

# 13

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT 13 PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## ANNUAL REPORT

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2011-2012 ACADEMIC YEAR



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# *greetings*

FROM THE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT 13

BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Regional School District 13 encompasses a tight-knit group of students, parents, administrators, teachers and support staff. We are fortunate to have the support of our community as we navigate the changes always present in the world of education. In my first year as Chairwoman, I am encouraged by the Board's steadfast commitment to provide a quality educational experience for our students, to pursue continuous improvement within our schools and to nurture an environment of caring for each other, our community, and our world.

Providing a relevant, high-quality experience for our students goes beyond hiring the best teachers, managing class size, and buying textbooks. As your Board, we must focus on strategic educational initiatives that will prepare our children for the future. To that end, our endeavors over the 2011/12 school year included the creation of a Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment position, provisions for the continued implementation of data teams and Common Formative Assessments, planning for the NEASC accreditation in the spring of 2013 and the completion of a demographic study aimed at broadening our understanding of declining enrollment trends.

The implementation of Common Core Standards is critical to student success. The Board recognizes the importance of educating ourselves, our staff and our community on these substantive changes to our educational landscape. Our Superintendent and her administrative team have developed a comprehensive four-year implementation plan for the Common Core. Over the next three years, we will dedicate ourselves to the effective implementation of this plan.

Through our continued support of the District Strategic Plan, the execution of public service projects, and the widespread participation in our many student activities and clubs, the Board hopes to foster community involvement and promote cultural awareness in our youth. We know that these efforts are essential to the development of responsible and productive citizens.

As you read through the pages that follow, you will gain insight into the initiatives employed by RSD13 Administrators and Teachers to empower our children. We hope you will enjoy reading about the creativity that abounds within our school system. We are honored to serve as your RSD13 Board of Education and we look forward to your continued support as we move forward with our mission.

Kerrie Flanagan  
Chairwoman, RSD13 Board of Education

# *a message*

FROM OUR SUPERINTENDENT

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Regional School District 13 is in the process of completing the Action Plans that encompass its fourth five-year Strategic Plan. In 2011-2012, we focused on the areas of: Student Progress, Student Connections, Benchmark Achievement, Communication and Technology. This Annual Report will provide you a sample of the variety of activities offered across the district and in specific buildings and grades.



Student Connections focused specifically on increasing student access to school activities in order to ensure that students felt connected to his/her specific school. Our major effort in this area involved the opening of the Parent Portal as part of our student information system, through a program entitled, PowerSchool. In addition to being our attendance system for students across the district, PowerSchool allows students and parents at the middle and high school levels to access grades and assignments in “real time.” Parents can access student grades and dialogue meaningfully with their son or daughter and his or her teachers.

All schools strive to provide a variety of activities, both in and out of the school day, which allows students an opportunity to try new things that will stretch them and develop their abilities. These activities take many forms: clubs, intramurals, and teams that compete. We host a variety of clubs that promote service to the community. In addition, we host evenings that include parents and students working together such as “Science Night” and “Strong School Reads.”

District 13 continues to focus on mentoring opportunities for our students. Currently we have older students mentoring younger students in our “Read and Lead” program. We have a variety of peer mentoring opportunities and a few select internships. In partnership with Durham and Middlefield Youth and Family Services we began offering a homework support program after school.

Data team work and the continued development of common formative assessments remain at the heart of our efforts to improve instruction that results in increased student learning. Grade level teams meet regularly to analyze student work and to refine instruction. Data team results continue to guide our efforts and to shape instruction across the District.

Our efforts to create a marketing template throughout the district have had us proceeding slowly and carefully. The intent of this strategy is to communicate to all constituents: students, staff, parents and community, what we are doing well and where we are going. We are increasing the use of our district logo on the majority of our publications so it becomes a familiar and recognizable symbol of District 13. In addition, we met with an expert in the marketing field, to help us determine ways in which we can familiarize our constituents with the District 13 “brand.”

Our focus on lifelong learning applies to every member of the organization as well as all of our stakeholders. The Habits of Mind that we want all of our students and staff to display include: perseverance, working well with others, giving back to the community, thinking flexibly, seeking and understanding feedback, and understand-

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ing individual learning styles as well as those of others, to name but a few of the necessary skills required to be a twenty-first century thinker.

Lastly, District 13 looks to increase our technology use while searching for alternative funding and resources to achieve this. Grants from the Coginchaug Valley Education Foundation and the Peach Pit Foundation have allowed individual teachers to experiment with emerging technologies as well as to introduce students to a variety of technology devices and applications that will enhance student learning. The integration of technology using free applications continues to occur at all grade levels across the district.

Region 13's Strategic Plan continues to be the guiding force behind establishing Board of Education goals each year. The report that follows highlights our efforts to achieve our goals and to move closer to the attainment of our mission. I invite you to peruse the following pages, to learn what we have accomplished and to ascertain where you may partner with us, as we strive to continuously improve student learning!

Susan L. Viccaro,  
Superintendent of Schools



# strategy one

## GOAL ONE — INCREASE STUDENT ACCESS TO SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

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A number of important initiatives focused on the first goal related to this strategy, which was to increase student access to school activities. Many of our students in grades K – 12 are members of community organizations and youth groups that perform a wide variety of services in our two towns. In addition, many students are involved in other outside activities, such as dance, theatre, and scouting. The focus of this goal was to increase student access to school activities thereby ensuring that all students felt connected to their schools. Efforts to increase student connectedness were prevalent in all our district schools throughout the 2011-2012 school year.

All student activities at Brewster School are scheduled during the day, following dismissal or in the evenings to ensure that all students can be active participants. The BKPTA sponsors a variety of clubs to meet the varied interests of our students. The Go Far Running Club is held during recess making it easy for students to participate.



Students are dismissed directly to the other clubs. Many clubs have held numerous sessions because of the overwhelming turnout. Evening events, such as Brewster Loves to Read, Science Night and Math Night are held as family events, encouraging parents and children to participate in the activities together. Attendance at these events is tremendous.

