

STRATEGIC SCHOOL PROFILE 2009-10**Ridgefield School District**

DEBORAH LOW, Superintendent

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Ridgefield,
Connecticut

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This profile was produced by the Connecticut State Department of Education in accordance with CT General Statutes 10-220(c) using data and narratives provided by the school district, testing services, or the US Census. Profiles and additional education data, including longitudinal data, are available on the internet at www.sde.ct.gov.

COMMUNITY DATA

County: Fairfield

Town Population in 2000: 23,643

1990-2000 Population Growth: 13%

Number of Public Schools: 9

Per Capita Income in 2000: \$51,795

Percent of Adults without a High School Diploma in 2000*: 4.9%

Percent of Adults Who Were Not Fluent in English in 2000*: 0.7%

District Enrollment as % of Estimated. Student Population: 91.3%

*To view the Adult Education Program Profiles online, go to www.sde.ct.gov and click on Adult Education, then Reports.

District Reference Group (DRG): A DRG is a classification of districts whose students' families are similar in education, income, occupation, and need, and that have roughly similar enrollment. The Connecticut State Board of Education approved DRG classification for purposes of reporting data other than student performance.

STUDENT ENROLLMENT

Enrollment on October 1, 2009 5,442
5-Year Enrollment Change -2.1%

DISTRICT GRADE RANGE

Grade Range PK - 12

INDICATORS OF EDUCATIONAL NEED

| Need Indicator | Number in District | Percent | | |
|---|--------------------|----------|------|-------|
| | | District | DRG | State |
| Students Eligible for Free/Reduced-Price Meals | 108 | 2.0 | 1.4 | 32.6 |
| K-12 Students Who Are Not Fluent in English | 24 | 0.4 | 0.6 | 5.4 |
| Students Identified as Gifted and/or Talented* | 321 | 5.9 | 6.1 | 4.1 |
| PK-12 Students Receiving Special Education Services in District | 504 | 9.3 | 10.3 | 11.4 |
| Kindergarten Students who Attended Preschool, Nursery School or Headstart | 296 | 92.2 | 95.9 | 80.5 |
| Homeless | 0 | 0.0 | N/A | 0.2 |
| Juniors and Seniors Working 16 or More Hours Per Week | 85 | 10.8 | 7.8 | 13.6 |

*0.0 % of the identified gifted and/or talented students received services.

SCHOOL DISTRICT DIVERSITY

| Student Race/Ethnicity | | |
|------------------------|--------|---------|
| Race/Ethnicity | Number | Percent |
| American Indian | 5 | 0.1 |
| Asian American | 221 | 4.1 |
| Black | 43 | 0.8 |
| Hispanic | 184 | 3.4 |
| White | 4,989 | 91.7 |
| Total Minority | 453 | 8.3 |

Percent of Minority Professional Staff: 2.4%

Non-English Home Language:

0.6% of this district's students (excluding prekindergarten students) come from homes where English is not the primary language. The number of non-English home languages is 12.

EFFORTS TO REDUCE RACIAL, ETHNIC, AND ECONOMIC ISOLATION

Below is the description submitted by this school of how it provides educational opportunities for its students to interact with students and teachers from diverse racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds.

Two initiatives represent the district's efforts to reduce racial, ethnic and economic isolation in Ridgefield. At the elementary level, over 50% of the teachers have been trained in Responsive Classroom procedures. The middle schools continue to implement Character Counts! through special assembly programs, class discussions, and lessons emphasizing the character pillars and respecting differences. The high school has expanded its student life program and incorporates student visits and exchanges into its world language program. Additionally, a variety of school and community events engage students in learning about other diverse people and cultures, and our middle and high school students go on extended foreign field trips. Ridgefield Public Schools participated in a teacher visitation program with teachers from Lebanon. This experience engages our students in learning about students and events in the Middle East. Ridgefield has participated in two of their inter-district building projects in the C.E.S. region aimed at reducing racial, ethnic and economic isolation. Some students from the Ridgefield Public Schools also attend the Academy for Performing Arts, the Academy for Information Technology Engineering, and the Center for Global Studies. We are working with C.E.S. to improve communication about these and other magnet schools to our students and their parents. Ridgefield continues to make strong efforts to attract candidates of all cultures and economic groups to our teaching/administrative positions. This year, we have continued our already-extensive electronic posting of vacancies and broadened our use of conventional advertising media. Our efforts have also included frequent attendance at recruitment fairs and participation in consortium minority recruitment activities.

STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Connecticut Mastery Test, Fourth Generation, % Goal. The Goal level is more demanding than the Proficient level, but not as high as the Advanced level, reported in the No Child Left Behind Report Cards.

| Grade and CMT Subject Area | District | State | % of Districts in State with Equal or Lower Percent Meeting Goal |
|----------------------------|----------|-------|--|
| Grade 3 Reading | 79.9 | 57.0 | 87.7 |
| Writing | 74.7 | 58.3 | 78.5 |
| Mathematics | 81.7 | 62.4 | 84.7 |
| Grade 4 Reading | 82.6 | 59.9 | 91.2 |
| Writing | 83.8 | 63.6 | 90.0 |
| Mathematics | 93.7 | 67.0 | 100.0 |
| Grade 5 Reading | 85.9 | 61.8 | 93.3 |
| Writing | 90.8 | 68.2 | 95.2 |
| Mathematics | 93.8 | 72.4 | 95.8 |
| Science | 87.2 | 59.4 | 92.8 |
| Grade 6 Reading | 89.9 | 74.9 | 79.8 |
| Writing | 89.7 | 65.9 | 94.5 |
| Mathematics | 90.8 | 70.7 | 86.5 |
| Grade 7 Reading | 91.8 | 77.4 | 77.9 |
| Writing | 83.0 | 61.2 | 86.4 |
| Mathematics | 90.5 | 68.5 | 89.0 |
| Grade 8 Reading | 94.1 | 73.3 | 94.9 |
| Writing | 89.6 | 62.6 | 95.5 |
| Mathematics | 93.5 | 67.3 | 97.5 |
| Science | 89.0 | 62.8 | 94.3 |

These results reflect the performance of students with scoreable tests who were enrolled in the district at the time of testing, regardless of the length of time they were enrolled in the district. Results for fewer than 20 students are not presented.

For more detailed CMT results, go to www.ctreports.com.

To see the NCLB Report Card for this school, go to www.sde.ct.gov and click on "No Child Left Behind."

Connecticut Academic Performance Test, Third Generation, % Meeting State Goal. The CAPT is administered to Grade 10 students. The Goal level is more demanding than the state Proficient level, but not as high as the Advanced level, reported in the No Child Left Behind Report Cards. The following results reflect the performance of students with scorable tests who were enrolled in the school at the time of testing, regardless of the length of time they were enrolled in the school. Results for fewer than 20 students are not presented.

| CAPT Subject Area | District | State | % of Districts in State with Equal or Lower Percent Meeting Goal |
|--------------------------------|----------|-------|--|
| Reading Across the Disciplines | 82.5 | 45.9 | 96.2 |
| Writing Across the Disciplines | 92.3 | 59.6 | 99.2 |
| Mathematics | 81.9 | 48.7 | 95.5 |
| Science | 76.4 | 45.3 | 93.2 |

For more detailed CAPT results, go to www.ctreports.com. To see the NCLB Report Card for this school, go to www.sde.ct.gov and click on "No Child Left Behind."

Physical Fitness. The assessment includes tests for flexibility, abdominal strength and endurance, upper-body strength and aerobic endurance.

| Physical Fitness: % of Students Reaching Health Standard on All Four Tests | District | State | % of Districts in State with Equal or Lower Percent Reaching Standard |
|--|----------|-------|---|
| | 65.6 | 50.7 | 83.8 |

| SAT® I: Reasoning Test Class of 2009 | | District | State | % of Districts in State with Equal or Lower Scores |
|---|------------------|----------|-------|--|
| % of Graduates Tested | | 82.0 | 68.5 | |
| Average Score | Mathematics | 581 | 508 | 93.8 |
| | Critical Reading | 570 | 503 | 93.8 |
| | Writing | 578 | 506 | 93.8 |

SAT® I. The lowest possible score on each SAT® I subtest is 200; the highest possible score is 800.

| Graduation and Dropout Rates | District | State | % of Districts in State with Equal or Less Desirable Rates |
|--|----------|-------|--|
| Graduation Rate, Class of 2009 | 97.8 | 91.3 | 76.9 |
| 2008-09 Annual Dropout Rate for Grade 9 through 12 | 0.4 | 3.0 | 84.6 |

| Activities of Graduates | District | State |
|--|----------|-------|
| % Pursuing Higher Education (Degree and Non-Degree Programs) | 95.5 | 84.5 |
| % Employed (Civilian Employment and in Armed Services) | 1.1 | 10.4 |

