

STRATEGIC SCHOOL PROFILE 2008-09**Ridgefield School District**

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Location: 70 Prospect Street
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	Per Capita Income in 2000: \$51,795
Town Population in 2000: 23,643	Percent of Adults without a High School Diploma in 2000*: 4.9%
1990-2000 Population Growth: 13.0%	Percent of Adults Who Were Not Fluent in English in 2000*: 0.7%
Number of Public Schools: 9	District Enrollment as % of Estimated. Student Population: 91.7%

*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, 2008	5,538
5-Year Enrollment Change	0.1%

DISTRICT GRADE RANGE

Grade Range	PK-12
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INDICATORS OF EDUCATIONAL NEED

Need Indicator	Number in District	Percent		
		District	DRG	State
Students Eligible for Free/Reduced-Price Meals	78	1.4	1.1	30.3
K-12 Students Who Are Not Fluent in English	32	0.6	0.6	5.2
Students Identified as Gifted and/or Talented*	312	5.6	5.8	4.0
PK-12 Students Receiving Special Education Services in District	547	9.9	10.2	11.4
Kindergarten Students who Attended Preschool, Nursery School or Headstart	294	88.6	95.8	79.7
Homeless	4	0.1	0.0	0.2
Juniors and Seniors Working 16 or More Hours Per Week	119	14.9	9.2	19.0

*15.4% 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	212	3.8
Black	38	0.7
Hispanic	164	3.0
White	5,119	92.4
Total Minority	419	7.6

Percent of Minority Professional Staff: 2.8%

Non-English Home Language: 1.7% 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 19.

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 the Character Counts! Program 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 participate 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.

The Ridgefield Public Schools continue 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, % 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.

Grade and CMT Subject Area	District	State	% of Districts in State with Equal or Lower Percent Meeting Goal
Grade 3 Reading	76.7	54.6	87.4
Writing	81.4	62.5	84.9
Mathematics	84.3	62.8	85.5
Grade 4 Reading	82.5	60.7	89.0
Writing	83.9	64.2	92.1
Mathematics	90.7	63.6	97.6
Grade 5 Reading	90.5	66.0	97.5
Writing	86.1	66.5	91.4
Mathematics	92.6	68.8	97.5
Science	82.5	58.1	86.4
Grade 6 Reading	85.1	68.9	72.4
Writing	80.6	62.2	78.5
Mathematics	91.2	68.8	89.0
Grade 7 Reading	94.1	74.9	92.4
Writing	89.2	62.9	95.5
Mathematics	89.7	66.0	93.0
Grade 8 Reading	91.4	68.4	94.2
Writing	90.5	66.5	93.5
Mathematics	90.5	64.5	92.9
Science	87.6	60.6	93.5

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 scoreable 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	79.5	47.4	95.5
Writing Across the Disciplines	89.0	55.0	97.7
Mathematics	77.5	47.8	93.1
Science	72.7	42.8	93.1

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
	39.9	36.2	56.8

SAT® I: Reasoning Test Class of 2008		District	State	% of Districts in State with Equal or Lower Scores
% of Graduates Tested		95.0	74.5	
Average Score	Mathematics	584	507	96.1
	Critical Reading	571	503	95.3
	Writing	581	506	96.1

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 2008	99.1	92.1	90.1
Cumulative Four-Year Dropout Rate for Class of 2008	0.5	6.6	90.5
2007-08 Annual Dropout Rate for Grade 9 through 12	0.5	2.5	77.4

Activities of Graduates	District	State
% Pursuing Higher Education (Degree and Non-Degree Programs)	95.2	84.1
% Employed (Civilian Employment and in Armed Services)	2.9	11.0

RESOURCES AND EXPENDITURES

DISTRICT STAFF

Full-Time Equivalent Count of District Staff	
General Education	
Teachers and Instructors	333.82
Paraprofessional Instructional Assistants	23.44
Special Education	
Teachers and Instructors	38.70
Paraprofessional Instructional Assistants	65.10
Library/Media Specialists and/or Assistants	14.20
Staff Devoted to Adult Education	0.00
Administrators, Coordinators, and Department Chairs	
District Central Office	6.00
School Level	21.74
Instructional Specialists Who Support Teachers (e.g., subject area specialists)	2.00
Counselors, Social Workers, and School Psychologists	26.10
School Nurses	13.50
Other Staff Providing Non-Instructional Services and Support	222.41

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	14.8	12.9	13.6
% with Master's Degree or Above	84.7	86.3	76.1

Average Class Size	District	DRG	State
Grade K	17.4	18.6	18.3
Grade 2	19.8	20.0	19.3
Grade 5	22.4	21.4	21.0
Grade 7	23.3	21.1	20.5
High School	21.0	19.7	19.3

Hours of Instruction Per Year*	Dist	DRG	State
Elementary School	996	996	988
Middle School	1,014	1,006	1,016
High School	963	988	1,007

*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*	3.7	2.9	3.3
Middle School	2.4	2.6	2.6
High School	2.3	2.2	2.4

*Excludes schools with no grades above kindergarten.