Korn School offered a variety of school activities for students this year. Participation in the lunch and recess time intramural program continued to be very successful with over 70% of all students participating in soccer and/or basketball. The Go-Far Running Club was also offered during recess three times a week. Thirty seven students ran the equivalent of at least one marathon and several students ran four

or more marathons throughout the school year. An assembly at the end of the year celebrated their success. The Student Senate sponsored a “Movie Frenzy”, an afterschool movie offered to all students throughout the school year. The profits from the movies covered the costs of an afterschool event held in June, “Summer Send Off” and almost every student stayed to participate in this fun event.

At John Lyman School, 99% of our families use the electronic version of the Wednesday Envelope which keeps them up to date on all of the school’s events and activities. The JLPA continues to be a vibrantly active group that works hard to support Lyman, the ID Program, and Region 13. In addition to so many other things that this group supports, JLPA runs the Go Far program and the annual musicals; this year presenting “Aristocats.” Many of our students participated in student activities such as the Senate, Art Board, Literary Board, Band, Chorus, Hello Chorus, Recorder Group, Trail Committee, Yearbook, WJLS, Tech Crew, and Origami Club. 92% of students participated in the Go Far program, with many marathons, double-marathons, and even some

## GOAL ONE — INCREASE STUDENT ACCESS TO SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

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triple and quadruple marathons been achieved! In addition to running, other sports that John Lyman students participated in were golf intramurals and after-school sports camp.

Memorial Middle School has worked hard to increase student access to school activities throughout the school year. A wide variety of activities are available both during the school day and after school which are designed to provide opportunities for growth and enrichment. Working in collaboration with several community agencies, student participation opportunities were expanded. Through the cooperative efforts of Middlefield Parks and Recreation and our school, large numbers of students participated in both the Select Chorus and Jazz Band programs. In our Select Chorus program, the number of students who participated doubled from the previous year. In addition to these efforts, Memorial Middle School also established a recognition flag program that promoted student accomplishments both in and out of school. Over the course of the year, students were recognized for a variety of accomplishments.

Strong School ran a successful after school intramural program throughout the 2011-2012 school year. Approximately 150 students participated in activities including Golf, Tennis, Mini-Hockey, Volleyball, and spring Cross-Country. In May of 2012, Strong's annual student talent show was a tremendous success. Approximately 40 students performed acts that included a comedy routine, guitar solos, a jazz ensemble, vocal soloists, and dance routines.

Based on the success of the pilot in the spring of 2011, CRHS implemented an eligibility probation period for students who did not meet the school's athletic participation policy criteria but who did meet the CIAC criteria. To earn eligibility, students must meet high standards for classwork and homework as well as for class participation and conduct. CRHS has averaged at least five students successfully completing the program each marking period, and in all cases there has been a marked improvement in grades and a return to full eligibility by the end of the marking period.

Based on parent feedback, CRHS has made several improvements to the morning announcements. The announcements are distributed in school and emailed home to parents, and they include the sports schedule for the week (including all levels of competition), general announcements for the school, an area for club meetings, and a listing of all upcoming college visits. This year CRHS also began including announcements specifically for parents in the morning announcements and emailing separate messages to parents for high-interest or school-wide information.

The opening of the Parent and Student Portals for PowerSchool has greatly increased parent awareness of their children's performance and has led to more informed and productive dialogue with teachers. Faculty members are becoming adept at using their pages to communicate additional information to parents, including assignment details, rubrics, due dates for upcoming assignments, and links for additional resources.

## GOAL TWO — EXPAND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADULT, CROSS-GRADE AND PEER MENTORING

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John Lyman School provides many opportunities for adult, cross-grade, and peer mentors. Many parents and grandparents work side by side with the staff to provide support for academics and classroom activities. Special Persons Day is an annual event for first and second grade students in which a child invites an adult (often a grandparent, aunt, uncle, parent, neighbor.) to join them at school for lunch and recess then spend the afternoon engaged in class activities culminating in our weekly assembly. As they have done in the past, this year the adults at Country Flower Farms grew vegetable plants for students at our school. Each student received a vegetable plant the week before Memorial Day to nurture and help find a good home for it. Staff is involved in many transition activities as students move to Memorial School. In our multi-age classrooms, older students serve as study buddies, readers, and positive behavior mentors for their younger classmates. Students also model positive values as they work to clean-up the garden and the Nature Trail.

Students from CRHS volunteer at Korn one afternoon a week through a program called, Read and Lead. Volunteers work in the classrooms with individual students (through the direction of classroom teachers) or provide math enrichment to a small group of fourth grade students. Parents continue to offer their time and talents by volunteering in the classrooms and library, supporting before and after school clubs, and attending field trips. Students from Strong and CRHS come to Korn to volunteer their time to learn a specific skill from one of our teachers or to mentor a student.

Memorial School saw a number of school-wide initiatives designed to expand opportunities for students to be mentored by both adults and peers. One priority in this area was to create and establish Student Success Plans for all sixth graders. While these will be implemented in the 2012-2013 school year, much of the planning and development occurred during the 2011-2012 school year.

CRHS students offer tutoring and academic support to Strong School students both through the National Honor Society's Tutoring Tuesday program at CRHS and the Homework Hangout program at SMS. There has also been an expansion of clubs and activities with chapters at both schools, planning joint activities on a regular basis (e.g. Model UN, EDGE).

The Best Buds program has continued to expand and grow in membership across both Strong School and CRHS. This program promotes a wonderful opportunity for disabled students to socialize and connect with their peers in a variety of fun and engaging activities during and after school hours. The program uses Best Bud members as mentors for the incoming ninth graders as well as throughout students' time at CRHS.

