

Stamford Public Schools

2019-2020 Annual Report to the Community

Coming together in support of all things Stamford.





MIND



BODY



HEART

The mission of Stamford Public Schools (SPS) is to provide an education that cultivates productive habits of mind, body and heart in every student.

SPS is a learning organization that continuously improves its effective, innovative and transformational teaching and learning. Our vision is to challenge, inspire and prepare all students to be productive contributing members of society.

A note from

The Superintendent

The 2019-2020 school year was unique in many ways. The district faced a number of challenges from a few local charter and private schools closing and ongoing facilities issues, to a global pandemic and a national reckoning with racism. While it may seem that reflecting on academic achievements and celebrations of pre-pandemic school days is disconnected from our current reality, it is important for us to recognize those milestones and acknowledge how far we have come in the past 18 months. As we look back, I am proud that Stamford Public Schools (SPS) has responded to each challenge with a rapid, resolute and resolved approach. No matter the size of the obstacle, our community, staff and students have come together to find solutions.

Last March, when COVID-19 forced the closure of our school buildings, SPS and the greater Stamford community illustrated a herculean effort of cooperation and teamwork, purchasing and supplying technology, setting up meal distribution centers, identifying childcare options and effectively communicating mitigation strategies.

Throughout the spring, and well into the summer, our staff reimagined teaching and learning in our new landscape. Our teachers have inspired us with their ability to remain steadfast as life-long learners and to maintain the high learning standards we've always had, in spite of an evolving school experience. The SPS staff embraced technology, introducing video lessons and interactive tools while striving to maintain a level of normalcy and connection with students and families.

We emphasized family and community engagement as demonstrated by the launch of Pop-Up Webinars to guide families on critical topics in real-time, such as tips for distance learning, addressing racism, and access to summer and Kindergarten resources. As we reflect on the year that started so normal and ended like no other in history, the stories featured in the following pages illustrate how our collaborative spirit has driven our students and district forward. Thank you, for your ongoing partnership.

The COVID-19 pandemic has tested us as a school community and a nation. Our SPS staff, students and families continue to respond with resilience and embrace the challenge. I welcome the opportunities of the next year, knowing that together we will succeed for all Stamford students.



Pandemic Response Brings Solidarity, Hope and Strength

On March 8, 2020, Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont announced the state's first positive COVID-19 case. In less than one week, SPS closed schools and pivoted to Remote Learning. SPS immediately recognized that many families would not have access to the resources needed during this global pandemic, so we worked with Stamford Cradle to Career, a Strive Together initiative led by the United Way, as well as with the broader Stamford community to provide families access to technology, instructional resources, meals, social emotional support and more.



Health and Safety

SPS worked in collaboration with the Stamford Department of Health to identify health and safety procedures, professional development, and training for staff and students.

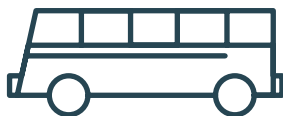
- Following the school reopening in September, 82% of students reported that it was easy to follow the COVID-19 related safety measures at school. (SPS December 2020 Survey)



Nutrition

Since the beginning of the pandemic, breakfast and lunch meals were provided uninterrupted to students in both the Hybrid Model (coming to school every other day) and the Distance Teaching and Learning Academy model.

- 1 Million+ (1,213,219) meals to students aged 18 or younger, free of charge.
- Meals were provided to meet food needs for seven days per week.



Transportation

SPS encouraged families to drive students to reduce the number of passengers, while implementing safety protocols. As of March 2021, there have been no known transmission from school buses, and we received no complaints regarding health and safety from parents.



Technology

SPS made a significant investment in technology hardware and software. The district provided access to devices and Wi-Fi hotspots for all students and staff, as needed.

- By December 2020, 100% of staff and students had access to a device.
- SPS worked with a local internet provider to facilitate 1,000 families receiving 12-months of free WiFi.



Facilities

SPS worked from March 2020 to opening day to ensure a safe and healthy learning environment for the 2020-2021 school year.

- Improved ventilation in school buildings to comply with Department of Public Health guidance.
- Reconfigured classrooms to allow for proper spacing of furniture and social distancing guidelines.
- Restricted visitors in buildings and limited approved building use forms.



Child Care

SPS created a resource of childcare options for families and staff. SPS partnered with community organizations to support childcare programs with professional development, personal protective equipment (PPE) and response strategies.



Teaching and Learning

SPS created a schedule and learning model that allowed students to be educated, and teachers and staff to work in a safe and healthy environment.

- Established a Hybrid (every other day) model and a full distance learning model.
- All teachers taught from their classrooms.
- Schedules included synchronous (live) and asynchronous (recorded) requirements by grade level.
- Students remained in cohorts in grades Pre-K-8, when possible.
- Staff prepared, and trained for a transition to a robust 100% Distance Teaching and Learning plan.



Social / Emotional Learning and Support

SPS staff worked with our community partners to ensure our students, staff and families were supported and that we addressed social emotional and mental health needs.

- Created safe, supportive and equitable learning environments that promote all students' social and emotional development.
- Used data as an opportunity to share information, deepen relationships, and continuously improve support for students, families, and staff.



Family engagement

SPS engaged with families and communities to foster opportunities for regular, two-way communication.

- Hosted 20 Parent Pop-up Webinars on topics of interest to our school community.
- Use of the PowerSchool Parent Portal increased 320%, from 56,850 sign-ins in 2019-20 to 176,465 in 2020-21.
- 92.3% of student records were accessed via the parent/student PowerSchool web portal.
- SPS News and Alerts are now received by 17,258 unique email accounts.
- Central Office staff worked with district representatives and members of the Information Technology (IT) department to expand our district website to include five new sections, encompassing over 50 content pages.
- SPS created more than a dozen tutorials and engagement videos in multiple languages to support of our families.

The SPS Office of Public Affairs worked daily with the local media to ensure positive and accurate comprehensive coverage of the SPS response. More than 40 newspaper articles and multiple television stories have highlighted the SPS COVID-19 response.

Nurture a Growing Student Body

Across SPS, students are offered learning opportunities and experiences in a wide array of interests and areas of focus. In addition to districtwide opportunities, all schools offer enrichment programs based on student interests, as well as faculty strengths. Enrichment programs encourage deeper thinking, active learning and student engagement.



16,652 Students
(increase of 570 over October 2018)



13

**ELEMENTARY
SCHOOLS**



5

**MIDDLE
SCHOOLS**



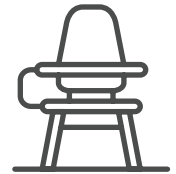
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**HIGH
SCHOOLS**



7

**MAGNET SCHOOL
LOCATIONS**



3

**INTERNATIONAL
BACCALAUREATE®
(IB) PROGRAMS**



71

**Languages spoken
in Student Homes**



14.4%

**English language
learners**
(increase of 1.6%)



14.5%

**of students are identified
with disabilities**
(increase of 0.7%)



86.8%

**Graduation rate
(four-year)***

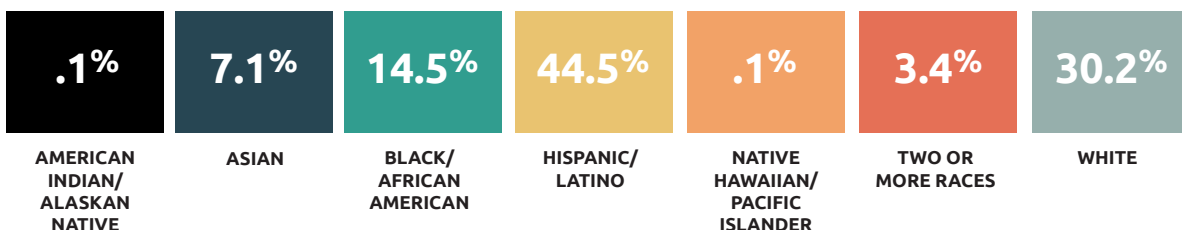
*Students with special learning or language
needs may graduate in more than four years.



