

State of the Schools 2011



**Building
Relationships to
Improve Learning**

The Guilford Public Schools

Our vision is a professional learning community where instruction invites effort and supports academic rigor for all students and educators.

Message from the Superintendent

State of the Schools

This fourth edition of the State of Schools is intended to provide feedback to Guilford Community members regarding progress we are making as a school district in educating the young people of Guilford. The District Leadership Team which includes principals and program supervisors has embraced the concept of maintaining a focus on classroom instruction and it has paid dividends as you will surmise after reviewing this report.

By not only maintaining but rather ratcheting up our instructional focus, the Guilford Public Schools has been able to increase student achievement despite the loss of funding for supplies and materials and close to twenty staff members over a two year period.

Our resolve in moving toward the vision of creating a professional learning community (PLC) where “instruction invites effort and supports academic rigor for all students and educators” is stronger than ever. Even in these difficult economic times our school system is continuing to flourish in terms of increased student learning and achievement. Our state and national test scores are at an all time high.

Focus on Instruction

During the 2006-07 school year our teachers were introduced to the nine Principles of Learning (POL) from the Institute for Learning at the University of Pittsburgh. The POL are based on the assumption that with sustained, focused effort on the part of our students and outstanding instruction that invites effort and provides rigor, all students can achieve at high levels. It is this belief system and the highly research based learning principles that have contributed so much to our success.

The leaders in the Guilford Schools have opened their classroom doors to one another in order to learn from each other. A culture of collaboration and trust is developing within our schools. Collaborative teams in all of our schools engage in collective inquiry and reflection with regard to best instructional practice as defined by the Principles of Learning.

Principle: Clear Expectations

If we expect all students to achieve at high levels, then we need to define explicitly what we expect students to learn. These expectations need to be communicated clearly in ways that get them “into the heads” of school professionals, parents, the community and, above all, students themselves. Descriptive criteria and models of work that meets standards should be publicly displayed, and students should refer to these displays to help them analyze and discuss their work. With visible accomplishment targets to aim toward at each stage of learning, students can participate in evaluating their own work and setting goals for their own effort.



Superintendent Tom Forella recognizes the importance of spending time regularly in classrooms interacting with students and teachers.

Professional Development

During the current school year professional development has been embedded into the every day work of the teacher. The Institute for Learning has been working with three instructional coaches in a highly structured professional training initiative. This two year initiative will provide the GPS with instructional expertise that will have the ability to interact with staff on a daily basis regarding the improvement of instruction.

Finally, it is important to note that the ongoing success of the Guilford Public Schools is a direct result of a very committed, passionate and hard-working staff. They have flourished in the collaborative culture that exists and are eager to learn about ways to improve their teaching each day.

I am thankful to the Guilford Community for their support and I hope the 2011 State of the Schools proves informative.

Principles of Learning

The Principles of Learning are condensed theoretical statements summarizing decades of learning research. They are designed to help educators analyze the quality of instruction and opportunities for learning that they offer to students. We look forward to introducing you to the nine Principles throughout the pages of this report.



District Department Highlights

Technology

Education continues to be innovated through and with technology in Guilford Public Schools.



Above, students at Baldwin document learning during gym class with the use of a flip camera.

The implementation of the Technology Plan continues. All regular elementary classrooms now have a SmartBoard.

A new web-based library/media software system has been implemented system-wide enhancing searching between schools and from home for students and faculty.

Interactive video integration, expanded use of web-based tools, documenting learning with flip cameras, lab simulations, and movie production are all examples of how education in Guilford continues to be innovated through and with technology.

Pupil Services

Bright Connections, a program for students with autism, was proposed to the Superintendent and the Board of Education following a two year study. The committee members included Guilford administrators and medical advisor, a consultant/behavior analyst, a parent, speech pathologist, special education teacher and the executive director of Yale University's Autism Center.



Unified Sports athletes and their coach Bill Wallach were honored at a banquet in May.

The Parent Advisory Council received a grant from the Guilford Fund for Education to enhance the Guilford Free Library's resource materials (books and DVDs) for parents with children with autism. The list of resource materials is available on the GPS website under Pupil Services/Parent Academy/Parent Resource Center.

