

**School-wide Title Application
Stamford Elementary School**

Principal: Gregory D. Betti

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Approved by Stamford School Directors

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Part 1: School Vision and Mission

School Mission: “Preparing students to find new solutions to real world challenges by providing the skills, experiences, and habits of mind that support innovative thinking.”

School Vision: All students can learn. Through our dedication and determination, we offer students the highest quality of education possible so that they can be successful at their career choice(s) and as valued members of society.

It is the vision of Stamford Elementary School “to make it the best school possible” as defined by:

1. Providing a staff that is dedicated to student's education and well-being;
2. Providing a school that has an instructional program that meets and exceeds the Vermont Standards and Grade Expectations through clearly aligned goals;
3. Providing programs that encourage and prepare students to be high school ready;
4. Providing a school that recognizes the value of parents and the community; and
5. Providing a school that cultivates positive, educational experiences for students.

To accomplish this vision, the staff and teachers will:

- Commit themselves to each and every student they teach;
- Be positive role models and foster strong leadership skills;
- Involve themselves in student and peer activities;
- Accept constructive criticism;
- Have open and continuous communication with parents;
- Work and collaborate with peers through professional learning communities, inservices, and staff meetings;
- Treat each student as an individual and be aware of individual needs;
- Provide a mentor to new staff members to help them adjust, become acclimated, and become successful teachers;
- Allow students to have a voice and to feel a sense of belonging and ownership;
- Seek opportunities to develop innovative and effective teaching strategies;
- Respect students and staff;
- Implement best educational practices;
- Offer varied opportunities for students to show what they know;
- Be aware of the multiple intelligences and use differentiated instruction techniques including child-centered and hands-on activities;
- Connect curriculum to real life;
- Utilize research-based instruction; and
- Prepare students for the transition from elementary to middle school and middle school to high school.

We will build a program in which students:

- Recognize the importance of all subjects;
- Appreciate literature and reading;
- Believe that they can accomplish anything;
- Learn mathematical skills that have practical applications;
- Become respectful, reliable, reasonable, and responsible citizens within their community and the world;
- Communicate effectively through oral and written presentations;
- Develop an understanding and appreciation for science and technology;
- Develop an understanding and appreciation for the arts;
- Are aware of their own well being (nutrition, health, self-esteem, and self-worth);
- Develop social skills through thinking and questioning; and
- Develop effective writing skills across the curriculum.

To build strong parent/community involvement, we will:

- Have monthly PTG meetings
- Offer family nights (Meet and Greet Night) through the school and P.T.G. organized family activities (Bingo, etc.);
- Establish a mentoring/volunteering program in conjunction with school policy requirements;
- Continue to increase and foster involvement with senior citizens;
- Encourage students to volunteer in the community; and
- Encourage open communication between school/parents and community/school.

We will create a school culture in which students:

- Feel good about themselves and their school;
- Feel safe at school;
- Trust their peers and teachers;
- Receive consistent, positive reinforcement from their teachers;
- Receive consistent and respectful treatment from the entire school community;
- Participate in a variety of extra-curricular activities;
- Feel like they have a voice;
- Accept that everyone is different;
- Understand the school rules and what it means to be respectful, responsible, reliable, and reasonable;
- Appreciate their school;
- Appreciate their own uniqueness and strengths; and
- Recognize that each student is in "the right place."

Part II: Narrative Description of the School

Stamford is a small community which neighbors the border of Northwestern Massachusetts.

Stamford Elementary School is now a K -8th grade school made up of 73 students. The school was built in the early 1960's with additions put on during the 1970's.

All of our 8th grade students are tuitioned to area high schools. The majority of our students attend either Drury High School or McCann Technical High School, both in North Adams, Massachusetts.

The Town of Stamford also has a private preschool program that runs from 12:30 P.M. to 3:30 P.M. with a current enrollment of approximately 15 students. It is self-supporting, and it accepts students from the surrounding communities. This program helps with the transition of our students from the preschool to the kindergarten environment.