59.1%

**of students were eligible for
free and reduced priced meals**
(increase of 1.7%)

Increasingly diverse student populations



Focus on Early Grade Reading

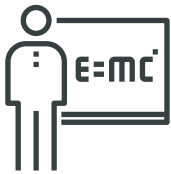
In the 2017-2018 school year, three of our elementary schools, KT Murphy, Stillmeadow and Toquam, engaged in a pilot program to improve early grade reading instruction. The pilot focused on providing professional development to our teachers around the Science of Reading as well as coaching from Literacy How mentors on best practices in the area of literacy. Three additional elementary schools were added in both the 2018-2019 and the 2019-2020 school years bringing this support model to 9 of our elementary schools. With a focus on data, teacher training and in class coaching, we have seen gains in our DIBELS scores for our students in grades K-2.

42%

of students in pilot schools are above benchmark compared to 29% in all other schools.

Focus on Educational Options in High School

Over the past three years, all three SPS high schools have prioritized providing diverse and challenging academic course offerings. Through professional development and credential enhancements, our high school teachers are teaching some of the most advance high school courses in the state.



SPS offers
more AP courses
than any other
district in the state.



SPS offers
25 UCONN ECE courses,
averaging 10 per high school.
(Top 5 in the state)



SPS is one of only
28 districts in the
state to offer a senior
Capstone Project.

SPS is one of only
8 districts in the state

(7 public / 1 private) who offer the
IB Diploma Program.

SPS offers the second
most IB courses (22)

of any district in the state (just two courses
behind the Metropolitan Learning Center
Interdistrict Magnet School).

According to the College Board, the mean score for the 2020 AP Exams was 3.03. Nationally, 60% of all exams taken earned a score of 3 or higher. 72% of all exams taken by SPS students earned a score of 3 or higher.

Stamford outperforms
the national numbers
by more than 10%.





Value Diversity of Thought

Differences in ethnicity, socioeconomic status and perspectives are only some of the factors that form the diverse school district we are so proud to call SPS. Our school communities celebrate our diversity and foster 21st century skills in every learner, teaching critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and effective communications. Each elementary and middle school community utilizes learning skills such as:

- Arts and Problem Solving
- CARES - Cooperation, Assertion, Responsibility, Empathy and Self-Control
- Higher Order Thinking School (HOTS)
- Leadership Through Service
- Responsive Classroom
- Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Math
- Student-Centered International-Mindedness
- Structured Inquiry

All three high schools offer an extensive catalogue of Advanced Placement (AP) and college-level courses, affording students the opportunity to earn college credits concurrently while working toward their high school diploma.

Offer A Wide-Range of Learning

UConn Early College Experience (ECE) is an opportunity for students to take UConn courses while still in high school.

Academy of Information, Technology & Engineering (AITE) offers rigorous academic courses, as well as electives in information technology, architecture and engineering, biomedical sciences, and digital arts.

The Early College Studies (ECS) Program at Stamford High School (SHS) is a dual-enrollment program with Norwalk Community College (NCC) in which students have the opportunity to simultaneously earn their high school diploma and an associate's degree in Computer Science within four to six years.

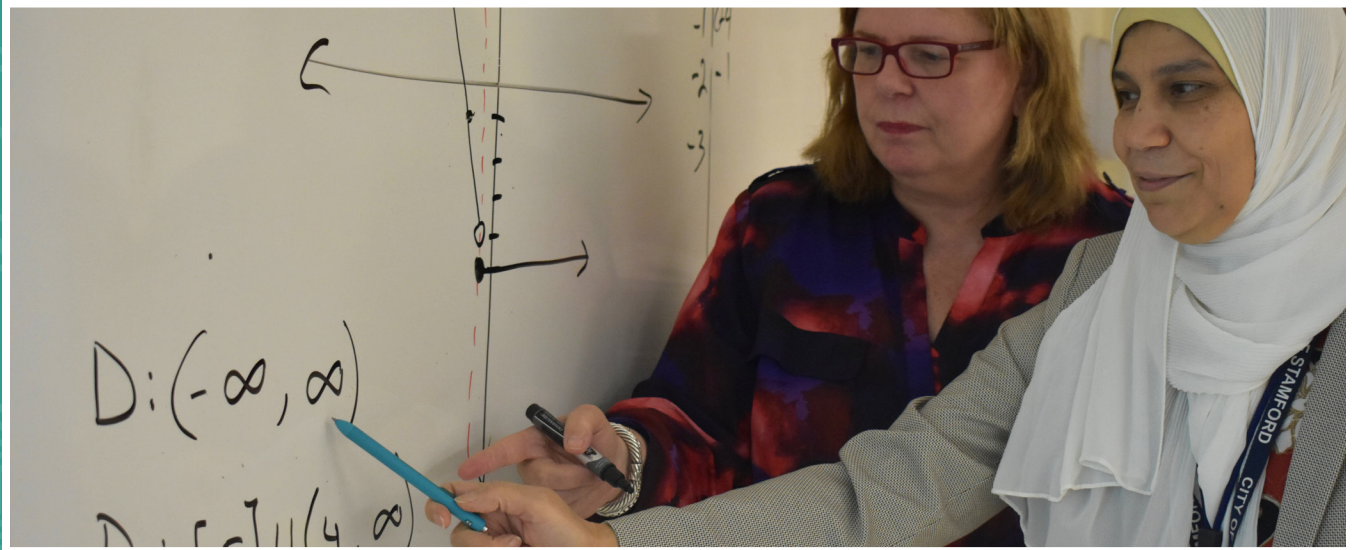
Stamford High School's International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP) offers a challenging, internationally respected curriculum that is designed to prepare students for success both in higher education and the real world.

The Stamford Regional Agriscience program at Westhill High School (WHS) prepares students for college and careers in animal science, agribusiness, agricultural mechanics, aquaculture, biotechnology, food science, marine technology, natural resources and plant science.

The Computer Science Academy of Westhill (CSAW) was established with the mission to expose students to the rapidly growing field of Computer Science.

Attract and Retain High Quality and Dedicated Staff

During the 2019-20 School Year, SPS hired 150 teachers, 64 Paraeducators and 8 administrators (combination of budget additions and replacements).



2,878 Employees

391

Substitutes

427

Paraeducators

1,552

Teachers and Student
Support Staff

150

Custodians

93

Office Support Staff

69

Tutors

61

Athletic Coaches

36

Security Workers

17

Parent Facilitators

82

Administrators

(68 SAU* Administrators + 14 Discretionary Administrators)

*Stamford Administrative Unit (SAU)

In February 2020, more than 500 staff members participated in voluntary Professional Development, featuring training webinars focused on a variety of digital platforms available to teachers, including Google Classroom.



