



# INTERDISTRICT SCHOOL FOR ARTS AND COMMUNICATION

## 2021-2022 ISAAC Profile

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**Amy Geary**  
Director of Student  
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### ISAAC by the Numbers

**Established:** 1997  
**Grades:** 6th, 7th, and 8th grades  
**Enrollment:** 276 students  
**Towns:** 17 sending districts including Berlin, Colchester, Essex, East Haddam, East Lyme, Groton, Hartford, Ledyard, Montville, Moosup, Mystic, New London, Norwich, Pawcatuck, Preston, Stonington, and Waterford  
**Demographics:** 62.1% Hispanic/Latino, 17.9% White, 16.1% Black or African American, 3.9% Other; 72.1% eligible for free or reduced lunch

### School and Community Overview

ISAAC, established in 1997, is a public charter middle school operated by a board of directors. Enrollment is at max capacity with 276 students who are accepted through an open, non-merit-based lottery that currently draws from 17 different towns and cities in southeastern Connecticut. The charter states that 50% of students must come from New London while the other 50% come from all other surrounding districts. In 2014, ISAAC was awarded the CT State Department of Education School of Distinction Award for the Highest Progress. In June 2020, ISAAC received initial candidacy accreditation with the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) and a 4-year Charter Renewal extension. ISAAC offers an extensive array of arts and communication-themed programs and opportunities, as well as academically rigorous high school preparatory classes that meet the needs of all students. Sixth graders are heterogeneously placed in courses that are preparing them for the skills needed in three years for high school. In seventh grade, advanced levels of study are offered in Pre-Algebra. During the 8th grade year, students can enroll in advanced courses such as Algebra I and Spanish. Students must take foundational art courses that prepare them for advanced art courses in the 6th and 7th grade years in order to take electives in the 8th grade year. The ISAAC Music Department is one of the strongest middle school music programs in southeastern Connecticut. Students can participate in athletics including boys' and girls' basketball and beginning in 2021-2022, cross country, volleyball, and fencing.

### ISAAC Highlights

- ISAAC received the CT Department of Education School of Distinction Award for highest progress in 2014
- ISAAC received candidacy status with the New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEASC) in June 2020
- The CT State Board of Education renewed ISAAC's charter for 4 total additional years in June 2020
- ~60% of the ISAAC music students were accepted into the Middle School Eastern Region Music Festival in 2019-20
- ISAAC Board of Directors expanded the arts and sports programs by adding dance/theatre and multi-media arts positions and increasing sports by 200% for the 2021-22 school year

### ISAAC Core Values and Beliefs About Learning

*ISAAC is a safe, nurturing, and diverse middle school in which arts and communication act as the heartbeat. Our professional learning community, comprised of passionate educators, are committed to the delivery of a rigorous curriculum that promotes effort through a growth mindset. We believe that all students can succeed with hard work and grit. Our stakeholders support the development of each student's journey in becoming lifelong learners by developing the academic, civic, and social skills needed to be difference makers as active citizens in our communities. Learning at ISAAC prepares our students to become empathetic and courageous leaders through authentic tasks and experiences that promote creativity, critical thinking, and excellence.*

### ISAAC Vision of the Graduate

The ISAAC Vision of the Graduate is that all graduates are proficient in the following competencies:

- Write effectively for various purposes
- Speak to diverse audiences in an accountable manner
- Develop the behaviors needed to interact and contribute with others on a team
- Analyze and solve problems independently and collaboratively
- Be responsible, creative, and empathetic members of the community

### Facts About Connecticut Charter Schools

- Q:** What are charter schools and what makes them unique?  
**A:** Charter schools are public schools that offer personalized learning experiences for students, no matter their needs, circumstances, and learning styles. Charter schools offer freedom and flexibility for families in choosing a type of education for their children, and schools have more flexibility to innovate and implement unique programs for students.
- Q:** Are charter schools free to attend?  
**A:** Charter schools, as public schools, are free to attend.
- Q:** Are charter school teachers required to be certified?  
**A:** All staff serving in Connecticut's public charter schools must be authorized by the state to serve in those schools, and the state regularly reviews schools for compliance.
- Q:** How do charter school students perform relative to other students?  
**A:** Charter school students are often outpacing and improving faster than their traditional public school peers. More than 80% of public charter school students in Connecticut are outpacing their traditional public school peers in year over year academic improvement in math and English Language Arts.
- Q:** How is the performance of a charter school evaluated?  
**A:** The Connecticut State Department of Education is the sole school authorizer. Annual audits of the school can include written reports, school site visits, or conditional plans associated with the school's charter renewal. At the conclusion of the charter extension, a comprehensive review of the school takes place.