Principle: Accountable Talk®

Talking with others about ideas and work is fundamental to learning. But not all talk sustains learning. For classroom talk to promote learning it must be accountable to appropriate knowledge, and to rigorous thinking. Accountable Talk® seriously responds to and further develops what others in the group have said. It puts forth and demands knowledge that is accurate and relevant to the issue under discussion. Accountable Talk® uses evidence appropriate to the discipline (e.g., proofs in mathematics, data from investigations in science, textual details in literature, documentary sources in history) and follows established norms of good reasoning. Teachers should intentionally create the norms and skills of Accountable Talk® in their classrooms.



Facilities

GHS: Resurfacing of the track and installation of new walkways. Replacement of lockers in the boys locker room. Energy lighting project.

Adams: Roof replacement and renovations of 6 lavatories. Installation of 8 unit ventilators, spot coolers in the 1937 building, new condenser for air conditioning for the science room, orchestra room, band room and art rooms. Energy lighting project in gym and energy project for boilers to reduce oil consumption (funded by ARRA grant).

Baldwin: Asbestos abatement in the north west lower wing, which included the installation of new flooring. Energy project to reduce gas consumption (funded by ARRA grant).

Cox: Installation of new gas service and removal of old oil tank. Structural repairs to maintenance barn, new fencing and construction of a new office next to the library.



Roof Replacement at Lakes

Leete: Flooring asbestos abatement, including water mitigation and new flooring in three classroom.

Lakes: Replacement of the entire roof.

Jones: Sealing and pointing of building. Installation of drainage to stop erosion. Sidewalk replacement. Testing and cleaning of existing portable water tank. Design of new portable water system.

Communications

Communications continues to be a priority within Guilford Public Schools. District sources include "The Anchor," electronic listserv, the Superintendent's parent and staff communication "Charting the Course," this annual State of the Schools written report and the Superintendent's presentation to the community, and "The Compass" newspaper. Our AlertNow communication system is used to communicate emergency and informational phone and email messages to parents and staff.

GPS website information continues to expand to provide more information about the school system and about community organizations that are of interest to the school community.

Guilford Board of Education



Board Chairman Bill Bloss recognized Guilford High School Theatre Arts students in Spring 2010 for winning the 2010 Connecticut Drama Association's "Outstanding Production" for a high school for their performance of On the Verge.

Message from Chairman Bill Bloss

Perhaps it is inevitable that with the economic downturn and the undeniable strain that our nation has faced over the past two years, the amount of budgets seems to get more attention than what our schools are doing with those budgets. But there should be no mistake: The Guilford Public Schools are in a time of unprecedented growth in student achievement. You've probably read that only seven towns in the entire state saw more of their students meet the state goal on the 10th grade CAPT tests. You may have seen that U.S. News and World Report ranked Guilford High School as one of "the very best across the country" – the only high school in New Haven County and one of only sixteen in the state to be recognized. Our renewed commitment to emphasizing quality instruction, smaller class sizes, improved use of technology, and needed curriculum changes helped bring our district to this point.

But the other half of the cost-benefit equation also bears thoughtful consideration. According to the state Office of Policy and Management, Guilford's per pupil spending is at most 80th in the state and its per capita tax levy is 52nd in the state. None of the seven towns above Guilford on the CAPT report had a lower per capita tax levy. With careful use of zero-based budgeting, we continue to hold budget increases to reasonable levels. For many years, Guilford has moved forward through the hard work of faculty, staff, parents, students, and volunteers. Guilford's public schools continue to do more with less.

Board Responsibilities and Committees

Nine local citizens are elected to serve unsalaried, staggered four-year terms on the Board of Education. The Board is responsible for setting educational goals and school policies; hiring a qualified Superintendent; operating and maintaining school buildings and grounds; and managing the expenditure of monies appropriated by the Town for the support of the schools. Board members are assigned to Committees annually and participate in Negotiations, Expulsion Hearings and Disbursement Reviews.

- Finance Subcommittee
- Facilities Subcommittee
- Health Advisory Committee
- Land Acquisitions Committee
- LEARN Board of Directors Representative
- Policy Subcommittee
- Standing Building Committee
- Standing Fields Committee
- Transportation Committee



The Health Advisory Committee worked with students and the executive chef of Yale Dining to develop a healthy recipe to enter into "The Recipes for Healthy Kids" national competition endorsed by First Lady Michelle Obama. Above, Board members Barbara Dudley and Alan Meyers sample the "A'MAsian Taco" with Baldwin students.