## GOAL TWO — EXPAND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADULT, CROSS-GRADE AND PEER MENTORING

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Strong School, in collaboration with Durham-Middlefield Youth and Family Services continued to implement Homework Hangout on Tuesdays and Thursdays throughout the school year. Twelve to fifteen students routinely stayed after school (some by choice, others mandated as an academic intervention) and received support from CRHS students and/or Strong's student intern from the University of New Haven. On four occasions during basketball season, the Strong Student Council hosted after school popcorn and movie events to bridge the gap between the end of the school day and the 3:30 game time.

Under the guidance of our Health teacher, Kirsten Beers, and in collaboration with both Durham-Middlefield Youth and Family Services and CRHS, Strong School started their own E.D.G.E. Group (Educated Decisions Guiding Everyday). This group met monthly and collaborated with the high school on an Internet Safety presentation in November of 2011, and a Safe Dates program in May of 2012.

The Middlesex Transition Academy Program at Wesleyan has connected with the students at Wesleyan to participate in Saturday outings and activities including hiking, gardening, and art. The students continue to participate in recreational activities such as swimming and exercising at the YMCA in Middletown. The MTA uses a mentoring model for incoming students to the program to share their experience at MTA and to ease their transition. Often the students create strong bonds with their employers and seek their support and advice as they learn new skills. On many occasions, employers will visit students in their classroom to check on their academic progress. The Saturday Social program in partnership with DMYFS was highly successful this year as it provided opportunities for a group of high school students with developmental disabilities to socialize together at the DMYFS center.



# *strategy two*

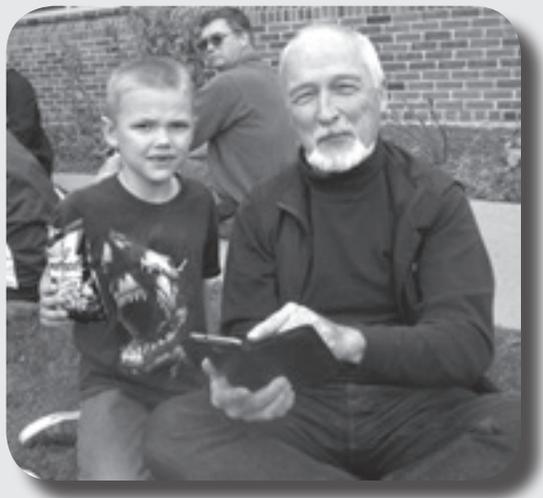
GOAL — IMPLEMENT DATA TEAMS AND COMMON FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS,  
BOTH WITH THE END RESULT OF GUIDING INSTRUCTION  
AND IMPROVING STUDENT LEARNING

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District goals for Strategy 2 related to the implementation of data teams and common formative assessments, both with the end result of guiding instruction and improving student learning. A district handbook has been established to ensure that data teams are operating consistently and effectively and that Common Formative Assessments follow the same model throughout the District. The school calendar for 2011-2012 included five late opening days specifically set aside for data team use. Because the data team process is complex and time-consuming, this additional time ensured that data team members had the time required to thoroughly analyze assessment results, select strategies to improve student learning in areas identified by the assessments, and implement those strategies with fidelity.

Data teams in District 13 are organized in a variety of ways. At the secondary level, the core academic departments meet as data teams. In grades K-6, grade level teams serve as data teams. Teachers of art, music, and physical education/health meet as K-12 data teams.

At Brewster School, each grade level data team met weekly and during the two hour late opening days. Remedial reading teachers and special education teachers are also members of the data teams. Data teams analyze assessment data from sources such as, the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessments, Primary Spelling Inventory, DIBELS Next and curriculum based assessments to determine which skills to focus on during each data cycle. Once the skills are identified the data teams develop Common Formative Assessment (CFA) as pre-and post-tests to administer to students. Each data team developed and implemented a minimum of four Common Formative Assessments (CFA) throughout the year. CFA's were developed to direct instruction and improve learning in specific academic areas. CFA's focused on reading skills, such as rhyming, phonics, sight words, fluency and cloze strategies, or writing, editing and revising. The outcome of every CFA post-test indicated that student learning improved as a result of the instructional strategies that were implemented. Results of the CFA's are analyzed using a pre-determined rubric to identify which students need further instruction to master the skills. SMART goals are set and team members agree on the instructional strategies that will be implemented to improve learning. While strategies are being implemented, team members discuss the outcome of interventions and modify them as necessary. Minutes of



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each meeting are kept and emailed to all team members and the principal. A review of each grade level data cycle revealed that there was a significant increase in the mastery of the identified skills.

Teachers in grades one and two also acted as Intervention Teams at Brewster School. The Intervention Teams focused on the students who were struggling and performing below grade level in reading. Teams identified specific skills holding the student back and implemented strategies to improve those skills. Specific goals were established for each student with the primary goal of accelerating each child in reading. Data indicates that each child who was focused on by the Intervention Teams made substantial progress.

At Korn, grade level data teams, comprised of classroom teachers, remedial, and special education staff met regularly to improve instruction and student performance. The data team process was implemented to track student learning using a pre-assessment to target specific reading and/or writing skills. When the teams met they identified students not meeting the benchmark and developed instructional strategies to help students improve. Teachers tracked individual and whole class progress and outlined which level of intervention was needed to move all students toward goal. The post assessment provided teachers with important data regarding student performance and a compass for where teachers would target their next data team cycle. Teachers used data team meetings and professional development time to develop a common formative assessment (CFA) that was both grade level appropriate and targeted a specific skill that was identified through the data team process. Grade three and four teachers developed common formative assessments to address reading comprehension and editing/revising skills. Data teams analyzed the data from the common formative assessments and tracked students in their class. During the data cycle, teachers shared materials that they used, both with their whole class and with students needing tier two or three interventions. Teams honed their skills at creating a common formative assessment which provides crucial information to guide instruction and improve student learning.