Our classroom structure is K, 1st/2nd, 3rd/4th, 5th/6th, and 7th/8th.

Historically, students at Stamford Elementary perform well academically in the area high schools. In fact, they are usually at the top of their classes. Many people move to the community specifically for the school's reputation. Over the past few years, we have seen a greater emphasis placed upon test scores. Below is a chart of percentages of students that received a score of a 4 (proficient with distinction) or a 3 (proficient) on the new Smarter Balanced Test and the NECAP Science Test given in the Spring of 2015. Students scoring a 1 or a 2 did not meet the proficiency level. Please note the State recognizes that the Smarter Balanced Test was significantly harder than the NECAP of previous years.

Grade Level	EL	Math	Science
3	N/A	N/A	N/A
4	73%	53%	60%
5	N/A	N/A	N/A
6	20%	10%	N/A
7	N/A	N/A	N/A
8	N/A	N/A	N/A

Note: Low numbers of students in some classes impact the effectiveness of pure statistical analysis that may result in N/A.

The entire school staff is a group of teachers focused on differentiated instruction and meeting the needs of all students. We have transitioned to the Common Core Standards and have implemented the Singapore Math Program throughout the school so that we have consistent and complimentary grade level transitions in math that align with the Common Core. In ELA, our kindergarten

through second grade students currently use the Treasures Reading Program supplemented with chapter books. Grades 3 and 4 use MacMillan/McGraw-Hill Glencoe “Leveled Readers” booklets. Grades 5-8 are currently using Interact™ “Genre Journeys” for independent reading supplemented by monthly genre specific reading from selected books.

We currently have no ELL programs.

We currently have a guidance counselor in our school four hours per week. Our guidance counselor uses a modified version of Second Step combined with team-building exercises in each of the classrooms. We will also continue to focus on the schools 4 R’s of being Respectful, Reasonable, Reliable, and Responsible. Our goal with this program is not only to see students and staff encouraging and modeling the 4 R’s, but to also promote positive classroom climate as well as a comfortable school climate. This year we will continue to use our modified PBiS (Positive Behavior Intervention System) model and use the QuickSchools behavior module and Discipline Tracker to record student behavior.

As part of a school-wide student assessment program that works in conjunction with our multi-tiered system of support, we use several programs throughout the year. We have also successfully implemented Foundations™ with our K-2 students that works in conjunction with other multi-sensory approaches used with our at-risk students. We continue to offer an after-school program which provides students with homework assistance, tutoring, curricular programming, and arts/athletic activities for grades 3-8. Through analysis of the NECAP data from Grades 3-8, as well as the data from the AimsWeb™ and Rigby Books™ (early childhood comprehension and fluency), we can devise strategies to help improve areas of weakness. During the "2015-2016" school year, the school tested with AimsWeb™ to get benchmark scores three times in ELA and at the end of the year in math to monitor student progress.

The administration and teachers believe that by identifying areas of need through data mining of the NECAP tests, benchmarking with Aimsweb™, and through other on-going assessments, we will have a consistent curriculum that will help to meet the needs of all of the students, improve our student’s progress, and in turn improve test scores. We are also using various internet based math programs (Study Island™ is the principle one obtained through a grant) which are accessible both at school and at home for the students to use to enrich their math skills. This program is receiving in-school support and the data of student use shows that the students are using it.

This year we once again have used all of our School-wide Title resources to fund our school-wide teacher. Katelyn Millard will serve as the reading/math school-wide teacher, the reading specialist, and work with our EST/504 students. I would like to use the school-wide teacher with the students in the classroom more often and try to minimize pull-out students. These decisions need to be made on a case-by-case basis directed towards the best interest of the student.

Our school has taken a more pro-active approach. By identifying math weaknesses in the early grades and having our School-wide Title person help to address these needs, we will give the students a sense of success and establish a firm base for the students to build upon through the higher grades.

