Achievable / Relevant / Time-bound)

Reading

- 82% - 87% of 4th grade students will score a 54 or better on the DRP by June
- 90% of 5th grade students will score a 58 or better on the DRP by June
- 90% of 6th grade students will score a 62 or better on the DRP by June
- 87% - 90% of 4th grade students will meet the end of year STAR Reading standard by June
- 90% of 5th grade students will meet the end of year STAR Reading standard by June
- 90% of 6th grade students will meet the end of year STAR Reading standard by June

Writing

- 75% - 80% of 4th grade students will meet the end of year writing standard by June
- 90% of 5th grade students will meet the end of year writing standard by June
- 90% of 6th grade students will meet the end of year writing standard by June

Math

- 76% - 81% of 4th grade students will meet the end of year STAR Math standard by June
- 60% - 65% of 5th grade students will meet the end of year STAR Math standard by June
- 60% - 65% of 6th grade students will meet the end of year STAR Math standard by June

Part IV: Progress Indicators

Indicator #5: Student Achievement ~ Positive Social Choices

Focus Area 5:

All students will demonstrate positive social choices at the elementary, middle and high school levels, as measured by:

- Increased percentage of students receiving school-based positive student recognition
- Increased percentage of students not requiring Tier 2* behavior intervention

Strategy/What must change to accomplish the goal:

- If we reinforce the tenants of good character in each school Character Education program, then all students will demonstrate respectful behaviors and improve their sense of social and emotional security in school.
- If systems are monitored/created to track recognition for positive social choices and interventions for behaviors that require correction, then character/climate committees can develop action plans to address specific school based needs.
- If we adopt practices from Responsive Classroom then teachers will learn additional effective management techniques and strategies for promoting academic engagement, creating a positive classroom community, and teaching in a developmentally appropriate way.

SMART Goal (Specific/Measureable/Aggressive yet Achievable/Relevant/Time-bound)

- 100% of students will receive school-based positive behavioral recognition
- 15% of students at the elementary level will not have required a Tier 2* behavior intervention

*Tier II behavior intervention is defined by either an action/consequence taken by administration and/or referral to the Student Intervention Team process.

Part IV: Progress Indicators

Indicator #6: Professionalism ~ Highly Effective Teaching and Learning

Focus Area 6:

Highly effective teaching in every classroom supported by highly effective instructional leaders in every school building, as measured by:

- **Leader:** Involving the school leadership team in identifying a leadership challenge; engaging the Leadership Team in a *rounds* model of observation, debriefs, reflection, commitments to follow-up cycle; and sharing learning/outcomes as a school community with a focus on improving teaching and learning
- **Teacher:** Participating in teacher/PLC Rounds which is driven by the teacher team identifying a problem of practice; providing feedback through a cycle of observation, questions, learnings, along with reflection; and commitments that positively impact teaching and student learning for all involved

Strategy / What must occur to accomplish the goal: (If/Then)

- If highly effective teaching strategies are well defined along with a system to regularly monitor it (*school-based and PLC-based rounds model*); then educators will have greater focus in collecting evidence, providing feedback, and ongoing reflection for improvement in instructional practice that positively impacts student learning.
- If standards of highly effective teaching are clearly defined (with a focus on Instruction/Service Delivery Standard #4, Planning Standard #3, and Assessment Standard #5) and leading (with a focus on PE #2 Teaching & Learning) by building common language across the district for teachers and leaders; then we will have a greater ability to identify and promote highly effective teaching and leading practices.
- If all evaluators' skill sets are developed around the use of strategic conversations, with a greater focus on effective feedback to teachers that is specific, useful, timely, and actionable; then teachers will be able to readily incorporate such feedback into practice thereby increasing their instructional effectiveness and improving student learning.
- If opportunities are provided for educators to engage in collaborative analysis of student work/assessment results, and educators regularly work together to refine their instructional practices and leadership skills in light of those results; then student learning will increase.
- If evaluators develop their skill in designing rigorous and targeted student learning objectives (SLOs) that measure growth over time; share this skill with teachers as they develop their plans for SLOs; then teachers will engage in skillful instruction to move student learning to higher levels.
- If student learning related to individual educators' instructional practices is measured, as well as grade level and district performance; then educators will identify students who are improving, celebrate and share best practices, as well as identify and support educators whose students are not exhibiting the expected learning outcomes as defined through our curriculum-based and standardized assessments.

SMART Goal (Specific/Measureable/Aggressive yet Achievable/Relevant/Time-bound)

Leader:

By the end of the year, every school-based team will engage in quality *cycles of rounds* that provides professional colleagues to work together to reflect on current practices; refine and build new skills; share ideas; teach one another; conduct classroom research; and/or solve problems of practice that result in documentation of effective instructional strategies and methodologies that positively impact student learning across the school.

Leaders will engage all faculty in reflection of the *rounds* process by asking the following:

- How can we measure the effectiveness of the professional learning we have been engaging in throughout the year?
- What has been the impact on student learning?
- In what ways did we improve our teaching this year?

Teacher:

By the end of the year, all PLC's (teacher teams) will engage in high quality *cycles of rounds* that provides professional colleagues opportunities to work together to reflect on current practices; refine and build new skills; share ideas; teach one another; conduct classroom research; and/or solve problems of practice that result in documentation of effective instructional strategies and methodologies that positively impact student learning.