At John Lyman School, Data Teams met regularly during the late opening days and at least three times per month. Student achievement results have been tracked and analyzed to inform instruction and improve student learning. Teams have made changes that have allowed them to make more efficient use of instruction, assessment, and intervention time. Weekly meetings were held with classroom teachers and remedial staff, as well as classroom teachers and special education staff to discuss ongoing interventions, plan instruction, and identify areas of concern with both identified and non-identified students. Across all grades and areas of focus, students have realized positive gains as evidenced by growth measured from pre-tests to post-tests. Targeted instruction was focused on helping students develop their skills. Common formative assessments were used in kindergarten for pre-rhyme recognition and post-rhyme recognition. In first grade, common formative assessments helped to measure students' progress in reading accuracy. In second grade, common formative assessments measured students' comprehension within the text. In third and fourth grades, common formative assessments tracked students' progress using text evidence to support open-ended responses.

At Memorial School, the building data team met monthly to establish priorities and analyze student outcomes. This team, comprised of the building principal, teachers, remedial staff and the school psychologist worked to prioritize areas of focus. This included the oversight of our Common Formative Assessments and the analysis of school data and results. Grade level data teams met during late openings and during team time to analyze the results of student performance and to help make decisions about instructional priorities. During the 2011-2012

## *strategy two*

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school year, our fifth and sixth grade data teams utilized Common Formative Assessments to target specific skill deficiencies in language arts and mathematics. Over the course of the past year, the sixth grade data team administered five Common Formative Assessments while the fifth grade team administered three Common Formative Assessments.

Strong School data teams met during each of our planned morning professional development days as well as on two of the full day teacher work days. During these meetings, the data teams assessed and evaluated student performance data, wrote common formative assessments (CFAs), and planned for additional expanded implementation of CFAs. These meetings also provided our data teams with time to assess and evaluate the spring 2011 Connecticut Mastery Test data. Through this professional collaboration, Strong School teachers were able to share ideas and plan effective units of instruction to support all of our students.

At Strong School, CFAs were administered in all academic areas on several occasions throughout the school year. The pre-unit assessments were used as a means of determining individual and collective academic needs and provided Strong School teachers with baseline data. This data then assisted teachers in their planning and implementation of differentiated instructional practices meant to support the range of learning needs and abilities of all of our students.

CRHS has had data teams operating in all core content areas for the past three school years, with multiple data teams within each department targeting specific courses and grade levels. Each of these data teams has developed a series of Common Formative Assessments for use in classes, and additional CFAs targeting specific skills are developed frequently. CFAs are administered on a regular basis, and their results are analyzed to help direct instruction and identify students in need of additional support. Data teams use multiple sources of data other than CFAs as well, including CAPT and CMT test results, CAPT simulation activities, and common exams, to help identify areas for improvement.

Our Pupil Personnel Director created a SRBI data collection system which aligned with the work that building data teams and Student Assistance Teams (SAT) were doing in order to document the specific tiered interventions that were implemented for students. This system allowed for documentation of the intervention data and progress monitoring over time to track a student's progress, the need for more intensive intervention, or if necessary, referral to special education as required under SRBI. During the 2011-2012 school year, all schools consistently implemented the system. This program was evaluated at the end of the school year and refined to make it more effective and user-friendly for staff and students.



# strategy three

## GOAL — IMPLEMENT A MARKETING TEMPLATE THROUGHOUT ALL LEVELS OF THE ORGANIZATION

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A marketing committee was established to implement this strategy. They were charged with marketing the district by promoting the opportunities that are available in our schools and our communities. Early in the year, they met with a marketing specialist to solicit professional advice on promoting our brand. As a result of that meeting, we learned that there are many positive avenues of communication that exist presently, however, we would like to increase those and find ways to reach more people. The group talked about using district and/or school logos as a way to visually establish a brand. A sub-committee developed a proposal for a new website, interviewed companies, and selected a vendor. It is the intention of this group that the new website will encourage more interaction with student, parents, and the community and help to publicize all the positive things that are happening in Region 13. Complimenting this effort was a building initiative to update classroom



websites to make them timelier, informative, user friendly and interactive. With the collaboration of Technology Integration Specialists Michelle Gohagon and Bill Kurtz, teams of teachers received training and provided needed updates to their classroom websites. At this time, most classroom teachers have up-to-date websites that are being utilized by students or parents. With our new website planned for the fall of 2012, the group talked about the possibility of an alumni webpage. A RSD13 Twitter account was established to make use of available technology to share information quickly and easily. Social media, such as Facebook, was also discussed as another way to reach

students and residents. As we have a Video Production Class at the high school, it is another resource that we may be able to be more fully utilized to help create appealing visual presentations of school happenings. We have had great success with the Durham/Middlefield Patch and Town Times in promoting the school district and want to continue to make use of the media to publicize our events. The group talked about utilizing more surveys for students, staff, and parents to get feedback on how we are doing.

# strategy four

## GOAL — COMMUNICATE THE LIFELONG LEARNING STANDARDS THROUGHOUT THE DISTRICT 13 COMMUNITY

The lifelong learning standards are included in both the Brewster staff handbook and the parent handbook. Habits of Mind posters display the standards in all classrooms. Teachers are responsible for focusing on specific lifelong learning standards at each grade level. They are reviewed with the students throughout the year. A number of the standards are also graded, using a rubric, on progress reports and discussed with parents during parent-teacher conferences.

Teachers at Korn also display the Habits of Mind posters in their classrooms. At the elementary level, students are encouraged to manage impulsivity, demonstrate persistence, strive for accuracy and develop listening skills. Core Ethical Values and lifelong learning standards are currently assessed through our progress reports based on a rubric which is shared with both parents and students.

At John Lyman School, communication about the lifelong learning standards has been ongoing and is evident in the class constitutions, articles in *The Integrated Update*, shares at weekly assemblies, homework assignments, goal setting, and in progress reports and conferences. We work regularly on providing reports in *The Town Times* and *PATCH*, participating in the District-wide wellness program and the Community Round-up Program.