**53.5% of
SPS Staff**

also call Stamford HOME
1539 of 2878
employees reside in Stamford

SPS teachers bring
19,756 years
of total SEA* experience to our students
*Stamford Education Association (SEA)

10:1 Student
Staff Ratio

95%

of teachers, instructors and counselors
have a masters degree or higher
(1469 out of 1550)

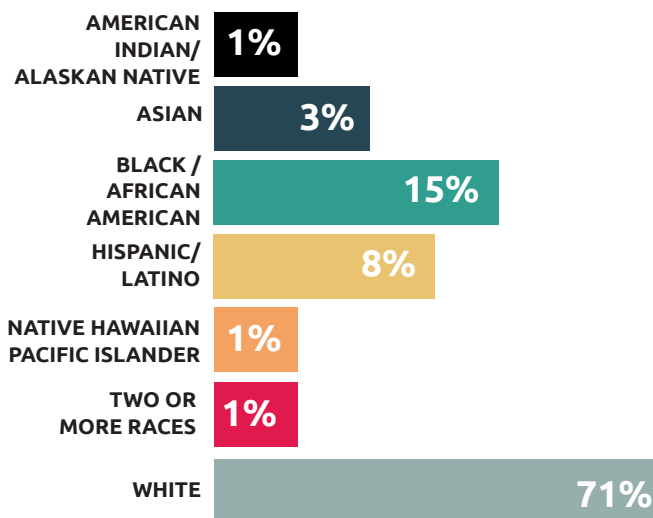
16.7%

of 2019-2020 SEA new hires
are SPS graduates themselves

12.74 years

Average number of years Teaching at SPS

All Staff Demographics





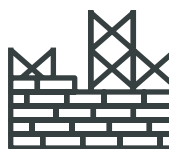
Support Healthy Financials and Facilities

In demonstration of our goal to provide our students, staff and administrators with the best physical environment, in the summer of 2019, the City of Stamford and SPS created the Stamford Asset Management Group (SAMG), to bring in-house all school facilities operational and capital management. SAMG oversees all capital projects, including the oversight of school custodians and trade workers, as well as all outside construction managers, architects, engineers and vendors.

As SAMG initiated an internal assessment of our facilities, the need for a long-term facilities plan to address our aging school infrastructure became immediately apparent. Throughout the fall of 2019 and winter of 2020, our community came together to discuss our options at countless public and city meetings. While COVID-19 derailed these conversations, the district has subsequently convened a long-term facilities planning committee that includes representation from the City of Stamford Planning Board, Board of Representatives, Board of Finance and the Operations Committee of the Board of Education. This committee is tasked with determining the next steps in creating a long-term facilities plan for all of our buildings.

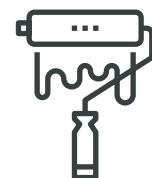
2019-20 Operating Budget surplus of
\$6,459,521 (2.28%)
on a budget of
\$283,069,806

Development and approval of
2020-21 Operating Budget of
\$285,555,203 (+0.88%)
and Grants Budget of
\$34,099,562
to accommodate an anticipated 3.2%
student enrollment increase.



24 Facilities
3M+ Sq. Ft of building space /
300+ Acres of Property

During 2019-20,
Stamford invested
\$40,000,000
into Building Repair and
Maintenance



12,940
Students Eligible for Bus Service
95% on-time rate achieved

Throughout the 2019-20 school year, the Stamford Asset Management Group began to investigate long-term strategies to address our aging facilities.



Westover Magnet Elementary School students and faculty remained at the 1 Elmcroft Road location through the 2019-20 school year, while ongoing construction continued at the original building.

Photograph by: Matt Brown, The Advocate



Strawberry Hill, an extension of Rogers International School, continues to add one grade each year. In 2019-2020, the school had 523 students in grades K-4. The school will have K-5 students in the 2020-2021 school year.



In September 2019, all of the SPS alternative education programs (RISE, LEAP and a new SPS middle school program) consolidated into a single location at 68 Southfield Avenue and adopted a new collective name, SPS Anchor at Harbor Landing. The single location brings our alternative programs and resources together to best meet the needs of our students, support our families, and efficiently utilize facilities and staff.



Across the district we continued to address heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) and air quality issues, which are common in older buildings.



Deepen Community Collaboration

SPS continues to expand its partnership with community based organizations, city and state officials, and business leaders as part of a STRIVE together collective impact initiative—Stamford Cradle to Career (SC2C). Under the leadership of the United Way of Western Connecticut, the overarching goal of SC2C is to collectively align community resources to ensure educational success for all Stamford children and families regardless of income, race or circumstance.

SPS worked with SC2C's to expand use of the Preschool Early Literacy Indicators (PELI), an assessment for 3 to 5-year-olds designed to measure pre-literacy and oral language skills. SC2C's support in digitizing and analyzing the results of 787 PELI assessments enabled SPS kindergarten teachers to make data informed goals for their incoming students in 2020.

SPS partnered with numerous nonprofit organizations to provide before and after school academic and enrichment programs for over 3,000 students through the state funded Extended School Hours Grant.

Westhill High School was the recipient of the Rise Innovation Grant to support the RISE by five network wide strategies to increase on-track achievement.

Stamford Public Education Foundation celebrated the 10th year of its successful middle school program mentoring **960 students** throughout **17 schools**, with support from **415 mentors**.



Photograph by: Matt Brown, The Advocate

Engage Students, Staff and Community

SPS utilizes Connecticut's Framework for Family Engagement Guiding Principles to engage families and community partners as full collaborators in education and involve them in advance planning and decision-making. Recognizing that student success is dependent on support and guidance when at home, as well as when in the classroom, SPS expanded existing efforts and adopted new strategies to increase family engagement and effective communications.

Increased regular two-way communication

For the first time, during the summer of 2019, the district held three open sign-up sessions in the government center lobby where students and parents could learn more and ask questions about the SPS free and reduced lunch program. The events featured Spanish-speaking parent liaisons knowledgeable about the registration process.

Throughout fall 2019, the Superintendent met with a cross section of community organizations, including numerous neighborhood organizations, the Rotary Club, Stamford Moms group, Boys and Girls Club, Stamford Women's Talking Circle, NAACP and the Stamford Haitian Community.

Community Open House day was held in mid-November, inviting prospective families, community members and local business leaders to meet building administrators for an insider look at the SPS student experience.

SPS improved the adoption of PowerSchool

Throughout the school year, SPS encouraged families to increase their usage of the PowerSchool Parent Portal, enabling students and their guardians to access grades, assignments and attendance details via a web portal or app. As of March 2020, an average of 9,572 unique parent and student logins were accessing the system each day.



Celebrate student and staff achievements

Each month, our district identifies and celebrates outstanding Student and Staff Achievements at monthly BOE meetings. Starting in May, SPS launched a weekly newsletter, SPS Shout Outs. Distributed via email and posted on the district website, Shout Outs acknowledge school communities, staff members or students who have inspired us with a unique project, an outstanding job or a special effort that had a positive impact on our students or community.

Maximize impact through technology

In February, SPS announced that, as per BOE policy, every BOE meeting is videotaped and available on the Board of Education's page on the district's website. While the meetings had always been videotaped, many families were unaware of their availability. Participation in BOE meetings topped 100 participants on several occasions.

When COVID-19 protocols prevented in-person events, our school communities were creative, hosting virtual spirit weeks, online student art shows and self-guided virtual field days.