Continuing on-going assessment of student learning and achievement was done last year through the “Haiku” computer program. Nick Fahey used the program as a pilot program for the school district that is now mandated to move towards a proficiency based assessment report card for all grades (K-12) in Vermont. The WSSU has provided professional development in this area and will continue to do so next year in an effort to comply with Vermont regulations. There are many questions surrounding the use of proficiency based learning and grading. Therefore, I don’t see it becoming the prevalent assessment method and using a new report card for at least one more year.

Part III: School Demographic Data

STUDENT INFORMATION	
Grades served	K - 8
Enrollment (total number of students served)	73
Student Stability (% of enrollment)	97.3%
Attendance Rate (% of days student attended)	96.6%
Suspensions as of April, 2015 (In-school)	0
Suspensions as of April, 2015 (Out of school)	0
Percent of economically disadvantaged/low-income students (eligible for free lunch)	15%
Number of general education students	73
Total number of students with disabilities (receiving IEP-mandated services)	5
Number of self-contained special education classes (For high schools: total number, in all subject areas, of special education self-contained classes)	0
Number of students in general education classes receiving IEP-mandated services	5
Number of special education students decertified this year	1
Percentage of recent immigrants	0
Number of English language learners (ELL) / limited English proficient (LEP)	0
Number of bilingual classes	0
Total number of students receiving ESL services	0
Number of ELL/LEP students identified for special education	0
Number of ELL/LEP students attaining English proficiency	0
Number of general education preschool students	0
Number of special education preschool students	1
Number of students in temporary housing	0
Ethnic and Gender Data (% of enrollment)	
White:	99%
Black:	00%
Hispanic:	01%
Asian and others (includes Pacific Islanders, Alaskan Natives, and Native Americans):	00%
Male:	33
Female:	40

STAFF INFORMATION

Total number of teachers	12
Percent of teachers fully licensed and permanently assigned to school	.75%
Percent of teachers with more than 2 years teaching in school	.75%
Percent of teachers with more than 5 years teaching anywhere	67%
Percent of teachers with Masters Degree or higher	25%
Average number of days absent (not including maternity leave time)	8.25**
Number of administrative/instructional supervisors	1
Number of guidance counselors	.1 FTE
Number of school psychologists	0
Number of social workers	0
Number of educational evaluators	0
Number of speech therapists	.3 FTE
Number of occupational therapists	0
Number of physical therapists	0
Number of school nurses	.2 FTE
Number of paraprofessionals providing instructional services	3x .5 FTE 1x .72 FTE
Number of paraprofessionals providing non-instructional services (i.e., health, translation, parent involvement)	0
Number of family assistants	0
Number of school aides	0
Number of school safety agents	0
**Note: Included 25 days of Family and Medical Leave	
Without that time – Average number of days absent 5.75	

Part IV: Needs Assessment - Sections A, B, and C

Section A: Analysis of Student Achievement and Program Effectiveness

English Language Arts (Reading, Writing, and Spelling/Vocabulary)

The school continues to make a concerted effort to upgrade antiquated ELA programs throughout the school. Grades K-2 use Foundations™, Chapter Books, Treasures, Spelling Connections, Reading-Leveled Readers (for reading groups), and work in alignment with the Common Core and State Standards to provide ELA instruction to our students. Teachers are expected to incorporate more writing into the social studies curriculum through projects and the science curriculum through the use of science notebooks/journals for inquiry-based research.

Grades 3/4 purchased the curriculum Spelling Connections™ to supplement their Leveled Readers™ curriculum. Additionally, the teacher uses Time for Kids Magazine™ and G.U.M. The teacher believes that the students in grade 3/4 that need additional supports should continue to “learn to read,” and all students should be “reading to learn.” Reading aloud and together is combined and supported in all subject areas as well as the reading time allotted.