Lifelong learning standards are communicated consistently three times per year as part of the Memorial School report card. Lifelong learning standards are also posted throughout the building reinforcing these essential life skills. Throughout the school year teachers emphasize the critical nature of these skills to all students relating to their success in school. During parent conferences teachers discuss progress that students achieve in relation to the lifelong learning standards. In addition, our lifelong learning standards closely align with the district's Core Ethical Values that form the fabric of Regional School District 13.

Students at Strong School receive report cards after each trimester that provide both academic performance as well as their progress on RSD13's lifelong learning standards. This information was also shared during parent conferences in November and March, as well as during parent/team meetings throughout the school year.

As part of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges re-accreditation self-study process, the CRHS faculty spent



the year evaluating our expectations for student learning, our methods for assessing student progress toward them, and how we communicate that progress. In doing so, the CRHS faculty has more clearly articulated



and more effectively integrated the lifelong learning standards into the school's Academic, Civic, and Social Expectations for Lifelong Learning. School-wide rubrics for several of these areas have been revised and are being used as the foundation for the development of departmental, course, and assignment-specific rubrics. The CRHS faculty is making wide use of PowerSchool to post assignment rubrics with assignments in the Parent and Student Portals, and many have begun reporting student progress in terms of achievement on rubrics instead of, or in addition to, letter or numerical grades.

The Pupil Personnel Department's focus has been on communicating the lifelong learning standards to students, parents, employers, and agencies as they relate to the transition planning that is done for students with disabilities. As part of the transition plan, students partake in a number of school and community-based activities in which they have opportunities to develop and demonstrate the district's lifelong learning standards. This transition plan and student's progress in this area is shared with parents, post-secondary programs, and adult agencies, as appropriate.

# *strategy five*

## GOAL — SECURE ALTERNATIVE MEANS FOR INCREASING FUNDING AND RESOURCES

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Technology innovation and expansion continued to play an important role in District 13. Our district goal related to Strategy 5 was to secure alternative means for increasing funding and resources.

We have undertaken a variety of steps to increase our technology capabilities and supplement our technology budget. By utilizing capital improvement funding, we have been able to increase the capacity of our network infrastructure by replacing outdated equipment and increasing the district's security, appropriate to industry standards to prevent outside attacks.

With respect to hardware, Region 13 has secured five year leases to allow us to project expenses at known funding levels. Region 13 has joined with the Western States Contracting Alliance (WSCA) to allow the most competitive pricing on all purchases. As a district, we have adopted a policy of a vendor neutral mind set, ensuring that we are not fixed on one particular product line, but rather will evaluate each project and product on its own merit to find the best solution for both cost and effectiveness. The district used E-Rate funding to award innovative technology grants for Region 13 staff members. Nine grants were awarded this year. We have utilized our existing physical space to add multi-station labs for instructional purposes.

At Brewster, Lyman, and Korn schools, an iPad initiative was undertaken in which free or low-cost apps are used to support primary grade instruction in literacy and numeracy. Teachers applied for and received Cogenchaug Valley Education Funding to acquire technology to support instructional activities in the areas of literacy, the arts, and to engage in educational interactions with teachers and students in schools across the country.

As a result of this goal, technology resources have increased greatly at Brewster School. A computer lab with eleven computers was established and a SMART Board and mounted projector were acquired and utilized by teachers and students all year. iPads were also purchased and introduced to students. They were used in the lab and in classrooms during centers and for individual and small group instruction. Teachers integrated technology into all curricular areas to enhance instruction. The students used technology to conduct research, write non-fiction books and reports, demonstrate new learning, share information, and practice literacy and numeracy skills. Technology also allowed teachers to differentiate instruction and assessment for individual students.



Both within our budget and through a variety of fund-raising efforts such as the Book Fair, John Lyman School has been able to purchase an ELMO document projector for every academic classroom. SmartBoards are now mounted in the Library Media Center and the Computer Lab and a portable SmartBoard is housed in the Music Room, but is available to anyone who wishes to use it. Further, the addition of 13 iPads has “whetted the technology appetite” of staff and students alike.

Technology Integration Specialist Michelle Gohagon worked extensively with teachers at the elementary level to familiarize them with Web 2.0 and to promote content driven technology projects throughout the school year. As a result of her work, teachers incorporated new websites and provided a multitude of new technology



projects to their students. Memorial Middle School teacher Kim Barris and her students participated in the Connecticut Educators Computer Association Eighteenth Annual Tech Expo which was held at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford. Ms. Barris and her students completed a multimedia presentation on students and staff of Regional District 13.

This was the first full year of CRHS’s new bring-your-own-devices policy of encouraging students to bring and use their personally-owned technology devices in school for educational purposes. This change has led to greater opportunities for students and a greater ability for teachers to make use of educational technology and online resources in the classroom. Examples of their application in classes include: student newspaper reporters tweeting their experiences during the senior trip to Washington DC in real time, use of blogging sites and Twitter to submit work and share written responses to classwork/reading assignments, increased ability to have multiple students conduct research in class without having

to relocate a class to a computer lab, and experimentation with online clicker-response systems to formatively assess students, and collect and analyze student data.