Immediately following school closure in March 2020, SPS expanded content on the district website to include Distance Teaching and Learning Resources and COVID -19 Information.

Throughout the months following the school closure, the district offered Parent Pop-Up Webinars to support families in these unprecedented times:

- Distance Learning Quick Tips for Mind, Body and Heart (May 21, 2020)
- Strategies for Speaking with Children About Race and Traumatic Events (June 5, 2020)
- Reimagining our Schools and Communities Through Addressing Racism and Violence (June 15, 2020)
- Stamford Summer Youth Programs (June 24, 2020)
- Kindergarten Registration (July 15, 2020)
- Support Your Child's Reading, Writing and Math Skills at Home (July 29, 2020)
- 2020-2021 SPS Reopening Plan (August 14, 2020)
- Health Professionals Webinar (pre-recorded August 24, 2020)



Promote Equity, Inclusion and Understanding

Stamford students come to our classrooms and community programs with diverse experiences, cultures, resources and needs, speaking more than 70 languages. SPS schools are places where diversity and inclusion are fostered and embraced. The occurrence of disheartening acts of racism in our country during this year have had an impact on our students, staff, families and community-at-large. These unfortunate events remind us of how important our work is in supporting policies and practices that value and promote diversity, equity and inclusion for all students, while supporting the holistic development of our students' minds, bodies and hearts.

Our SPS building-based and central office staff work collectively to support students, staff and community partners in discussing and processing these events. Through this collective work, SPS continues to work toward the goal of providing equitable opportunities for all students in order to minimize the achievement and opportunity gaps that exist among various student groups.

Stamford Cradle to Career (SC2C) took the lead on driving the School Climate and Restorative Practices program, a framework that encourages a nurturing school culture of supportive relationships over punitive consequences. Two of our middle schools received ongoing training on restorative practices throughout the year. Several SPS staff members attended professional development sessions under a train-the-trainer model to provide additional opportunities to expand the district's quest to become a restorative school district.

Parent Pop-Up Webinars were held in June 2020 in response to national media coverage and protests that occurred following the death of George Floyd. SPS partnered with the Stamford Youth Services bureau, community leaders and professional to help our community process the images being reported in the media and establish an open discussion about what happens in our own community.



Productive Habits of Mind

SPS strives to provide every learner with a relevant and rigorous education in a safe environment. SPS curriculum features flexible learning environments and inquiry-based instruction that can accommodate individual learning differences. By encouraging risk-taking, problem-solving and embracing change, students will graduate as lifelong learners, creators and contributing members of our community.

SPS students will acquire and apply critical, creative and self-regulated thinking.



38%

of SPS students complete Algebra 1 by end of Grade 8

A total of

962

students took a total of 1,799 Advanced Placement exams in 30 course areas in Spring 2020. 72% of exams taken earned a score of 3 or higher.

1362.5

Top 10% of Class of 2020 SAT scores
(95 percentile nationally)

1,009 SPS students participated in
Connecticut School Day SAT 2020®

**Mean SPS scores are on par
with the State Average**

SPS ELA 514 | CT ELA 514

SPS Math 498 | CT Math 500

Promote and Recognize Biliteracy

SEAL OF BILITERACY

More than half the world's population speaks more than one language. Studies have shown bilingual individuals have stronger brains, better attention and task-switching capacities, adjust better to environmental changes, and experience less cognitive decline associated with aging. SPS promotes biliteracy as a competitive advantage for our students.

Stamford Public Schools adopted the Seal of Biliteracy in 2018 to recognize students who have studied and attained proficiency in English and any other language, and who have met specific requirements at the time of graduation. Students are awarded a Seal of Biliteracy on their transcripts and diplomas. The seal recognizes the value of students' academic efforts, the tangible benefits of being biliterate, and prepares students to be productive members of our global society. Students from all three area high schools are eligible to apply for and receive the seal of biliteracy as part of their diploma.



119 students from the Class of 2020 graduated with a Seal of Biliteracy, which recognizes students who demonstrate **a high level of proficiency** in English and another language in the areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

This year SPS students achieved this recognition in **15 different languages** and for the first time we had students earn this award in **Korean** and **American Sign Language (ASL)**.

The Seal of Biliteracy is awarded to eligible students who successfully complete one the following pathways to a Biliteracy seal:

Seniors in SPS World Language who score an 1-3 (Intermediate level 3) or higher in all four domains of the Assessment of Performance toward Proficient in Language (AAPPL) and received an official passing notification prior to the Tuesday following Memorial Day.

Juniors in SPS World Language courses who scored a 3 or higher on that AP exam.

Heritage Speakers, a speaker of any language other than English, who are seeking designation in a language not offered at SPS, but who can prove proficiency by meeting the minimum identified score on one of a number of offered assessments.

"The Seal denotes that SPS recognizes the value locally and globally of being bilingual in our multicultural and multilingual society."

Amy Beldotti, Associate Superintendent for Teaching and Learning

Graduate Globally minded Citizens

STAMFORD HIGH SCHOOL INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE® (IB) DIPLOMA PROGRAM

In May 2020, Stamford High School (SHS) awarded its first class of IB Diplomas. Moving beyond the typical high school curriculum, these students complete two years of rigorous and comprehensive education incorporating global perspectives and emphasizing critical thinking, depth of understanding, reflection, a personal connection with the curriculum, and mindful service. At the core of all IB learning is a keen focus on international-mindedness. Beyond well-rounded learning in a variety of global topics, students also engage in CAS (Creativity, Activity, Service), a framework that promotes school involvement and service learning. Student learning is demonstrated in a self-guided extended essay, a 4,000-word college-level research paper that illustrates proficiency in research, communications, social, thinking and self-management.

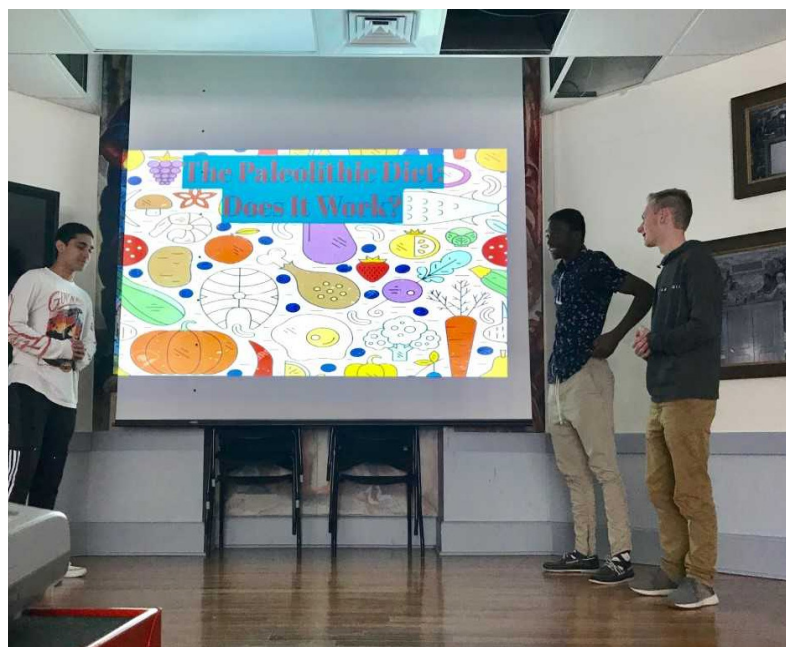
IB students are more likely to enroll in 4-year college institutions

81.5% vs. 40%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014

Stamford is one of only nine high schools in the state to offer the IB Diploma Program. IB is recognized across the world for its inquiry-based approach to education, currently operating in 147 countries. Students enter the IB Diploma Programme at SHS as juniors, completing seven required two-year courses that take an interdisciplinary approach to language and literature, language acquisition, individuals and societies, math, science and the arts. IB students master a depth and breadth of content. Adequate time is allocated for research and understanding of the material and real-world application of learning. Applications for the IB Diploma program are open to any sophomore residing in Stamford regardless of the high school they currently attend.