Guilford High School Facility Planning

In fall 2010, the Board of Education contracted with Tai Soo Kim Architects to develop options to address the facility needs at Guilford High School. A community committee and the Board will consider the design options presented. Once an option is selected, a June 2011 referendum is anticipated.

Principle: Organizing for Effort

An effort-based school replaces the assumption that aptitude determines what and how much students learn with the assumption that sustained and directed effort can yield high achievement for all students. Everything is organized to evoke and support this effort, to send the message that effort is expected and that tough problems yield to sustained work. High minimum standards are set and assessments are geared to the standards. All students are taught a rigorous curriculum, matched to the standards, along with as much time and expert instruction as they need to meet or exceed expectations.



2010-2011 Education Budget

Opportunities to Grow During Difficult Economic Times

Due to the current economic situation, a different approach to developing the 2010-11 budget was implemented by the Guilford Public Schools Leadership Team. It was the consensus of the Board members and the Leadership Team that in this time of economic crisis, the development of the 2010-11 budget should be viewed as a time to reduce costs wherever possible while at the same time, the current crisis should be viewed as an opportunity to also create change and focus our efforts to an even greater extent on classroom instruction.

With the above charge in mind, the Leadership Team initiated a budget development process that examined with a critical eye all current programs, initiatives, staff assignments, and supply and equipment needs that support our vision and instructional focus. At the same time, opportunities for change were investigated that would continue to move the District forward in terms of student achievement.

2010-2011 Budget Priorities

- **Focus on Classroom Instruction**
- **Professional Development focused on Instructional Improvement**
- **Utilization of limited resources to continue to move district in positive direction in terms of student learning.**

In all cases a collaborative approach was utilized to accomplish our budget goals. Special faculty meetings were held at each building to specifically address doing more with less and innovative approaches that would continue us moving in a direction of high level student learning. Obviously, difficult decisions were made in order to arrive at the 2.80% increase that reflects a reduction of 13 positions from the 2009-10 budget. At the same time, funding for one Administrative position was reallocated in order to provide for highly trained Instructional Coaches that will work closely with K-4 teachers in the area of literacy instruction. It is our hope that with an even greater emphasis on instruction at the early grades, students will be challenged at high levels and not one student will fall between the cracks.

Guilford Public Schools Budget History Comparison Increase Over Previous Years

2006-07 Budget:	\$43,401,527	5.73%
2007-08 Budget:	\$45,630,692	5.14%
2008-09 Budget:	\$48,170,968	5.57%
2009-10 Budget:	\$48,660,772	1.02%
2010-11 Budget:	\$50,021,963	2.80%

Budget Comparison

	2009-10	2010-11	Change	%Change
Salaries	30,045,472	30,963,090	917,618	3.05%
Benefits	9,085,700	9,385,812	300,112	3.30%
Services	2,860,000	2,808,608	(51,392)	- 1.80%
Tuition	1,727,900	1,992,327	264,427	15.30%
Supplies	1,614,500	1,237,400	(377,100)	- 23.36%
Capital	521,000	605,526	84,526	16.22%
Transport.	2,806,200	3,029,200	223,000	7.95%
Total	48,660,772	50,021,963	1,361,191	2.80%

Guilford Public Schools Enrollment History

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11
Cox	347	319	321	316
Jones	350	357	347	346
Lakes	449	438	433	409
Leete	307	335	332	335
Baldwin	608	574	544	587
Adams	600	603	620	572
GHS	1154	1138	1115	1113
Total	3815	3764	3712	3678

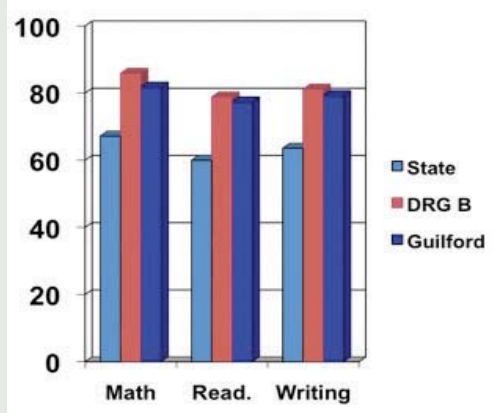
2010 Bond Appropriations

On April 20, 2010, Guilford voters appropriated \$1,560,000 for a roof replacement at Guilford Lakes School and \$760,000 for renovations and improvements at Calvin Leete Elementary School, A.W. Cox Elementary School, Melissa Jones Elementary School and Elisabeth C. Adams and Abraham Baldwin Middle Schools.