DISTRICT EXPENDITURES AND REVENUES, 2007-08

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	\$42,701	\$7,711	\$7,521	\$8,787	\$7,522
Instructional Supplies and Equipment	\$990	\$179	\$267	\$237	\$271
Improvement of Instruction and Educational Media Services	\$4,221	\$762	\$461	\$660	\$446
Student Support Services	\$3,641	\$657	\$808	\$881	\$806
Administration and Support Services	\$5,623	\$1,015	\$1,351	\$1,503	\$1,369
Plant Operation and Maintenance	\$9,615	\$1,736	\$1,382	\$1,796	\$1,377
Transportation	\$4,731	\$798	\$649	\$714	\$644
Costs for Students Tuitioned Out	\$2,856	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other	\$335	\$60	\$152	\$168	\$151
Total	\$74,713	\$13,457	\$12,869	\$15,251	\$12,805
Additional Expenditures					
Land, Buildings, and Debt Service	\$8,756	\$1,581	\$1,791	\$1,884	\$1,759

Special Education Expenditures	District Total	Percent of PK-12 Expenditures Used for Special Education		
		District	DRG	State
	\$12511648	16.7	19.1	20.5

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	94.6	4.2	1.0	0.2
Excluding School Construction	94.2	4.4	1.1	0.3

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	531
Of All K-12 Students for Whom the District is Financially Responsible, the Percent with Disabilities	9.7%

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	36	0.7	0.9	0.8
Learning Disability	206	3.7	3.9	3.9
Intellectual Disability	10	0.2	0.2	0.5
Emotional Disturbance	30	0.5	0.4	1.0
Speech Impairment	114	2.1	2.3	2.3
Other Health Impairment*	98	1.8	1.9	2.1
Other Disabilities**	37	0.7	0.6	0.9
Total	531	9.7	10.1	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 2007-08 with a Standard Diploma	N/A	81.4
2007-08 Annual Dropout Rate for Students Aged 14 to 21	N/A	3.5

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	45.9	30.2	86.9	65.7
	Writing	40.9	19.5	85.3	64.1
	Mathematics	51.9	30.7	89.8	65.7
	Science	45.5	23.8	85.1	59.4
CAPT	Reading Across the Disciplines	28.6	14.1	79.5	47.4
	Writing Across the Disciplines	50.0	13.6	89.0	55.0
	Mathematics	26.8	15.4	77.5	47.8
	Science	19.0	10.6	72.7	42.8

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	16.4
	% With Accommodations	83.6
CAPT	% Without Accommodations	30.4
	% With Accommodations	69.6
% Assessed Using Skills Checklist		3.9

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	17	3.2

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	464	87.4	77.9	72.7
40.1 to 79.0 Percent of Time	44	8.3	15.4	16.1
0.0 to 40.0 Percent of Time	23	4.3	6.6	11.2

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 provide informed instruction for all students, including our special education and struggling/at risk population.

In addition to improvements in our curricular infrastructure, the district has focused on professional development to improve our differentiation practices. Our K-5 mathematics teacher provided ongoing coaching, modeling, and professional development about effective differentiation strategies to be used in elementary classrooms. Moreover, the district hired three literacy consultants to work with our teaching staff. One consultant worked in all six elementary schools to work with teachers 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 to train teachers on effective strategies for incorporating reading instruction into their disciplines. Each trained cohort then developed annotated lessons in which were embedded the instructional practices they had learned.

In the area of special education, we have been 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 two consultants to work with and train our K-12 special education staff on inclusion practices. Our new 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. Superintendent Deborah Low established four long-range planning committees: one to represent primary level education, a second committee representing intermediate elementary grades, a third committee representing middle school grades, and a fourth committee representing the high school. The committees included teachers, parents, students, staff members, community members, administrators, Board 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 2009, 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.