RESOURCES AND EXPENDITURES

DISTRICT STAFF

| Full-Time Equivalent Count of School Staff | |
|---|--------|
| General Education | |
| Teachers and Instructors | 336.87 |
| Paraprofessional Instructional Assistants | 21.84 |
| Special Education | |
| Teachers and Instructors | 39.80 |
| Paraprofessional Instructional Assistants | 71.81 |
| Library/Media Specialists and/or Assistants | 14.20 |
| Staff Devoted to Adult Education | 0.00 |
| Administrators, Coordinators, and Department Chairs | |
| District Central Office | 8.00 |
| School Level | 21.77 |
| Instructional Specialists Who Support Teachers (e.g., subject area specialists) | 2.00 |
| Counselors, Social Workers, and School Psychologists | 24.60 |
| School Nurses | 13.50 |
| Other Staff Providing Non-Instructional Services and Support | 208.86 |

In the full-time equivalent (FTE) count, staff members working part-time in the school district are counted as a fraction of full-time. For example, a teacher who works half-time in the district contributes 0.50 to the district's staff count.

| Teachers and Instructors | District | DRG | State |
|--|----------|------|-------|
| Average Years of Experience in Education | 14.0 | 13.1 | 13.8 |
| % with Master's Degree or Above | 84.7 | 88.5 | 77.8 |

| Average Class Size | District | DRG | State |
|--------------------|----------|------|-------|
| Grade K | 17.0 | 18.5 | 18.5 |
| Grade 2 | 19.6 | 20.8 | 19.7 |
| Grade 5 | 22.3 | 21.6 | 21.1 |
| Grade 7 | 22.2 | 20.8 | 20.8 |
| High School | 21.7 | 21.2 | 19.6 |

| Hours of Instruction Per Year* | Dist | DRG | State |
|--------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Elementary School | 994 | 995 | 992 |
| Middle School | 1,011 | 1,005 | 1,018 |
| High School | 967 | 988 | 1,006 |

*State law requires that at least 900 hours of instruction be offered to students in grade 1-12 and full-day kindergarten, and 450 hours to half-day kindergarten students.

| Students Per Academic Computer | Dist | DRG | State |
|--------------------------------|------|-----|-------|
| Elementary School* | 3.6 | 2.9 | 3.2 |
| Middle School | 2.7 | 2.6 | 2.5 |
| High School | 2.0 | 2.1 | 2.3 |

*Excludes schools with no grades above kindergarten.

DISTRICT EXPENDITURES AND REVENUES, 2008-09

Expenditures may be supported by local tax revenues, state grants, federal grants, municipal in-kind services, tuition and other sources. DRG and state figures will not be comparable to the district if the school district does not teach both elementary and secondary students.

| Expenditures All figures are unaudited. | Total (in 1000s) | Expenditures Per Pupil | | | |
|---|---------------------|------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | | District | PK-12 Districts | DRG | State |
| Instructional Staff and Services | \$44,199 | \$7,984 | \$7,819 | \$9,168 | \$7,829 |
| Instructional Supplies and Equipment | \$1,010 | \$182 | \$274 | \$270 | \$279 |
| Improvement of Instruction and Educational Media Services | \$3,115 | \$563 | \$474 | \$653 | \$459 |
| Student Support Services | \$3,831 | \$692 | \$863 | \$958 | \$859 |
| Administration and Support Services | \$5,809 | \$1,049 | \$1,405 | \$1,509 | \$1,426 |
| Plant Operation and Maintenance | \$9,052 | \$1,635 | \$1,469 | \$1,920 | \$1,462 |
| Transportation | \$5,381 | \$802 | \$701 | \$748 | \$694 |
| Costs for Students Tuitioned Out | \$3,271 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Other | \$1,522 | \$275 | \$163 | \$236 | \$162 |
| Total | \$77,190 | \$13,906 | \$13,458 | \$16,033 | \$13,386 |
| Additional Expenditures | | | | | |
| Land, Buildings, and Debt Service | \$9,558 | \$1,727 | \$1,864 | \$1,997 | \$1,825 |

| Special Education Expenditures | District Total | Percent of PK-12 Expenditures Used for Special Education | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|--|------|-------|
| | | District | DRG | State |
| | \$14,650,625 | 19.0 | 19.9 | 20.7 |

Revenue Sources, % of Expenditures from Source. Revenue sources do not include state funded Teachers' Retirement Board contributions, vocational-technical school operations, SDE budgeted costs for salaries and leadership activities and other state-funded school districts (e.g., Dept. of Children and Families and Dept. of Corrections).

| District Expenditures | Local Revenue | State Revenue | Federal Revenue | Tuition & Other |
|-------------------------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Including School Construction | 94.3 | 4.5 | 1.1 | 0.2 |
| Excluding School Construction | 94.0 | 4.5 | 1.2 | 0.2 |

EQUITABLE ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES AMONG DISTRICT SCHOOLS

Below is the description submitted by this district of how it allocates resources to insure equity and address needs.