Student Achievement Data

2010 Connecticut Mastery Test

Grade 4 CMT Results



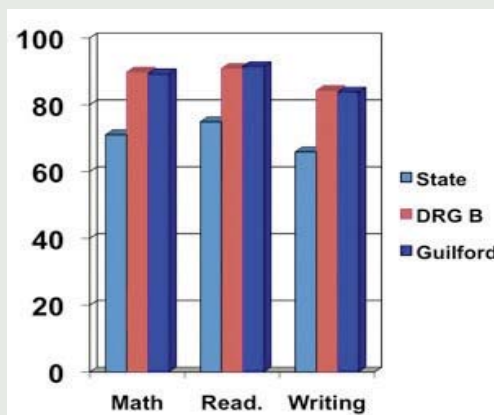
- Math**
- State - 67.2%
 - DRG B - 85.9%
 - Guilford - 81.8% (95.2%)
- Reading**
- State - 60%
 - DRG B - 78.9%
 - Guilford - 77.4% (86.8%)
- Writing**
- State - 63.6%
 - DRG B - 81.2%
 - Guilford - 79.3% (91.3%)

The Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) provides an accurate assessment of how well students statewide are reaching the standards of achievement that have been established by the State Board of Education in reading, writing, mathematics, and science.

All students enrolled in grades 3 through 8, inclusive, are required to participate in the CMT. Students in grades 5 and 8 are also required to participate in a science test.

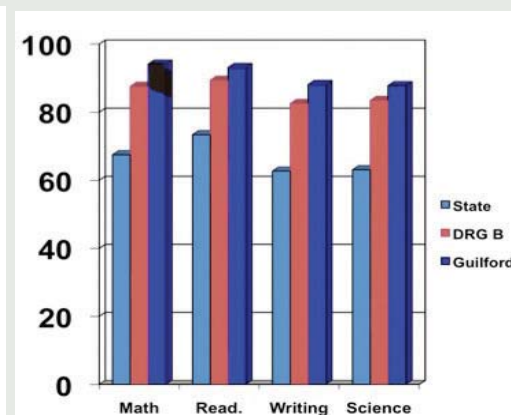
The CMT scores in Guilford continue to be significantly above the state average in all areas - reading, writing, mathematics, and science.

Grade 6 CMT Results



- Math**
- State - 71%
 - DRG B - 89.8%
 - Guilford - 89.3% (95.2%)
- Reading**
- State - 74.9%
 - DRG B - 90.9%
 - Guilford - 91.4% (96.7%)
- Writing**
- State - 65.9%
 - DRG B - 84.3%
 - Guilford - 83.8% (93.4%)

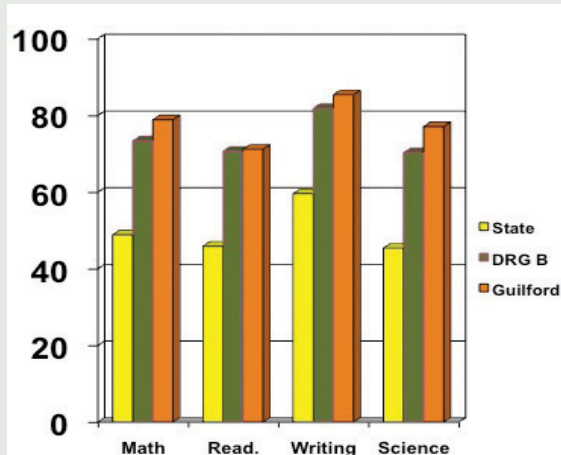
Grade 8 CMT Results



- Math**
- State - 67.5%
 - DRG B - 87.6%
 - Guilford - 94.1% (99.3%)
- Reading**
- State - 73.4%
 - DRG B - 89.4%
 - Guilford - 93.1% (97.4%)
- Writing**
- State - 62.7%
 - DRG B - 82.6%
 - Guilford - 88.1% (95.5%)
- Science**
- State - 63.1%
 - DRG B - 83.5%
 - Guilford - 87.8% (94.2%)