In a traditional year our IB students would have sat for international proctored exams in May. The pandemic forced students to work from home, completing their diploma requirements virtually. Currently, the district offers IB Primary Years programs at Rogers International School (K-8) and Strawberry Hill Elementary School.



Stamford is **one** of only **nine** high schools in the state to offer the IB Diploma Program. IB is recognized across the world for its innovative approach to education, currently operating in 147 countries.

"The IBDP gave me both the academic and life skills that have led to my success in my first year of college-compared to my peers, I am much more prepared!"

**Namrata Kumar, SHS IB Class of 2020,
UConn Class of 2024**



Productive Habits of Body

SPS strives to ensure that all students are prepared to lead an active lifestyle and make healthy life choices.

SPS provides health and wellness education and services that empower students to be self-aware, to take ownership of their academic growth, and to plan for the future.



SHS and WHS offer **OVER 50** competitive athletic teams

(COVID forced the cancellation of the 2020 spring sports season)

In Fall 2019, 20% of all SPS high school students registered for one or more of our competitive sports teams (515 WHS, 436 SHS, AITE does not have sports teams, their students participate on teams from their districted high school).

In addition to traditional gym classes, staff offer age-appropriate workout and training guidance to help students stay in shape and relieve stress.

SPS Health and Physical Education teachers work with community partners including the Rowan Center, PEACEWORKS and Stamford Hospital to supplement lessons and instruction with guest speakers and interactive activities.

In March, our teachers and coaches continued to foster productive habits of mind, in more creative and innovative ways. At Northeast Elementary School, the physical education teachers posted a dance workout video that was received enthusiastically by students and families. Stillmeadow Elementary School hosted a schoolwide virtual Field Day, and Stamford High's athletic department launched a Google Site offering daily workouts for students and their families.

SPS and Chartwells served **10,800+ meals DAILY**

2000+ breakfasts through the federally funded School Breakfast Program

8200+ lunches, SPS provided 910,802 lunches to students during the school year.

600+ evening meals through the ROSCCO and student-athlete evening supper club



Immerse Students in their Environment NATURE's CLASSROOM / THE FRESH AIR FUND'S SHARPE RESERVATION

For more than a decade, school communities across Stamford have found creative ways to help students understand and appreciate the world in which we live. SPS students study the species and explore nature in partnerships with community organizations like SoundWaters, the Mill River Park Collaborative and the Stamford Nature Center.

Each year, a number of schools take the learning to a higher level, by participating in unique hands-on educational opportunities through partnerships with Nature's Classroom and the Fresh Air Fund's Sharpe Reservation.

The day-long or overnight programs offered at nearby facilities, allow students to learn and experience what is otherwise not possible in the classroom. Focused on team building and aligned with the National Science Standards, small groups of students are tasked to:

- Apply practical and creative thinking skills to solve a physical challenge
- Develop a sense of community
- Recognize confidence in themselves and an appreciation for others

These immersive learning experiences present a great opportunity for students to discuss the importance of their surroundings and reflect on how societal impact and use has evolved over time.



"The enthusiasm and outcomes garnered during the Nature's Classroom experience are carried with them back to our school community."

**Dr. Shawn Marinello,
Northeast Elementary Principal**

"At Davenport Ridge, we have been participating in this collaboration with Sharpe Reservation for almost ten years. Over 1,000 students have participated in these team building activities, which focus on teamwork, critical thinking and community building. These activities serve as life lessons for the students and help them to grow as better community members."

Michael Pisseri, Principal, Davenport Ridge Elementary School

Address Food Insecurity

SPS DINING SERVICES



Stamford Public Schools (SPS) provides free breakfast and lunch meals to any student in need, through Chartwells School Dining Services. In addition, the district offers pre-packaged meals to students attending after-school and evening activities and practices at SHS and WHS.

On March 12, 2020, Stamford Public Schools announced that all school buildings would be closed effective the following day. Within hours, Dawn McGinn, Senior Director of Dining Services and Audrey Way, SPS Determining Official worked to identify community partners who could assist in distributing meals the following day. The two immediately recognized that many SPS students are dependent on their school cafeteria for their daily meal. Since September, the two had been collaborating on serving breakfast and lunch in the district's 21 school buildings, as well as overseeing a Filling in the Blanks-sponsored weekend backpack program and an after-school "supper club" that supported program participants and student athletes. They quickly recognized that their out-of-school offerings were about to expand exponentially and become more important than ever before.

From March 13, 2019 through September 1, 2020, Stamford Public Schools provided
462,772 FREE Meals
to our students.

The next morning, volunteers from local community organizations joined staff members to distribute bagged meals at every school building in Stamford. Virtually overnight, the team created what we now fondly refer to as, "Grab and Go." With the help of dozens of volunteers, a program was created to feed every student in need, in an ever-changing landscape. While the program specifics have evolved with the circumstances, since the pandemic began, Stamford students have received breakfast and lunch meals to cover food needs seven-days-per-week, uninterrupted.

At the height of the need in late spring, meals were distributed in 28 separate locations across the district.

Spring 2020 Grab and Go:



22
School
Sites



5
Community
Sites



1
Church

"Chartwells is committed to ensuring kids have access to nutritious and healthy meals. Last spring, that meant moving into the community and bringing the food to them (when they stopped coming to us). Whether it's in the cafeteria or in their neighborhood, we never stopped delivering the meals to the students and their families."

Dawn McGinn,
Senior Director of Dining Services



Thank you to all who supported the Stamford Public Schools Grab and Go program

Office of Family & Community Engagement Staff	Chartwells Staff
Community Volunteers	Members of the Stamford Public Schools Paraeducator Association
Stamford Public Schools Security Team	SPEF (Stamford Public Education Foundation)
Domus Foundation Volunteers	Filling in the Blanks
Building One Community	Southend Community Center
Yerwood Center	

"Families face so many challenges today. Helping them ensure their children have access to meals hopefully will be a huge relief during this time."

Olympia Della Flora, Associate Superintendent School Development



Productive Habits of Heart

SPS recognizes that everyone experiences stress and anxiety differently. We provide support through our school psychologists, counselors and social workers to assist each student and family to identify and utilize the coping mechanism that works best for them.

SPS students acquire and apply the skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.



A year-long plan was launched in Spring 2020 to re-engage parents to understand their childcare needs while simultaneously partnering with community organizations to support child care programs with professional development, PPE and response strategies.

In June, community leaders from Stamford joined SPS staff to discuss race, monitoring media intake, and processing traumatic events around race with children. The Parent Pop-up Webinar featured breakout sessions for parents and guardians of elementary and secondary students.