Teachers will reflect on his or her record of practice through the following:

- How can I measure the effectiveness of the professional learning I have been engaging in throughout the year?
- What has been the impact on student learning?
- In what ways did I improve my teaching this year?

Part IV: Progress Indicators

Indicator #7: Student Safety and Social/Emotional Well Being

Focus Area 7:

Stakeholders express satisfaction with the district's efforts related to safety and social/emotional well-being, as measured by:

- Percentages of students responding favorably on the following Social/Emotional Security Indicators:
 - "If a student is bullied in school, how difficult is it for him or her to get help from an adult?"
 - "Overall, how much do you feel like you belong at your school?"
 - "How much respect do students at your school show you?"
 - "Overall, how safe to you feel at your school?"
- Percentages of stakeholders (staff and parents) responding favorably to the following Student Safety Indicators:
 - "Overall, how safe do you feel as a teacher at this school?" (staff)
 - "The principal makes safety a priority." (parents)

Strategy/What must change to accomplish the goal:

- If students are provided a safe, physical environment in school, then they will be able to concentrate/actively engage in their learning.
- If students feel they are in schools with positive school climates, then they will be able to devote more time to their learning.
- If faculty and staff of the Simsbury Public Schools define and implement specific, measurable actions to address the physical and social/emotional security of students, then there will be an increase in positive school climate and students will feel safer in school.

SMART Goal (Specific/Measureable/Aggressive yet Achievable/Relevant/Time-bound)

As evidenced by the results from the Spring administration of a survey modeled on the Panorama survey that was taken in 2015, favorability percentages will increase from and to the following:

Indicator	2015 Favorability %	2017 Favorability %	2018 Favorability %	2019 Goal Favorability %
If a student is bullied in school, how difficult is it for him or her to get help from an adult?	73%	75%	77%	79% - 82%
Overall, how much do you feel like you belong at your school?	72%	80%	80%	82% - 85%
How much respect do students at your school show you?	58%	72%	72%	74% - 77%
Overall, how safe do you feel at your school?	81%	85%	84%	86% - 88%

Faculty and Parents

Indicator	2015 Favorability %	2017 Favorability %	2019 Goal Favorability %
Overall, how safe do you feel as a teacher at this school? (faculty)	95%	93%	≥ 90%
The principal makes safety a priority (parents)	91%	NA	NA
Overall, how safe does your child feel at this school? (parents)	NA	93%	≥ 90%

Note: The parent question was worded differently on the 2017 survey. We plan to administer a district survey in the Spring of 2019 to all stakeholder groups. From this point forward, the parent survey on safety will use the working from the 2017 administration.

Part VI: Quality Indicators

Our most critical priorities are stated in the school Improvement Indicators featured on the previous pages of this document. However, there are many other indicators which allow us to monitor the quality of services and achievement in Simsbury Public Schools. All other indicators that we monitor are called “Quality Indicators”. Our goal is to maintain our strong historical achievement on these measures. Please note that 2013 was the last year we administered the Connecticut Mastery Test. While we transition to a new state test, we will be using district level assessment data to monitor student performance in Math, Reading, and Writing. The Quality Indicators, along with current and baseline performance, can be found in the following:

Simsbury Public Schools						
SQUADRON LINE SCHOOL QUALITY INDICATORS						
		Current 2017-18		Three-Year History		
				2016-17	2015-16	2014-15
Smarter Balanced Assessment – Literacy (ELA)						
Percent of Students attaining Level 3 or better	Grade 3	82%		79%	83%	81%
	Grade 4	84%		79%	77%	81%
	Grade 5	93%		81%	83%	83%
	Grade 6	90%		87%	78%	75%
Percent of Students attaining Level 4 or better	Grade 3	59%		50%	62%	61%
	Grade 4	64%		59%	53%	55%
	Grade 5	68%		51%	50%	35%
	Grade 6	47%		48%	35%	43%
Smarter Balanced Assessment – Mathematics						
Percent of Students attaining Level 3 or better	Grade 3	68%		76%	76%	72%
	Grade 4	69%		71%	66%	71%
	Grade 5	67%		68%	69%	50%
	Grade 6	76%		78%	60%	64%
Percent of Students attaining Level 4 or better	Grade 3	48%		47%	40%	39%
	Grade 4	40%		37%	25%	35%
	Grade 5	39%		41%	43%	32%
	Grade 6	49%		54%	31%	29%
Science CMT						
Percent of Students At/Above Goal	Grade 5	NA		83.0%	91.0%	80.0%
Percent of Students in the Advanced Band	Grade 5	NA		48.4%	32.4%	27.0%

Other Academic Indicators						
Percent of Students Meeting or Exceeding Physical Fitness Standards	Grade 4	46%		36.7	65.3	50
	Grade 6	54%		63.5	59	56
Special Education Prevalence Rate		11.8		12.8	11.3	11.1
Percent of K-3 Special Education Students At/Above Grade Level Reading Goals		62.7		54.0	50.25	57.6
Percent of teachers who agree/strongly agree that their instructional practice has substantially improved as a result of participating in their PLC		84.8		88.5	91.9	79.49
Character Education Indicators						
Number of students who received two or more "Better Choice" slips		21		26	25	21
Percent of students who received at least one SHINE recognition		100		100	100	100
Percent of students attending 95% of school days		83		83.4	84.3	78.1