2010 Connecticut Academic Performance Test

CAPT Results



- Math**
- State - 48.9%
 - DRG B - 73.4%
 - Guilford - 78.9% (96.5%)
- Reading**
- State - 45.9%
 - DRG B - 70.7%
 - Guilford - 71.2% (96.1%)
- Writing**
- State - 59.6%
 - DRG B - 81.9%
 - Guilford - 85.4% (97.2%)
- Science**
- State - 45.5%
 - DRG B - 70.3%
 - Guilford - 77.1% (96.2%)

In all areas assessed by CAPT, our students continue to demonstrate learning gains over the past two years. In mathematics, science, and writing, the percentage of our students scoring at goal and above increased from the previous year.

Throughout Connecticut, Guilford High School ranked 8th out of 202 schools in math, science, reading and writing. In 2010, Guilford High School ranked 2nd in our DRG of students scoring at goal and above on all four sections of CAPT, earning the distinction of CAPT Scholar.

Over 95% of all Guilford High School students taking CAPT were proficient in math, reading, writing, and science.



Principle: Fair and Credible Evaluations

If we expect students to put forth sustained effort over time, we need to use assessments that students find fair; and that parents, community, and employers find credible. Fair evaluations are ones that students can prepare for: therefore, tests, exams and classroom assessments as well as the curriculum must be aligned to the standards. Fair assessment also means grading against absolute standards rather than on a curve, so students can clearly see the results of their learning efforts. Assessments that meet these criteria provide parents, colleges, and employers with credible evaluations of what individual students know and can do.

Guilford High School Achievement Data

Advanced Placement Test Data

YEAR	# OF STUDENTS TAKING A.P. TESTS	TOTAL # OF TESTS TAKEN	NUMBER OF SCORES AT 3 OR BETTER	% OF SCORES AT 3 OR BETTER
2007	177	305	236	77%
2008	182	333	254	76%
2009	198	353	271	77%
2010	201	426	315	74%

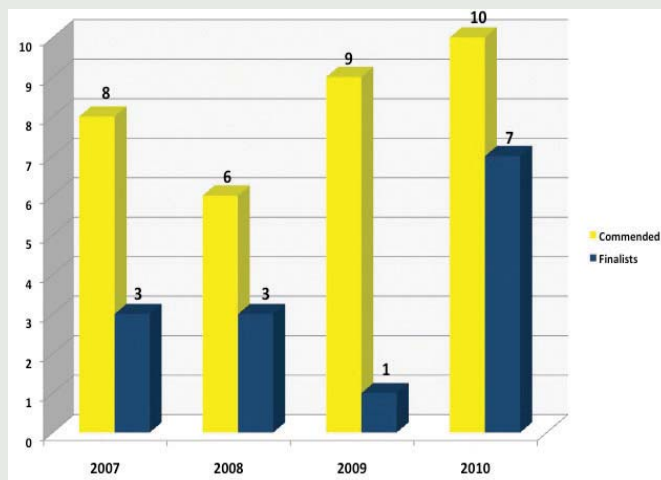
The number of 12th graders scoring 3 or higher on Advanced Placement Tests has risen each year over the past three years.

201 students took 426 Advanced Placement Tests in 2010, more than in any other year.

Students may enroll in AP classes in Biology, Calculus, Chemistry, Computer Science, English, French, Physics, Spanish, Economics, U.S. History, and Western Civilization.

Guilford High School maintained a 99% graduation rate from 2009 of which 95% matriculated to post secondary opportunities.

National Merit Scholars



Seven Guilford High School students were named National Merit Finalist Scholars in 2010.

SAT Scores

	GHS		CT		USA	
	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010
Math	534	553	513	514	515	516
Reading	539	548	509	509	501	501
Writing	544	553	512	513	493	492

Guilford High School students' SAT scores rose in 2010 over 2009. Test scores in Guilford continue to exceed State and National averages. Note that CT and USA scores include both public and private schools.