SPS partnered with the Mayor's Youth Leadership Council (MYLC) to host a student-led webinar to discuss reimagining our schools and communities through addressing racism and violence.

Throughout the Spring, students across the district showed us their compassion and empathy in response to the pandemic.

Westhill High School Angels raised money for health care workers, meals for child care providers and facilitated a book give-away.

Students in our 18-21 year old Individuals Achieving Independence program made signs to show their appreciation for firefighters with whom they regularly partner with on community projects.

Elementary School communities demonstrated gratitude for our teachers by hosting socially distanced car parades and drive-through celebrations.

The Stamford Public Education Foundation (SPEF) Student-Athlete Program served 118 fall and 97 winter athletes, fostering positive student-athlete development and growth academically, athletically and social-emotionally.



Promote School Readiness | APPLES Early Childhood Education Center

APPLES Early Childhood Education Center provides our youngest learners with language enriched classroom settings that foster student independence and the acquisition of school readiness skills to prepare each child for a successful school career. In addition to academic based activities, students are exposed to differentiated and intentionally planned learning experiences to support their language development, communication and social skills, fine and gross motor skills, and individual creativity.

APPLES offers a variety of classroom settings, allowing each child a developmentally appropriate (least restrictive) environment, where they can access the skills needed to achieve their most significant measure of growth. APPLES has operated in its current location, on the Rippowam Middle School campus for the past seven years.



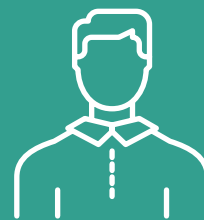
200

Students
(Ages 3-5)



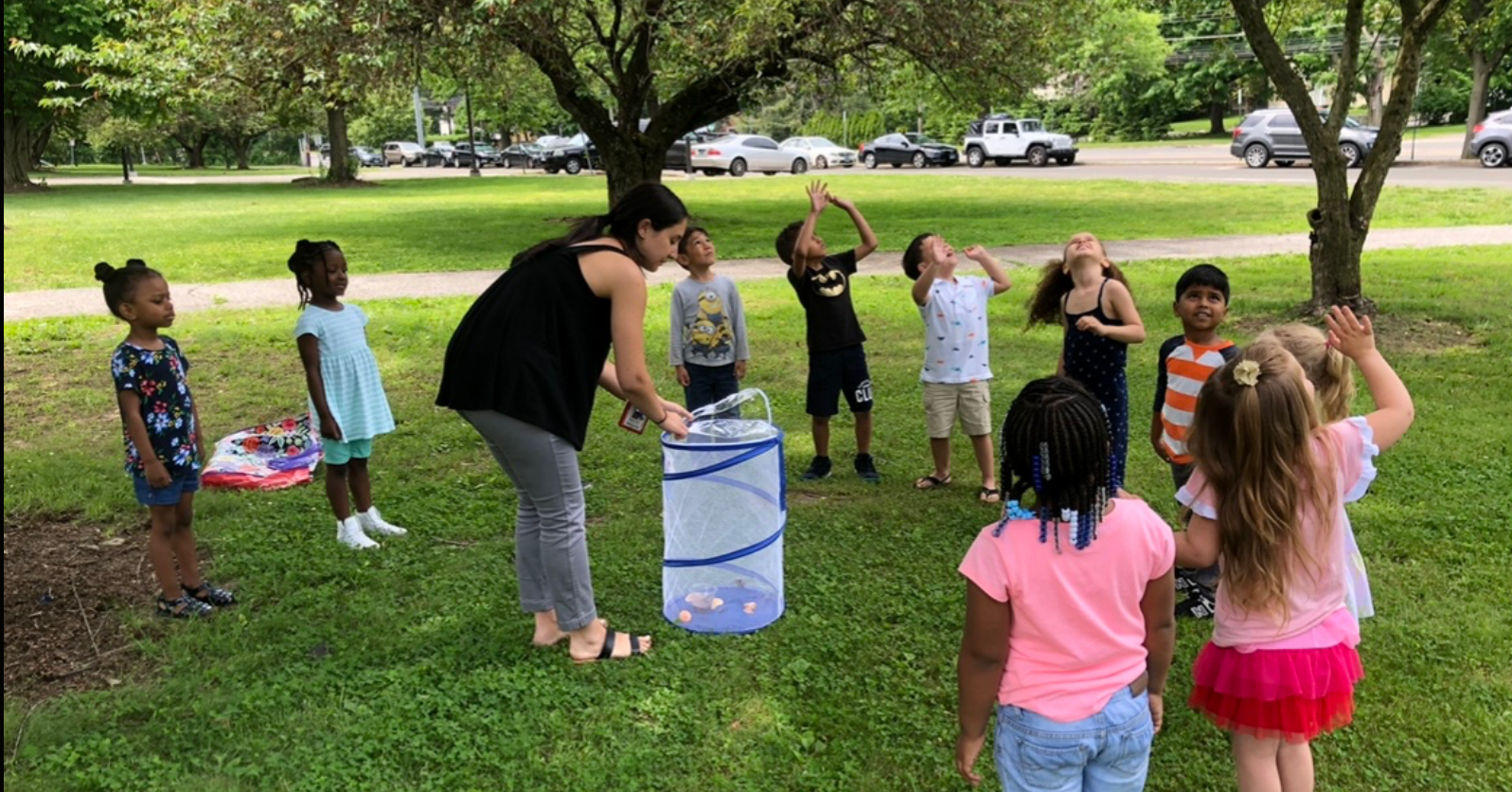
72

Full Time
Staff



8

Part Time
Staff



APPLES (Age-Appropriate Peers Playing Learning and Exploring in School) Preschool is an integrated preschool program that offers a nurturing and enriching first school experience by providing the following programs:

APPLES provides special education services as required by federal and state laws for children with Individual Education Plans starting at age three.

APPLES has the unique pleasure of educating general education preschool-aged peers through a lottery application process open to all Stamford residents and City of Stamford employees.

School Readiness Program is for students who are four years old and will be attending Kindergarten in SPS. This program supports students who have not yet had a preschool experience, and who speak a second language in their home. This program follows the Office of Early Childhood Guidelines and Fee Schedule.

In response to the spring 2020 closure of schools, the APPLES team quickly and innovatively engaged their parents and families. They offered home-delivery of learning and play materials, provided parental strategies (especially for the special education community), offered developmentally appropriate daily matrix schedules, and hosted "learn how to play," sessions over Zoom. The APPLES team connected with parents to establish a wraparound level of support for the students and their families, ensuring students continued their vital social development.

APPLES Teacher Brie O'Bryan was named Outstanding Special Education Preschool Teacher by the Connecticut Parent Teacher Association. Nominated by parents, Brie was recognized for her efforts to support the school with technology assistance, her colleagues with lesson planning ideas, and her students with daily lessons both in email and through Zoom. She also stayed connected by delivering weekly "goodie" bags to her students' homes each Sunday.

The National PTA designated APPLES Early Childhood Center's PTA (APPLES PTA) a 2019-2020 National PTA School of Excellence, the first-ever preschool in the country to garner such recognition.

"The APPLES community strives to create positive home-school partnerships that help our children grow both in and out of school."