Once again, in conjunction with the PTG, the school conducted a reading celebration event during March that included every class and to accentuate the importance of reading. Mrs. Millard took on the responsibility and the event was positively received by teachers and students.

The middle school has purchased the Interact™ simulation software to supplement the Curriculum Associates™ program in ELA that we used two years ago. Through the use of Haiku LMS™, the teacher provides lessons from the curriculum and PDF formatted lessons on the Chromebooks for the students to use at school and at home. The middle school provides directed reading through monthly genre based reading books. The students are also provided substantial supplemental reading time through the social studies program. The lessons are aligned with the standards and the Common Core.

The school has also instituted a literacy block of time (15-20 minutes each day) for dedicated reading. Mr. Fahey is in the process of becoming a reading coach and is working with the Agency of Education, University of Vermont, and other agencies to help apply reading strategies throughout the school. This dedicated time is monitored so that it is productive. Mr. Fahey is working to bring several methods of making the most out of the time allotted and also collecting data to support it.

Mathematics

In the area of mathematics, we now use the Singapore Math Program that has been implemented in every grade. This math program aligns with the Common Core. In support of the Common Core, the math program will make writing across the curriculum a significant component of student instruction. Additionally, the curriculum targets critical thinking and multiple pathways to arrive at the correct answer. The staff has made a significant investment in learning and becoming comfortable and adept with the new program.

The school has continued to provide free tutoring for the after-school program focused on grades 3-8. We will continue to send home released items from the NECAP/Smarter Balanced tests to encourage parents to work with their children at home.

We continue to support the professional development in the areas of math, the Common Core, proficiency based learning (PBL), personal learning plans (PLP), multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS), and other required programs directed by the Agency of Education.

Science

The school recognizes that the current curriculum that is currently used in grades K-2 is outdated and needs to be replaced. However, the school has taken a proactive approach and purchased Pearson Science curriculum that is aligned with the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) that were adopted by Vermont. Currently we have 4th grade and middle school that have been provided with one half of the curriculum. We are hoping to align this curriculum with all grades in the next two years. Grades K-2 will be ordering it during the summer of 2016 to use next year.

Additionally:

Grade K uses *Scholastic News*, Macmillan/McGraw Hill Science - A Closer Look, and Pearson Interactive Science.

Grades 1/2 use the Foss Full Option Science System™ which the teacher is very comfortable with. Grades K, 1/2, and 3/4 are also supplemented with an environmental science program in place of the "4-Winds Program" through the Southern Vermont Natural History Museum's "Science Essentials" program which makes eight or more presentations annually.

In the middle school grades, the teacher uses supplemental workbooks and the technology lab for on-line video experiments. Middle school science has become more project-based as evidenced by the teaching a minimum of four science labs with subsequent write-ups throughout the year.

Social Studies

Grade K currently uses *Scholastic News*, resources from the Internet, and holiday based materials.

Grades 1/2 currently use a standards-based map aligned with Vermont standards with supplemental materials as the focus of their social studies program. The students also regularly read from Scholastic News which is aligned with the Common Core and keeps the program interesting and current.

Grades 3/4 uses the Harcourt™ “Our Communities” social studies curriculum and the newly purchased Harcourt™ curriculum – States and Regions.

The middle school has purchased the Interact™ simulation software to help make the social studies program more interactive. The social studies program is supplemented with History Alive™ and Government Alive™. Mr. Fahey was granted time to visit the local area feeder high school last year and presented a report to the School Board that our program is currently aligned with the needs of the students and prepares them to enter these schools and be successful in this subject area.

Arts

Although we are a very small school, we are able to offer programs in the area of art and music for our students. In music, the students put on a minimum of two concerts per year. The parents and the community seem to appreciate the effort to enrich and encourage this important scholastic area that is put forth by the school, music teacher, and students. In art, the students take pride in their artwork and the work is put on display in the hallways for the community to observe. The arts are a very important part of a child’s education and its presence is very strong in our school and community.