Principle: Self-management of Learning

If students are going to be responsible for the quality of their thinking and learning, they need to develop—and regularly use—an array of self-monitoring and self-management strategies. These metacognitive skills include noticing when one doesn't understand something and taking steps to remedy the situation, as well as formulating questions and inquiries that let one explore deep levels of meaning. Students also manage their own learning by evaluating the feedback they get from others; bringing their background knowledge to bear on new learning; anticipating learning difficulties and apportioning their time accordingly; and judging their progress toward a learning goal. These are strategies that good learners use spontaneously and all students can learn through appropriate instruction and socialization. Learning environments should be designed to model and encourage the regular use of self-management strategies.



Great News from our Schools in 2010

Guilford High School



Evan Brown

Presidential Scholar

GHS Senior Evan Brown was recognized as one of only 141 Presidential Scholars nationwide. He traveled to Washington, D.C. in June to participate in workshops and meet President Obama.

Academic Accomplishments

The many academic successes of GHS students include:

- 3 gold medal winners on the National Latin Exam
- Math Team placed first in Middlesex County Math League Competition
- Physics Team placed first in Design in Lake Com-pounce Competition
- 7 National Merit Finalists
- 10 Commended National Merit Scholars

Outstanding in the Arts

- GHS Theatre Arts won the CT Drama Association's "Outstanding Production"
- 39 musicians made CMEA Southern Regional Honors Ensembles
- 75 students performed in concert tour of Italy
- 13 students juried in the Future Choices Shoreline Arts Alliance Exhibition

Excelling in Athletics

- Six State Champions: Girls Cross Country, Girls Foil, Boys Foil, Boys Epee, Boys Hockey, and Boys Tennis
- 79 Scholar Athletes
- 31 All State Athletes and Individual Champions
- 2 All-American Athletes



2010 GHS State Championship Tennis Team

Elisabeth C. Adams Middle School

Student achievements were numerous in 2010. 70 students demonstrated their academic scholarship in addition to their qualities of service, leadership, citizenship, and character as they were inducted into the National Junior Honor Society in June. Five students went to the CT Science Fair, a team of students won High Honors in national Word Masters Challenge, and 39 musicians attended the Southern Regional Music Festival.

At Adams, students are made aware of the importance of their civic responsibilities and encouraged to participate in community service activities throughout the year. Peer Helpers continue to work at Adams and in the community to reduce the isolation that develops between generations of people. The Intergenerational Computer Club for Guilford seniors helps to address this concern.

Baldwin Middle School



Baldwin students using SmartBoard

The addition of technology such as SmartBoards and BrightLinks has fostered environments where teachers are engaging students in hands-on experiences. The use of this technology allows students to play an active role in classroom lessons with

interactive worksheets/websites/graphic organizers. These activities are great visual and auditory tools for teaching that bring life to unfamiliar concepts.

A second area of focus has been our ARRA intervention program. We have worked hard to carefully select students who require focused, small group instruction and very specific types of intervention in order to help them realize their highest potential. Based on the data that we have collected, we are pleased to note that on the 2009-10 CMT testing, 9 of the 12 students (75%) in the ARRA intervention program met goal and in reading, 5 of the 11 students (45%) met goal.

Principle: Recognition of Accomplishment

If we expect students to put forth and sustain high levels of effort, we need to motivate them by regularly recognizing their accomplishments. Clear recognition of authentic accomplishment is a hallmark of an effort-based school. This recognition can take the form of celebrations of work that meets standards or intermediate progress benchmarks en route to the standards. Progress points should be articulated so that, regardless of entering performance level, every student can meet real accomplishment criteria often enough to be recognized frequently. Recognition of accomplishment can be tied to opportunity to participate in events that matter to students and their families. Student accomplishment is also recognized when student performance on standards-based assessments is related to opportunities at work and in higher education.



Calvin Leete Elementary School

Grade 4 students received the first GFFE grant that was written by elementary students. While learning decision-making, budgeting, grant-writing, and social skills, the students designed and implemented a “green” carnival that raised funds for local organizations that support the environment. They were supported by Social Worker Jean Menzies and Speech and Language Pathologist Amanda Merrill.

The school community embraced the district Wellness Policy which encourages healthy choices in the areas of nutrition and fitness. This included the “Fun with Fitness” program where family members and students exercised together for the first 20 minutes of school each Monday to stimulate their learning during the week.



The Leete community exercises every Monday morning to stimulate learning.