Kendra Brown, Director of Early Childhood



Support Students After Graduation **BRIDGE TO COLLEGE**

SPS strives to secure post-high school success for all students. A dedicated team of counselors, teachers and administrators work to ensure our seniors graduate with a post-secondary plan. Unfortunately, some students are impacted by a phenomenon known as ‘summer melt’, where students who are accepted to, and planned on attending, college disconnect from resources and ultimately do not complete the college enrollment process. Though research shows ‘summer melt’ impacts all college intending students, first-generation and low-income students are disproportionately impacted.

Since 2019, SPS has offered Bridge to College (B2C) to help graduates secure post-secondary enrollment and prevent summer melt. Open to any graduating SPS senior interested in attending higher education, the program aims to remove barriers that students face in completing the enrollment process; including submitting financial aid forms, registering for classes, and preparing for the transition to independence. B2C students are matched with an SPS school counselor, and work collaboratively to identify areas of concern and address their individual needs. In 2020, the B2C program operated virtually, using a mix of phone and online meeting platforms. SPS utilized text messaging throughout the summer, targeting all seniors with tailored messages about deadlines and available support services. School counselors made direct phone calls to all first-generation graduates to further ensure those most at risk of summer melt were aware of available resources.

At the conclusion of its second year, the Bridge to College program has doubled the number of students served and added a B2C Coordinator who liaises with the counselors and serves as a resource for students throughout their freshman year of college.

B2C is operated in partnership with Stamford Cradle to Career, SPEF, and RISE.

- 112 students enrolled in Bridge to College (up from 48 in 2019).
- 80% of B2C students engaged in regular communication with their school counselor throughout the summer.
- 61% of B2C participants enrolled in college as of fall 2020 (based on National Clearinghouse data). Though down slightly from 2019 enrollment, this outcome is consistent with the national decline in fall 2020 college enrollment.
- Of 2020 SPS graduates who intended to attend Norwalk Community College (NCC): 59% of B2C students enrolled in the fall of 2020, compared to 47% of those students who did not receive one-on-one support.

Program Management:

- Rebecca J. Wilson, Coordinator for College and Career Readiness/School Counselor Services

2020 school counselors:

- Maria DeAntonis
- Andrena Forlenzo
- Spiro Milas
- Nicole Vazquez

“The best part of Bridge to College was the communication between me and my counselor and how helpful she was. I would not be going to NCC right now without her help.”

SHS 2020 Graduate

School, Staff and Student Achievement

Stamford Public Schools celebrates the accomplishments of select schools, students and staff members. Here are some highlights from the 2019-2020 School Year.



College for Every Student Brilliant Pathways named Cloonan Middle School as a School of Distinction for the 11th consecutive year, recognized for exemplary efforts in helping students become college and career ready.



WHS Junior Jacob Sherman and SHS Juniors Allie Findeisen and Panos Ketonis earned perfect ACT scores--the highest possible composite score of 36 on the standardized test.



SHS Senior Andrew Patashnik was named a National Merit Scholarship® Semifinalist in the 65th annual National Merit Scholarship Program.



National PTA designated APPLES Early Childhood Center's PTA a 2019-2021 School of Excellence.



AITE Senior Alyssa Craner, SHS Senior Aron Ravin and WHS Senior Victoria Morgan were accepted into the National Hispanic Recognition Program.



SHS Senior Aron Ravin took first place and a \$10,000 scholarship in the Ronald Reagan Great Communicator Debate Series in the summer of 2019.



AITE Senior Christopher Burke was named a National Merit Commended Student in the 2020 National Merit Scholarship® Program.



Rogers International School sixth and seventh grade teams, under the direction of Rogers Teachers Michael Argenio and Cara Denison, earned second and third places respectively at the 37th Annual National Academic Championship in Washington D.C.



Scofield Magnet Middle School Eighth Grader Aryan Pandalai Was named to the National American Mathematics Competition (AMC 8) Honor Roll and earned first place in the 72nd Connecticut Science and Engineering Fair.



The Columbia Scholastic Press Association awarded The Round Table, the SHS digital student newspaper, a Gold Medal for 2019-2020.



The National Center for Earth and Space Education selected an experiment proposal developed by SHS Seniors Rithin Armstrong and Lizet Garcia for testing on the International Space Station in this year's Student Spaceflight Experiments Program Mission 14.



AITE Senior Manik Jain led the winning Artificial Intelligence and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles team at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's summer engineering program.



AITE students Anna Lichtenberg and Kevin Fleischer were among 13 selected NASA-sponsored high school students who participated in astronomical research at Caltech during the summer of 2019.



In 2020, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) designated Springdale Elementary, Davenport Ridge Elementary, and Strawberry Hill, an extension of Rogers International as Schools of Distinction in the 2018-19 Next Generation Accountability Report.



Springdale noted by CSDE for High Growth in Math for all students and for high-needs students.



Davenport Ridge is recognized by CSDE for High Growth in English language arts for all students and for high-needs students.



Strawberry Hill recognized by CSDE for High Performance.



Connecticut Parent Teacher Association named APPLES PreSchool Teacher Brie O'Bryan Outstanding Special Education Preschool Teacher of the Year.



Connecticut Association of School Administrators named SPS Director of Curriculum and Instruction Natalie Elder McClarty the Stamford Administrator of the Year.



The New York Jets and Gatorade awarded SHS Football Coach Jamar Greene the High School Coach of the Week award.



The Hispanic Parade Organization awarded Paraeducator Lucas Romero the El Quijote award for commitment and dedication to the Hispanic community.



SPS students earned 46 total prizes in the 35th Annual Stamford Literary Competition.



AITE Junior Carlee Reid took first place and a \$1,500 scholarship in the Altice USA Hispanic Heritage Month Essay Contest.



Six graduates of the inaugural SHS International Baccalaureate® (IB) Diploma Programme class met all of the requirements to earn the distinguished IB diploma.



The State Education Resource Center, in collaboration with the Commission on Women, Children and Seniors, awarded its 2019 Parental Involvement Recognition Award to SPS parents Regan Allan and Yadira Esquivel.



Inspirational Actions

The SHS annual “Pink Out” event raised \$9,000 for cancer-related charities, the total raised over seven years surpasses \$75,000.

SHS Athletic Trainer Jordan Napolitano and Athletic Director Chris Passamano worked together to save the life of an official who suffered a medical emergency during the Annual Winter Girls’ Basketball Tournament.

Toquam Elementary School Music Teacher Robert Brown performed emergency measures to aid a student who was choking.

SHS Senior Joe Nathanson earned the Rank of Eagle Scout for the construction and installation of four Buddy Benches at Newfield Elementary School, as part of the school’s “Kindness” program.