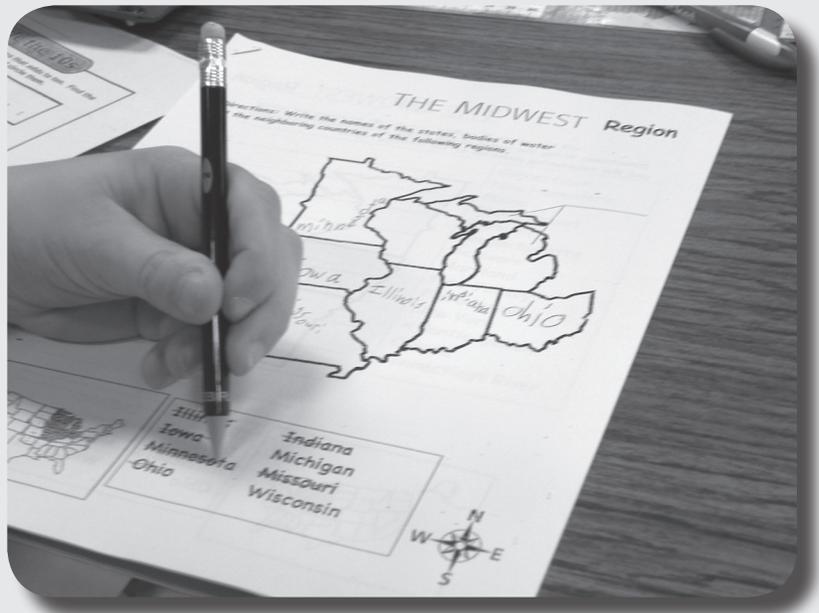
Whenever possible, the pupil personnel department has looked within its own staffing to share technology expertise and knowledge to develop staff members’ skills. Several staff members have provided department-based training on specific student-based software programs and hardware, so as not to have to bring in and pay for outside trainers. This has allowed staff to expand their capacity and skills in the area of technology and to further support the instruction of students with disabilities. The department has searched for and compiled a listing of free or low cost apps to use with students with disabilities on the iPad or ITouch.

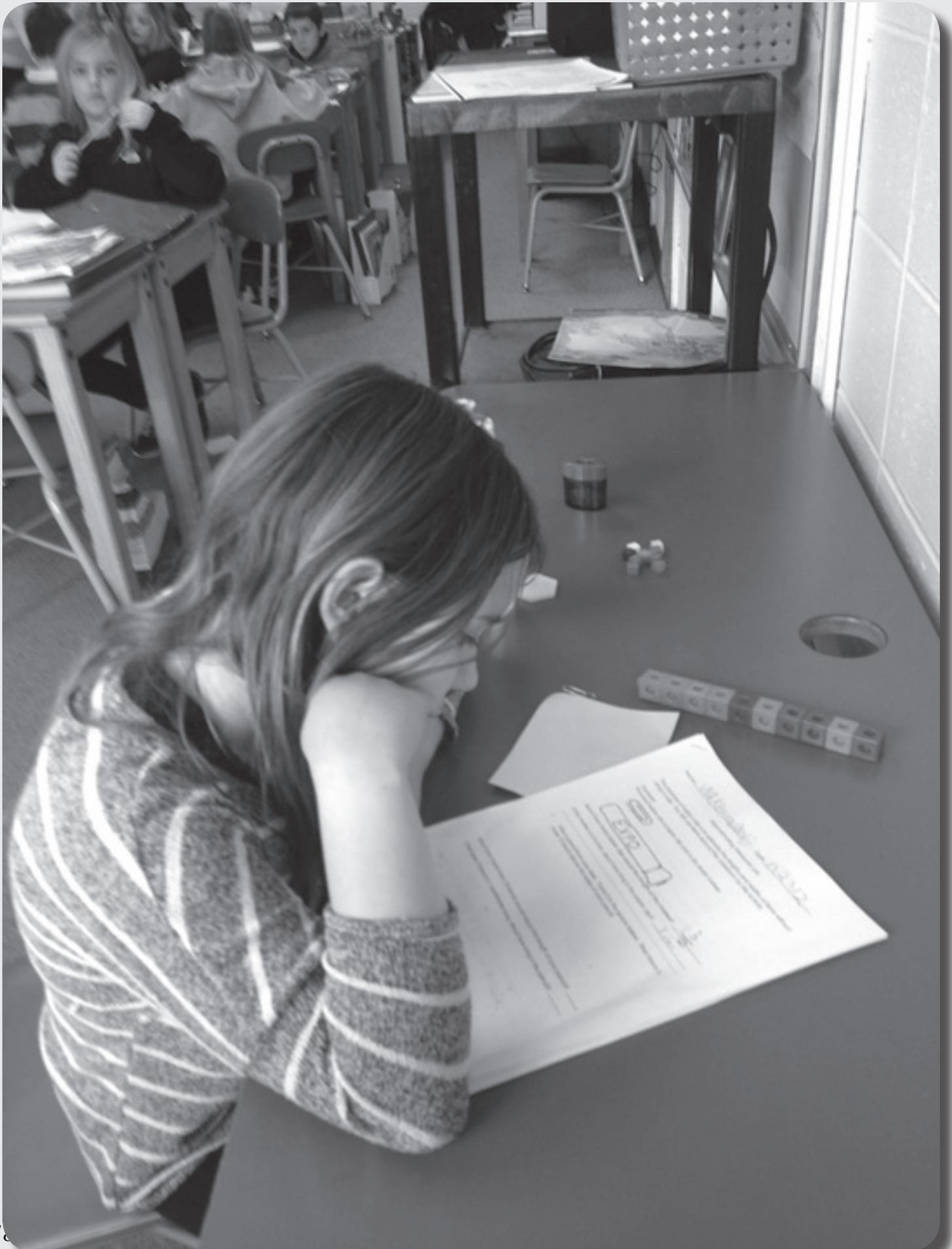
# curriculum

## COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

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The major focus in the area of curriculum was to begin the revision of our Mathematics and English Language Arts curricula to align with the new Common Core State Standards. These standards, which have been adopted by 46 states, including Connecticut, will be assessed in the spring of 2015. To begin this process, two Curriculum Councils were established, one for Language Arts and one for mathematics, with a teacher representative from each grade level, at each school, on each committee. Each committee member acted in the role of liaison to their grade level teams, and as such, information was disseminated and shared from the district, to the schools, and back to the district. Staff compared the standards within our existing curriculum against the new Common Core standards. All district staff was provided with professional development in the area of “unwrapping” the standards prior to the revision of curriculum. To standardize this work, our curriculum template was revised. As most of our elementary staff teaches both language arts and mathematics, the decision was made to begin this process with mathematics first. As such, the K-4 mathematics curriculum was revised during the late spring of this year, while the grades 5-12 mathematics curriculum revisions will be completed during the 2012-2013 school year. Four staff members attended a two-week workshop at ACES on developing grade level units based on the new Common Core Standards.