It is the policy of the Ridgefield Board of Education to ensure that all resident students are offered equal access to educational opportunities provided within the school program. Not only does the Board provide for a budget process that assures equity within and among all schools, it also funds district-wide instructional administrative positions in the areas of math, science, language arts and technology. Our professional development program makes available a wide range of training opportunities for all teachers K-12. Since funds for each school's materials, supplies, equipment and other resources are formulated and distributed based upon a "per pupil" allocation, each school receives an appropriate percentage of the district budget. In addition, principals submit requests for necessary support to run any needed/desired specialized programs. Special projects such as reading or math program pilots are funded separately and are evenly distributed across the schools. The district plans for improvement and maintenance projects with a focus on achieving parity among schools. Throughout the year, the Superintendent, as an agent for the Board, oversees all expenditures. The Superintendent also requests Board funds for district-wide initiatives when the needs present themselves

SPECIAL EDUCATION

| | |
|--|------|
| Number of K-12 Students with Disabilities for Whom the District is Financially Responsible | 498 |
| Of All K-12 Students for Whom the District is Financially Responsible, the Percent with Disabilities | 9.2% |

| Of All K-12 Students for Whom District is Financially Responsible, Number and Percentage with Disabilities | | | | |
|--|------------|------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Disability | Count | District Percent | DRG Percent | State Percent |
| Autism | 43 | 0.8 | 0.9 | 1.0 |
| Learning Disability | 195 | 3.6 | 3.9 | 3.9 |
| Intellectual Disability | 11 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.5 |
| Emotional Disturbance | 28 | 0.5 | 0.4 | 1.0 |
| Speech Impairment | 103 | 1.9 | 2.2 | 2.2 |
| Other Health Impairment* | 95 | 1.7 | 2.1 | 2.1 |
| Other Disabilities** | 23 | 0.4 | 0.6 | 0.9 |
| Total | 498 | 9.2 | 10.2 | 11.6 |

*Includes chronic health problems such as attention deficit disorders and epilepsy

**Includes hearing, visual, and orthopedic impairments, deaf-blindness, multiple disabilities, traumatic brain injury, and developmental delay

| Graduation and Dropout Rates of Students with Disabilities for Whom District is Financially Responsible | District | State |
|---|----------|-------|
| % Who Graduated in 2008-09 with a Standard Diploma | 85.5 | 81.0 |
| 2008-09 Annual Dropout Rate for Students Aged 14 to 21 | 2.1 | 4.1 |

STATE ASSESSMENTS

Percent of Students with Disabilities Meeting State Goal. The Goal level is more demanding than the Proficient level, but not as high as the Advanced level, reported in the No Child Left Behind Report Cards. These results are for students attending district schools who participated in the standard assessment with or without accommodations for their disabilities. Results for fewer than 20 students are not presented.

- **Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT), Fourth Generation.** The CMT reading, writing and mathematics tests are administered to students in Grades 3 through 8, and the CMT science test to students in Grades 5 and 8.
- **Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT), Third Generation.** The CAPT is administered to Grade 10 students.

| State Assessment | | Students with Disabilities | | All Students | |
|------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|-------|--------------|-------|
| | | District | State | District | State |
| CMT | Reading | 47.1 | 31.6 | 87.7 | 67.5 |
| | Writing | 39.7 | 19.6 | 85.6 | 63.3 |
| | Mathematics | 55.8 | 32.9 | 90.9 | 68.1 |
| | Science | 55.4 | 23.7 | 88.1 | 61.1 |
| CAPT | Reading Across the Disciplines | 34.3 | 13.8 | 82.5 | 45.9 |
| | Writing Across the Disciplines | 44.1 | 16.8 | 92.3 | 59.6 |
| | Mathematics | 37.1 | 16.7 | 81.9 | 48.7 |
| | Science | 37.1 | 13.0 | 76.4 | 45.3 |

For more detailed CMT or CAPT results, go to www.ctreports.com. To see the NCLB Report Card for this school, go to www.sde.ct.gov and click on “No Child Left Behind.”