A.W. Cox Elementary School

The Before School early intervention programs expanded in 2010 to include four sessions. While the classes predominantly addressed literacy skills, one class focused on math. There was also a section focused on pre-reading skills for Kindergarten. Students were invited to attend the eight week sessions based on assessment results. Attendance ranged from 35 to 48 students in each program. Student outcomes at the completion of each section supported the value of the Before School program.

Students at A.W. Cox were recognized by Anthology of Poetry, Inc. and the PTA for art. They were involved in Nature Explorers, Race into Spring, Chess, Historical Mask Theatre, the Governor’s Reading Challenge, Read Aloud Day, the School Drama Club, Chess Club, Rosa’s Readers, State’s Night, Native American Day, and many other curricular and extracurricular activities.

Melissa Jones Elementary School

Students were an integral part of curriculum events such as Cozy Up to Reading Nights, the Wax Museum, Publishers’ Picnic, Authors’ Teas, winter and spring concerts, and Early Guilford Day. As part of their science units all grade 3 classes participated in a Geological Hunt through Guilford to Bluff Head, Chaffinch Island, and Race Hill.

The One Book of Many Writings is published annually by the Grade 4 Student Review Board. With over 300 written submissions from students in kindergarten through Grade 4, the book compiled all of the writing recognized on the Writing Wall for the 2009-2010 school year. Eight grade 4 students met weekly as members of the Student Review Board and oversaw the submissions and publication of a book that each MJS family received at the end of the year.

Guilford Lakes Elementary School

Students at Guilford Lakes accomplishments were many and diverse including a State chess championship, highest honors in Word Masters, Special Olympics Gymnastics Best of Show award, recognition for the most books read by a first grader in the State of Connecticut, and publication in the Creative Communications Spring Poetry Contest.



Kindergarten Children Around the World Concert

Among the many curriculum events were a Multiage Author’s Night, Big 6 Research Reports co-taught with the Library/Media Teacher and the classroom teachers, Junior Achievement Day, Mighty Mjolnir fourth grade play, and the Kindergarten Children Around the World Concert.

The Spirit of Giving Throughout GPS

Students, staff, and parents continue to selflessly recognize individuals and organizations from the local to international level in need and give generously of their time, talents and monetary contributions to help.

All of our schools came to the aid of Haiti following the devastating earthquake and raised tens of thousands of dollars for the victims of that country. Students held benefit concerts, dance-a-thons, and participated in Hearts for Haiti.

Principle: Socializing Intelligence

Intelligence is much more than an innate ability to think quickly and stockpile bits of knowledge. Intelligence is a set of problem-solving and reasoning capabilities along with the habits of mind that lead one to use those capabilities regularly. Intelligence is equally a set of beliefs about one’s right and obligation to understand and make sense of the world, and one’s capacity to figure things out over time. Intelligent habits of mind are learned through the daily expectations placed on the learner. By calling on students to use the skills of intelligent thinking—and by holding them responsible for doing so—educators can “teach” intelligence. This is what teachers normally do with students they expect much from: it should be standard practice with all students.



Curriculum

Language Arts

Elementary teachers have expanded literacy instruction to support more critical thinking in fiction and non-fiction text using Questioning the Author in grades K-4. Teachers are studying resources in book groups, modelling lessons for one another, and reflecting on progress as part of their professional learning.



Second grade students at Melissa Jones study fairy tales with the aid of guiding questions and text talks from their teacher.

Science

The Science Curriculum Review Committee has been revising the current science curriculum as part of the district comprehensive review. The committee expects to integrate the Common Core State Standards in reading and math as much as possible, incorporate more inquiry-based tasks, and present its final K-12 Science Curriculum recommendation to the Board of Education by June 2011.

Social Studies

The next comprehensive curriculum review will be in the area of social studies. During the 2011-2012 school year, a committee will begin the research component of the curriculum development process. A revised K-12 Social Studies Curriculum document will be presented to the Board of Education during the 2012-2013 school year.

Guilford High School added a new economics course for 2010-2011. The curriculum for the course is now being piloted and will be incorporated into the social studies document as part of the next comprehensive curriculum review.

Professional Development

Professional Development relative to improved instruction and increased student learning continues to be a priority of the Board of Education and the District Leadership Team. Professional Learning Communities and Learning Walks provide valuable opportunities for faculty to identify ways to increase learning and rigor in classrooms.