# student achievement

At the school and district levels, we examine data at aggregate and disaggregate levels to understand group and individual student performance relative to class, school, district, and national assessments and other similar groups. Data is used to inform classroom instruction and provide insights on the alignment of our curriculum and instruction. Our analysis is grounded in identifying what works – in order to enhance and build upon strengths – and identifying areas that may need to be targeted for further study. The following are the results of the Connecticut Mastery Test given to all students in grades 3-8. The Connecticut Academic Performance Test, SAT, and Advanced Placement data conclude this section.

## Connecticut Mastery Test – Fourth Generation Reading

	Spring 2011		Spring 2012	
	Goal	Proficient	Goal	Proficient
Grade 3	64.9	82.5	60.5	79.0
Grade 4	71.3	87.4	78.0	92.0
Grade 5	77.6	89.5	78.0	89.6
Grade 6	86.6	92.7	89.9	94.9
Grade 7	86.1	91.5	84.3	92.1
Grade 8	86.0	91.9	87.7	95.1

## Connecticut Mastery Test – Fourth Generation Writing

	Spring 2011		Spring 2012	
	Goal	Proficient	Goal	Proficient
Grade 3	67.5	88.8	66.9	88.2
Grade 4	70.1	90.2	68.6	91.2
Grade 5	82.9	94.5	82.3	95.6
Grade 6	69.2	88.6	83.8	95.1
Grade 7	68.8	90.6	71.7	89.1
Grade 8	86.9	93.7	78.7	94.7

**Connecticut Mastery Test – Fourth Generation Mathematics**

	Spring 2011		Spring 2012	
	Goal	Proficient	Goal	Proficient
Grade 3	69.2	91.8	75.8	92.7
Grade 4	66.1	89.4	74.8	96.1
Grade 5	80.6	95.1	78.5	90.4
Grade 6	86.2	98.9	89.9	97.8
Grade 7	78.2	92.1	78.3	96.7
Grade 8	85.4	96.5	80.9	95.7

**Connecticut Mastery Test – Second Generation Science**

	Spring 2011		Spring 2012	
	Goal	Proficient	Goal	Proficient
Grade 5	76.2	93.9	76.8	94.5
Grade 8	84.0	93.1	78.7	90.5

**Connecticut Academic Performance Test**

	Spring 2011		Spring 2012	
	Goal	Proficient	Goal	Proficient
Reading Across the Disciplines	55.2	93.7	48.9	87.0
Writing Across the Disciplines	81.3	96.0	71.1	91.9
Mathematics	69.8	96.4	57.4	89.9
Science	61.3	93.3	59.3	92.6

## *student achievement*

### Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) Means

	Spring 2011		Spring 2012	
	Region 13	State	Region 13	State
Critical Reading	546	509	523	510
Writing	544	513	530	510
Mathematics	544	513	515	512

### Advanced Placement (AP) Test (Score range 1-5 with 5 being the highest score)

	Number of Tests Taken	% of Region 13 students scoring at or above three	% of CT students scoring at or above three
2010	58	97	70
2011	74	99	70
2012	72	96	73



# school highlights

Brewster

## FREDERICK F. BREWSTER SCHOOL

Nancy M. Heckler, Principal

☞ The second grade teachers and music teacher created a play entitled *The Magic School Bus Kicks Up A Storm* and performed it for Brewster students, staff, parents, relatives, and friends. The play emphasized the knowledge students learned during their study of weather.

☞ Tiger Robison, our music teacher, composed and wrote the lyrics for three songs that students sang in the school play.

☞ Students from first and second grade presented their technology projects to teachers and students from across the State and to the State Representatives at the Connecticut Educator's Computer Association Technology Exposition. Representative Matt Lesser also gave the students a tour of the State House.

☞ A variety of reading programs such as, Dr. Seuss Day, Brewster Loves to Read, and the Reading Compact meetings were held for students and families to promote reading at school and home.

☞ The BKPTA sponsored eight excellent cultural arts programs and /or workshops related to curriculum for our students.

☞ Throughout the year, Brewster students and staff completed seven service projects focused on the needs of others.



## FRANCIS E. KORN SCHOOL

Laurie L. Sinder, Principal

- ☞ Our Student Senate offered afterschool movies throughout the year, and a “Summer Send Off” was held in June from the proceeds of Movie Frenzy! This afterschool event gave students a chance to play games, dance, and have special treats to eat. There was also a raffle for prizes.
- ☞ Students and teachers used the SMART Board and SMART Board software as part of their studies of the U.S. regions, math concepts, and language arts. Classes participated in Mystery Skypes with other classes from around the country. iPads were used by students and teachers to create projects using apps such as; Puppet Pals, Popplet and Fotobabble.
- ☞ Throughout the year, the BKPTA sponsored cultural arts programs and/or workshops related to the curriculum. They also sponsored the Science Fair, Go-Far Running Club, math enrichment, egg decorating, and chess club.
- ☞ Students participated in numerous community service projects to demonstrate our Core Ethical Values. Students brought in gently used books which were donated to Read to Grow. They also collected coins for Pennies for Patients, non-perishable food items for Amazing Grace, and purchased gifts for Riverview Hospital during the holiday season. In the spring, they participated in Jump Rope for Heart, which is sponsored by the American Heart Association.
- ☞ A school-wide field trip to see the movie, *Chimpanzee*, supported our study of Ecosystems. In preparation for the movie, students learned about the characteristics of chimpanzees, their habitats, and survival skills. The opportunity to go to the movie as a school community also promoted connectedness among students and staff.