Participation in State Assessments of Students with Disabilities Attending District Schools

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|------|
| CMT | % Without Accommodations | 19.9 |
| | % With Accommodations | 80.1 |
| CAPT | % Without Accommodations | 18.6 |
| | % With Accommodations | 81.4 |
| % Assessed Using Skills Checklist | | 4.5 |

Accommodations for a student's disability may be made to allow him or her to participate in testing. Students whose disabilities prevent them from taking the test even with accommodations are assessed by means of a list of skills aligned to the same content and grade level standards as the CMT and CAPT.

Federal law requires that students with disabilities be educated with their non-disabled peers as much as is appropriate. Placement in separate educational facilities tends to reduce the chances of students with disabilities interacting with non-disabled peers, and of receiving the same education.

K-12 Students with Disabilities Placed in Educational Settings Other Than This District's Schools

| Placement | Count | Percent |
|-----------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Public Schools in Other Districts | 0 | 0.0 |
| Private Schools or Other Settings | 26 | 5.2 |

Number and Percentage of K-12 Students with Disabilities for Whom District is Financially Responsible by the Percentage of Time They Spent with Their Non-Disabled Peers

| Time Spent with Non-Disabled Peers | Count of Students | Percent of Students | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|------|-------|
| | | District | DRG | State |
| 79.1 to 100 Percent of Time | 444 | 89.2 | 78.0 | 73.4 |
| 40.1 to 79.0 Percent of Time | 30 | 6.0 | 15.7 | 15.3 |
| 0.0 to 40.0 Percent of Time | 24 | 4.8 | 6.3 | 11.3 |

SCHOOL DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT PLANS AND ACTIVITIES

The following narrative was submitted by this district.

One of the ongoing goals of the Ridgefield Public Schools is to improve all students' performance on district assessments as well as on state and national tests. To achieve that goal, Ridgefield has launched an ambitious plan of curriculum and instructional improvement. In addition to our K-12 curriculum with embedded performance-based assessment, we have added benchmark assessments in reading at every grade level from K-12, in writing at every level from Kindergarten through grade eight, and in math at every level from Kindergarten through grade five. These assessments are used to develop instruction for all students, including our special education and struggling/at risk population. The district has focused on professional development to improve our differentiation practices. Our K-5 Mathematics Professional Development Coordinator provided ongoing coaching, modeling, and professional development on effective differentiation strategies to be used in elementary classrooms. In May of 2010, the town supported the funding to launch the district's implementation of full-day kindergarten beginning in September of 2010. In preparation for the new program, curriculum revisions were completed and kindergarten teachers received extensive professional development. The district hired three literacy consultants to work with our teaching staff. One consultant worked in all six elementary schools on units of study and provided professional development to clarify expectations for their implementation. Another consultant worked with K-5 teachers to coach them on effective reading strategies for all students. A third consultant worked with both middle and high school content area teachers, training them on effective strategies for incorporating reading instruction into their disciplines. Each trained cohort then developed annotated lessons and the instructional practices they had learned were embedded in these lessons. In the area of special education, we have focused on increasing the inclusion of all students with disabilities in the regular classroom. We have increased the number of special education support staff working in co-teaching situations and hired consultants to work with and train our K-12 special education staff on inclusion practices. Our Special Education Director provided numerous information sessions for the special education staff to clarify expectations for their inclusion practices. Additionally, during the year, professional development activities involved a large number of staff in "differentiated instruction" for the regular education classroom. The intent of both this training and the literacy training is to foster greater success for mainstreamed students. We are engaged in a strategic planning process that will frame our goals for improvement for the next several years. Three long range planning committees (one representing elementary education, a second representing middle school grades, and a third committee representing the high school) provided the Board of Education with recommendations for District Priorities. The committees included teachers, parents, students, staff members, community members, administrators, Board of Education members, and various municipal officials. Each committee met once per month throughout the year to identify, research, and extensively discuss critical issues that would shape our students' futures. In May of 2010, all committees presented their findings to the Board of Education in the form of reports and recommendations for district priorities. These priorities will, in turn, shape both Board and school goals for improvement. All schools enjoy a high level of parent involvement, including strong relationships with their respective Parent Teacher Associations. The PTAs work closely with the district to support school improvement goals. Our mission statement, "Our mission is excellence for all students in partnership with parents and the community", is an indication of the important role that parental involvement plays in our students' academic success.