Administrators and professional staff participate in many conferences and training sessions on topics including CMT Reading Comprehension objectives, addressing literacy at the middle and high school levels, implementing intervention programs, technology, an MIT physics workshop, speech and language training, and assessment strategies.



Learning Walks provide an opportunity for professional staff to observe peers and provide feedback to improve instruction. Above Assistant Superintendent Anne Keene, Superintendent Tom Forcella and Principal Catherine Walker take part in Learning Walks, observing a practice session of a music ensemble group at Adams Middle School.



Principle: Academic Rigor in a Thinking Curriculum
Thinking and problem solving will be the "new basics" of the 21st century. But the common idea that we can teach thinking without a solid foundation of knowledge must be abandoned. So must the idea that we can teach knowledge without engaging students in thinking. Knowledge and thinking are intimately joined. This implies a curriculum organized around major concepts that students are expected to know deeply. Teaching must engage students in active reasoning about these concepts. In every subject, at every grade level, instruction and learning must include commitment to a knowledge core, high thinking demand, and active use of knowledge.

Our Partners in Education

The 2010 Friend of Education Award

TEAM Guilford

The Guilford Public Schools recognized the leadership of TEAM Guilford for their commitment to the Guilford's youth most specifically with TEAM Guilford Kids and their work with the Developmental Assets Survey.

Team Guilford Kids will continue to work with Women and Family Life Center, Guilford Youth and Family Services and the Guilford Public Schools to formulate a comprehensive program involving the schools, athletic teams, civic groups, churches and community organizations that will improve the level of assets in our children and discourage risk taking behavior.



Parent and Community Partners

Our schools benefit greatly from the willingness of area businesses, parents and community organizations to share their time and expertise with our students and staff. Diverse experiences include curricular events such as a Heart Expo sponsored by the Hospital at Saint Raphael, a partnership



Cardiologists and other experts from the Hospital of Saint Raphael gave students at Adams Middle School a hands-on lesson in the structure and function of the heart.

between Melissa Jones faculty and Guilford Youth & Family Services to offer a Homework Club to students twice a week, and our Mentoring Program with over 150 volunteers working with students in all of our schools. The Rotary Club of Guilford Sponsors the Interact Club and continues its Student of the Month recognition at Guilford High School.

Our PTOs and other parent groups volunteer their time in classrooms, provide a multitude of enrichment programs and raise funds to supplement many district initiatives. The Guilford PTA sponsors Junior Achievement Day and the Reflections Art Program.

Principle: Learning as Apprenticeship

For many centuries most people learned by working alongside an expert who modeled skilled practice and guided novices as they created authentic products or performances for interested and critical audiences. This kind of apprenticeship allowed learners to acquire complex interdisciplinary knowledge, practical abilities, and appropriate forms of social behavior. Much of the power of apprenticeship learning can be brought into schooling by organizing learning environments so that complex thinking is modeled and analyzed, and by providing mentoring and coaching as students undertake extended projects and develop presentations of finished work, both in and beyond the classroom.

Guilford Fund for Education

The GFFE is committed to fostering innovation and excellence in learning for ALL students residing in Guilford. In addition to its General Grants program, the GFFE has established the Apple Grant for Professional Development which will finance professional development opportunities for individual Guilford Public School teachers. .

Among the 12 grants awarded in 2009-2010, Guilford students and faculty will benefit from the following:

- "Speaking in Tongues" - GHS students will improve their foreign language skills through the use of computer headsets and digital recording and editing software.
- An elementary school art teacher received an Apple Grant to attend the Connecticut Art Education Association Fall 2010 Conference.
- Kindles and a library of electronic books were purchased for Baldwin students to improve fluency and vocabulary.



What About All the Rocks?

The theme to this school year, "Building Relationships to Improve Learning" was introduced during Convocation, our opening of schools professional development presentation, by Superintendent Thomas Forcella and Assistant Superintendent Anne Keene. Images of rock structures or cairns reinforced the theme.

Faculty collaborated in a closing activity to create a rock formation that symbolized the vision of the Guilford Public Schools as "a professional learning community where instruction invites effort and supports academic rigor for all students and educators."





Guilford Public Schools

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