JOHN LYMAN SCHOOL

Karen Brimecombe, Principal

☞ John Lyman School and the Go Far Program were awarded the Thomas R. Flanagan Memorial Student Activities Award by the Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS).



☞ Lyman hosted two HOT Schools Leaderships. One leadership was on parental involvement and residency planning as seen through our Inter-Disciplinary Planning Team; the other was on “HOT Strategies-HOT Schools Components: Strong Arts, Arts Integration and Democratic Practice.”

☞ “Aristocats” practices took place most Friday afternoons since the fall, culminating in five performances during the first weekend of June.

☞ Channel 30 featured John Lyman School as a HOT School. Filming took place in October with airing on Wednesday evening, November 30 and Thursday morning, December 1.

☞ For the sixth consecutive year, 100% of First Graders participated in Rosa’s Readers. Rosa DeLauro was so impressed that she came to visit Lyman School, speaking to third and fourth graders at their “3 Branches of Government” performance and then visited every first and second grade class!



## MEMORIAL MIDDLE SCHOOL

Kevin Brough, Principal

☞ Memorial School implemented a new recognition program for students during the 2011-2012 school year. When staff were informed of significant accomplishments by students both in and out of school, the individuals were recognized through morning announcements and by having a recognition flag flown in their honor.

☞ The Memorial School Drama Club production of “Music Man” was presented on May 4, 2012 to a full audience of parents and community members. Over 75 students participated in this production which involved both fifth and sixth students.

☞ Memorial School students won highest honors in this year’s Word Masters Challenge. Two of our students earned perfect scores and eight others obtained outstanding results in these assessments that took place three times during the school year.

☞ Thirty-three Memorial School students were selected for publication in the Pine Tree Poetry 2012 Collection. This annual publication showcases exemplary words of poetry by young people throughout the country. Overall, 19 sixth graders and 14 fifth graders were recognized for publication.

☞ Students from Memorial School participated in the Sister School Interdistrict Grant Program this past year. This program, which was coordinated by ACES (Area Cooperative Education Services), allowed students in Mrs. Hamilton’s class to participate in a variety of multicultural themed projects and activities over the course of the 2011-2012 school year.



## FRANK WARD STRONG MIDDLE SCHOOL

Scott Sadinsky, Principal

- The musical groups at Strong School participated in the “Trills & Thrills Musical Mini-Festival” in May 2012. The seventh and eighth grade Select Choir, eighth grade Chorus, eighth grade Band, and seventh and eighth grade Jazz Ensemble participated and each received either an Excellent or Superior rating.
- In February, Strong School hosted its annual Strong School Reads program. The book of choice was Neil Shusterman’s *Unwind*. Over sixty participants joined the book discussion. Among those in attendance were students, parents, and community leaders.
- Strong School implemented a Developmental Guidance program for all seventh grade students that is aligned with Connecticut’s School Counseling Comprehensive Curriculum. The topics included study skills and conflict resolution. For the school year 2012-13, this program will be expanded to include eighth grade students. The Developmental Guidance curriculum will also align with Strong School’s implementation of the CT State requirement that every student develop and maintain a Student Success Plan.
- In October of 2011, Strong School held a school-wide assembly for a program dedicated to Rachel’s Challenge. Rachel Joy Scott, a victim of the Columbine High School shootings, was a proactive student and, prior to her untimely death, sent a clear message of compassion, giving back, and practicing acts of kindness. After the assembly, all students, in small groups, participated in a “Chain Links” activity. With the guidance of our Chain Links Club, students shared examples of random acts of kindness they have witnessed in our school, and throughout our community. These examples were added to a paper chain that we are building and extending throughout Strong School.
- In the fall of 2011, Strong School implemented a new student recognition program entitled, “Noteworthy Spartans.” This initiative provides all staff the opportunity to recognize any student for a wide-array of positive contributions they make to Strong School. Examples include a student who exhibited one of the five Core Ethical Values; a student who improved their study habits; a student who gave of their time to assist at a school event, etc. Strong School staff members fill out a half sheet, “Spartan Note.” The original is hung on the bulletin board in the front hallway, while a copy is provided to the student to be brought home. For the 2011-12 school year, over 300 “Spartan Notes,” were given out.



COGINCHAUG REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

Andre Hauser, Principal

- ☞ The CRHS faculty has spent the year engaged in the New England Association of Schools and Colleges self-study process. Although it is a challenging and time-consuming process, the result has been a thorough examination of our practices that has led to greater understanding of our strengths and areas for improvement, as well as an accompanying desire on the part of the faculty to tackle those areas. Four of the seven Standard Reports have been completed, presented to the faculty, and ratified by an overwhelming (90% or higher) majority of the faculty.
- ☞ CRHS’s adoption of a bring-your-own-devices (BYOD) approach to student technology has been a popular and successful policy change that has brought us closer to realizing our Mission Statement’s call for “innovative learning opportunities” that will help prepare students for success in “a constantly changing world.”

- ☞ The CRHS athletic facility was complete and ready for use for the full school year. This has allowed CRHS to host home football games for the first time ever, to host track meets for the first time in several years, to provide a safe, comfortable, and convenient site for school and community teams in a variety of sports to host their games, and a much higher-quality facility for community members interested in fitness.



- ☞ Athletic highlights include: the girls’ soccer team winning the Shoreline Conference Championship, the girls’ basketball team winning the Class S State Championship, the girls’ softball team winning both the Shoreline Conference Championship and the Class S State Championship, several members of the boys’ and girls’ track teams winning medals at the Class S State Meet and qualifying to compete in the State Open and All-New England track meets.
- ☞ CRHS freshman Cory Hassman was selected as the Connecticut winner of the Doodle 4 Google contest based on his entry in the national logo-design contest. He was honored at a school-wide assembly that featured presenters from Google, Senator Blumenthal, and several other local and state-level elected officials. The assembly received extensive coverage on three TV stations, three newspapers, and one news website.