Congratulations

TO THE STAMFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS CLASS OF 2020

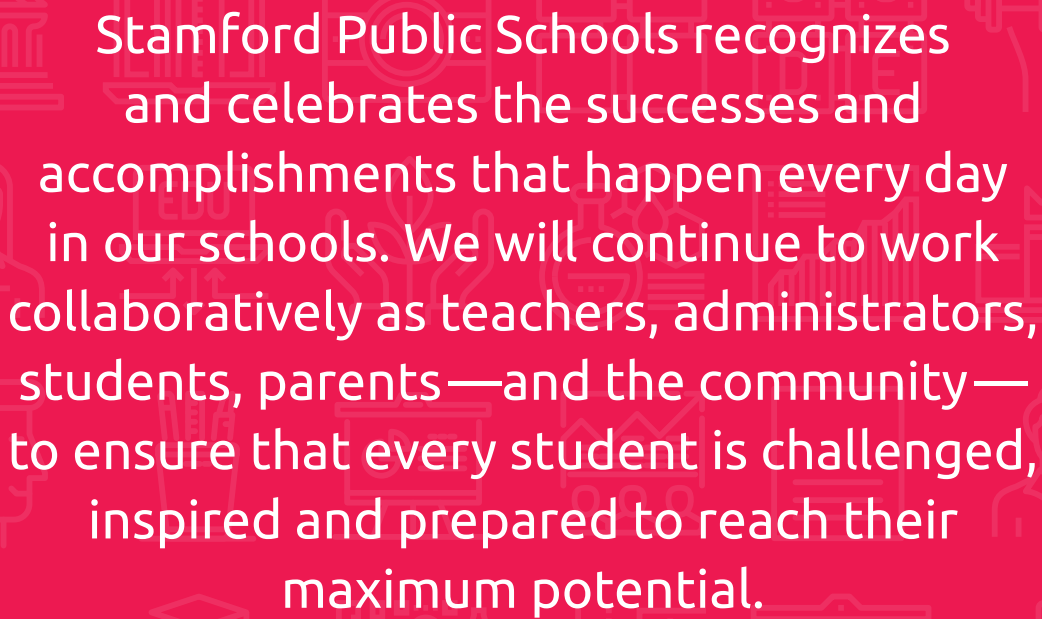
***WE WISH OUR GRADUATES WELL AS THEY HEAD TO INSTITUTIONS
OF HIGHER LEARNING, CAREERS AND THE U.S. ARMED FORCES.***

ALBERTUS MAGNUS COLLEGE
AMERICAN UNIVERSITY
BALDWIN WALLACE UNIVERSITY
BAR-ILAN UNIVERSITY (ISRAEL)
BARUCH COLLEGE OF THE CUNY
BELLEVUE COLLEGE
BERKLEE COLLEGE OF MUSIC
BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY
BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN COMMUNITY
COLLEGE OF THE CUNY
BOSTON COLLEGE
BOSTON UNIVERSITY
BOWDOIN COLLEGE
BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY - PROVO
BRISTOL TECH
BROWN UNIVERSITY
BRYANT UNIVERSITY
CALIFORNIA COLLEGE OF THE ARTS
CENTRAL CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY
CHAMPLAIN COLLEGE
CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY
CLEMSON UNIVERSITY
COASTAL CAROLINA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON
COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF PHILADELPHIA
CONNECTICUT COLLEGE
COOPER UNION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF
SCIENCE AND ART
CORNELL UNIVERSITY
CULINARY INSTITUTE OF AMERICA
DARTMOUTH COLLEGE
DREXEL UNIVERSITY
DUKE UNIVERSITY
EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
EASTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY
EASTERN NAZARENE COLLEGE
ELON UNIVERSITY
EMERSON COLLEGE
EMORY UNIVERSITY
FAIRFIELD UNIVERSITY
FASHION INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
FISHER COLLEGE
FLAGLER COLLEGE - ST AUGUSTINE
FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY
FLORIDA COASTAL PREP
FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
FORDHAM UNIVERSITY
FULL SAIL UNIVERSITY
GATEWAY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
HARTWICK COLLEGE
HARVARD UNIVERSITY
HIGH POINT UNIVERSITY
HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY
HOUSATONIC COMMUNITY COLLEGE
HOWARD UNIVERSITY
HUSSON UNIVERSITY
INDIANA UNIVERSITY - BLOOMINGTON
IONA COLLEGE
ITHACA COLLEGE
JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY
JOB CORPS
JOHNSON & WALES UNIVERSITY
KENYON COLLEGE
KING'S COLLEGE
KUTZTOWN UNIVERSITY
LIBERTY UNIVERSITY
LIM COLLEGE
LINCOLN TECHNICAL INSTITUTE
LINCOLN TECHNICAL INSTITUTE -
EAST WINDSOR
LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY
LOYOLA UNIVERSITY MARYLAND
LOYOLA UNIVERSITY NEW ORLEANS
LYNN UNIVERSITY
MANCHESTER COMMUNITY COLLEGE
MANHATTANVILLE COLLEGE
MARIST COLLEGE
MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
MERCY COLLEGE
MERRIMACK COLLEGE
MIAMI DADE COLLEGE
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE
MINNESOTA STATE COMMUNITY AND
TECHNICAL COLLEGE - FERGUS FALLS
MONROE COLLEGE - NEW ROCHELLE
MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY
MOUNT HOLYOKE COLLEGE
MOUNT SAINT MARY COLLEGE
MUHLENBERG COLLEGE
NEW ENGLAND INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
NEW YORK INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
NEW YORK SCHOOL OF INTERIOR DESIGN
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY
NICHOLS COLLEGE
NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY
NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

NORTHWESTERN
NORWALK COMMUNITY COLLEGE
OLIN COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING
PACE UNIVERSITY AT PLEASANTVILLE
PENNSYLVANIA COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY
PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY
PLYMOUTH STATE UNIVERSITY
PORTER AND CHESTER INSTITUTE
PURDUE UNIVERSITY
QUINNIPIAC UNIVERSITY
RENSSELAER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE
RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE
RICCI'S ACADEMY
ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY
RUSSEL SAGE
SACRED HEART UNIVERSITY
SAINT JOSEPH'S UNIVERSITY
SANTA CLARA UNIVERSITY
SARAH LAWRENCE COLLEGE
SAVANNAH COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN
SETON HALL UNIVERSITY
SIMMONS UNIVERSITY
SKIDMORE COLLEGE
SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY
ST. FRANCIS
STATE COLLEGE OF FLORIDA -
MANATEE - SARASOTA
SUFFOLK UNIVERSITY
SUNY AT PURCHASE COLLEGE
SUNY COLLEGE AT CORTLAND
SUNY DELHI
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY
TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
THE CITY COLLEGE OF THE CITY UNIVERSITY
OF NEW YORK
THE NEW SCHOOL
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA
THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
TRINITY COLLEGE
TUFTS UNIVERSITY
UNION COLLEGE
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
UNITED STATES ARMY
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
UNITED STATES NAVY
UNIVERSAL TECHNICAL INSTITUTE

UNIVERSITY OF BUFFALO SUNY
UNIVERSITY OF BRIDGEPORT
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA - SANTA BARBARA
UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER
UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT
UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT - STAMFORD
UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON
UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE
UNIVERSITY OF DENVER
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH
UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA -
CHAMPAIGN
UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS
UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY
UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE
UNIVERSITY OF MAINE
UNIVERSITY OF MAINE AT FARMINGTON
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND - COLLEGE PARK
UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS - BOSTON
UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS - DARTMOUTH
UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS - AMHERST
UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAVEN
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHARLOTTE
UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND
UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND
UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER
UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA UPSTATE
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA - COLUMBIA
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA - ST. PETE
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MAINE
UNIVERSITY OF VALLEY FORGE
UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA
UTAH VALLEY UNIVERSITY
VALENCIA COLLEGE
VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY
VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY
VIRGINIA TECH
WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY
WASHINGTON AND LEE UNIVERSITY
WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY
WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY
WESTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY
WESTERN NEW ENGLAND UNIVERSITY
WILLIAMS COLLEGE
WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE
XAVIER UNIVERSITY
YALE UNIVERSITY



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