Physical Education

In the past, physical education had such an emphasis on competitive sports. Although competitive sports do have a place in the curriculum, we would like to see more cooperative games played with students. This would work well in conjunction with the school’s emphasis on following the 4 R’s (Respect, Reasonable, Reliable, and Responsible). Students would also benefit from more health awareness and fitness by learning how to take care of their bodies through nutrition and exercise. We encourage students to walk or ride their bikes to school as a healthy alternative to riding the bus. Additionally, the school offers some programs for staff and students through VEHI (such as the “Healthy Heart Walk”) to get exercise through the after-school program.

Use of Technology and Library Media Services

Technology is becoming more and more important in our world. The State of Vermont now recognizes it as one of the transferable skills students must become proficient at in order to graduate high school. To teach our technology curriculum, we have a part-time technology teacher employed. We have also hired a part-time technology technician and are moving to a server-based

technology and Chromebook laptops. Our computer lab equipment has become more antiquated due to escalating replacement costs, software costs, and maintenance schedules. While we continue to support and use the computer lab, we have supplemented our current inventory of 21 computers with 33 Chromebook laptops that work in tandem with our Google Apps for Education™ operating environment and associated application software. These laptops are virtually maintenance free and do not require upgrading. Their useful life is approximately the same as desktop hardware.

The students in grades 3-8 are expected to become proficient at Microsoft Office™ and Google Apps™ and various other programs such as photo enhancing software. Our technology has opened the doors for students to conduct internet-based research in school instead of having to rely on the few computers in the library. Additionally, we have expanded our internet capability using the new high speed fiber line which seamlessly encompasses the entire school. Our students' grasp of technology continues to grow with changing technology both in and outside of the school. The students in middle school use technology every day. The students are always on the Chromebooks and this frees up the computer lab for other classes to use. The students can log into their school accounts at home, do their assignments, and then print them in school.

We have a fiber internet connection through ENA. We use QuickSchools™ to collect student information and produce reports cards. Parents now have internet access to their student's information such as attendance, grades, behavior, and homework. With the fiber, we will have the ability to have interactive classroom meetings with other schools and access to all colleges and libraries. Additionally, high speed internet access worked well for us during the Smarter Balanced computer assessment testing that was used last year.

Other Areas

We do not currently have significant attendance problems at the Stamford Elementary School but we are experiencing a problem with tardiness. We have support services offered in speech, occupational therapy, and special education. Our school improvement team reviews tests and curriculum and makes recommendations to the staff. We hold regular EST meetings and all 504 and IEP plans are current.

Part IV-Section B: Process for Reporting Needs Assessment Findings

All testing scores (aside from benchmark tests that show no reason for concern) are reported to staff, parents, and with tests such as the NECAP or Smarter Balanced, to the community and School Board. These scores are part of a driving force to examine the practices and trends utilized here in our school. Parents are also notified through meetings and parent/teacher conferences on testing results. We continue to review data and goals and work together as a community to develop new goals for the upcoming school year.

Part IV-Section C: Identified Priorities for 2016-2017

1. To continue to update out-of-date curriculum that is not aligned with the Common Core or the current GLE's in specific core subjects.
2. Continue to work towards increasing test scores in all standardized tests (reading, writing, math, and science).
3. Incorporate more writing in science and math through journals and notebooks as required by the Common Core and tested with the Smarter Balanced computerized test.
4. Provide professional development in areas of need as determined by the WSSU.
5. Provide training in the areas of proficiency based learning (PBL), personal learning plans, and Multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) as required by new legislation.
6. Continue to work with parents as new legislation will require a new grading system without significant Agency of Education advocacy. While we piloted Haiku Learning System this year, we will likely not use it next year due to the cost. However, we will continue to use a proficiency based model of learning and reporting in the middle school not only to help transition and inform parents, but hone our own skills in this area.
7. Increase the use of technology available both at school and at home to help students in need and also students that are gifted.