

STRATEGIC SCHOOL PROFILE 2011-12

Elementary School K-6 Edition

Middle Gate Elementary School**Newtown School District**

CHRISTOPHER GEISLER, Principal
Telephone: (203) 426-7662

Location: 7 Cold Spring Road
Newtown,
Connecticut

Website: newtown.k12.ct.us/~mg/

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 or testing services. Profiles and additional education data, including longitudinal data, are available on the internet at www.sde.ct.gov.

TYPE OF SCHOOL

School Type: Traditional/Regular Education
School Grade Range: K - 4

STUDENT ENROLLMENT

Enrollment on October 1, 2011: 476
5-Year Enrollment Change: -7.8%

INDICATORS OF EDUCATIONAL NEED

Need Indicator	Number in School	Percent in School	Elementary Schools	
			% in District	% in State
Students Eligible for Free/Reduced-Price Meals	33	6.9	6.1	39.4
K-12 Students Who Are Not Fluent in English	1	0.2	0.3	7.8
Students with Disabilities	38	8.0	7.3	10.9
Students Identified as Gifted and/or Talented	4	0.8	2.7	2.0
Kindergarten Students who Attended Preschool, Nursery School or Headstart	75	97.4	96.3	79.8
Students in Grades Above School's Entry Grade Who Attended Same School the Previous Year	374	93.7	95.4	95.8

PROGRAM AND INSTRUCTION

Instructional Time	School	State Elementary Schools
Total Days per Year	183	181
Total Hours per Year	980	993

State law requires that at least 180 days of school be offered to students in kindergarten through Grade 12, 900 hours of instruction to Grades 1-12 and full-day kindergarten, and 450 hours to half-day kindergarten students.

Type of Kindergarten: This school offers full-day kindergarten.

Average Class Size	School	District	State
Kindergarten	15.4	16.0	18.5
Grade 2	19.2	18.4	19.7
Grade 5	N/A	N/A	N/A

Required Hours of Instruction Per Year in Selected Subject Areas		
Grade 2	School	State
Art	26	31
Computer Education	20	16
English Language Arts	518	488
Health	17	18
Library Media Skills	22	20
Mathematics	209	200
Music	22	32
Physical Education	50	39
Science	37	73
Social Studies	37	67
World Languages	0	7

World Language

Formal instruction (at least 1 hour per week) in a world language is not offered in this school.

Lunch

An average of 30 minutes is provided for lunch during full school days.

Special Programs	School	Elementary Schools	
		District	State
% of K-12 Students in Bilingual Education Program or Receiving English as a Second Language Services	0.2	0.3	7.8
% of Identified Gifted and/or Talented Students Who Received Services	100.0	98.6	81.1
% of Special Education Students Attending This School Who Spent Over 79% of Their Time with Their Non-Disabled Peers	86.8	85.9	78.8

LIBRARY AND COMPUTERS

Free on-line access to periodicals, newspapers, and other resources is available to all Connecticut schools through the Connecticut Digital Library at www.iconn.org.

Instructional Computers and Library Materials	School	Elementary Schools	
		District	State
# of Students Per Computer	4.3	3.6	2.8
% of Computers with Internet Access	100.0	100.0	97.4
% of Computers that are High or Moderate Power	100.0	100.0	94.2
# of Print Volumes Per Student*	50.6	37.5	29.7
# of Print Periodical Subscriptions	20	21	11

*Because a certain number of volumes are needed for a library of adequate breadth and depth, a small school may need a higher number of volumes per student.

SCHOOL STAFF

Full-Time Equivalent Count of School Staff		In the full-time equivalent count, staff members working part-time in the school are counted as a fraction of full-time. For example, a teacher who works half-time in a school contributes 0.50 to the school's staff count.
General Education: Teachers and Instructors	27.04	
Paraprofessional Instructional Assistants	5.66	
Special Education: Teachers and Instructors	2.50	
Paraprofessional Instructional Assistants	6.80	
Library/Media Specialists and/or Assistants	1.60	
Administrators, Coordinators, and Department Chairs	1.00	
Instructional Specialists Who Support Teachers (e.g., subject area specialists)	3.00	
Counselors, Social Workers, and School Psychologists	1.00	
School Nurses	1.10	
Other Staff Providing Non-Instructional Services and Support	12.60	

Teachers and Instructors	School	Elementary Schools	
		District	State
Average Number of Years of Experience in Education	10.8	14.0	13.7
% with Master's Degree or Above	84.8	91.8	81.6
Attendance, 2010-11: Average # of Days Absent Due to Illness or Personal Time	6.5	8.4	8.7
% Assigned to Same School the Previous Year	90.9	89.4	85.0

HOME AND SCHOOL COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

- Teacher E-Mail Addresses:** All teachers at this school have been issued e-mail addresses.
- Online Homework Information:** A portion of the school website is devoted to homepages.

The following narrative about how this school promotes and supports parental involvement was submitted by this school.

Our commitment to encouraging and supporting family involvement takes many forms. The PTA at Middle Gate is a dedicated and involved group of parents and teachers who work together to provide outstanding educational experiences for our students. The Middle Gate PTA sends weekly e-blasts and publishes a bi-monthly newsletter to keep families informed. The PTA supported our literacy initiative through a generous donation to improve our Goldmine Library, Reading Center, and classroom libraries. They coordinated reading challenges and provided feedback on the draft of our Literacy Action Plan (created by our Literacy Team). Our PTA Cultural Arts committee provides monthly cultural experiences for our children that promote the arts and encourage the celebration of diversity while meeting the curriculum standards. Our PTA continued to support the GeoKids Initiative, which helped children learn about US and world geography. Parents also volunteered to run the Junior Master Gardener Program. Through this program our children learn about plants and nutrition in our outdoor classroom. Middle Gate Loves to Read Week included a Family Book Club Night, where parents read a book with their children and discussed it with other families who have read the same book, and a K-2 early literacy event. Parents volunteer in classrooms to provide language arts support and math skill practice. Additionally, parent volunteers assisted in the Library Media Center, "Super Star Math" enrichment program, and in Science Lab lessons. Our school website, with teacher web pages, supports parents in their quest to help their children succeed academically and socially. Activities such as the annual Father/Child Pancake Breakfast, which is attended by more than six hundred people over the course of two days, Muffins with Mom, Grade 3 Family Math/Science Night, Middle Gate Madness, and evenings such as "What's under the microscope night?" encourage the participation of dads, moms, and extended family members in their children's education. Our parents are participants in the Principal's Coffee, a forum in which they can openly discuss concerns, suggestions, and/or successes. Topics of interest and school/district initiatives are also presented and discussed in this setting.

SCHOOL DIVERSITY

Student Race/Ethnicity		
Race/Ethnicity	Number	Percent
American Indian	0	0.0
Asian American	20	4.2
Black	3	0.6
Hispanic	24	5.0
Pacific Islander	0	0.0
White	413	86.8
Two or more races	16	3.4
Total Minority	63	13.2

Percent of Minority Professional Staff: 0.0%

Non-English Home Language :

2.3% of this school's students (excluding prekindergarten students) come from homes where English is not the primary language. The number of non-English home languages is 9.

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.

Middle Gate School works to provide a program of study to increase student awareness of diversity and cultures other than our own. The Respect, Responsibility and Celebration of Diversity (RRD) Committee was created as a sub-committee of the Middle Gate School Leadership Council. Students discuss and participate in strengthening the connections that students have to school and to each other, and students discuss sensitive issues dealing with the underrepresented populations at Middle Gate. Monthly themes focusing on respect, responsibility, kindness and caring, sincerity and honesty, and cooperation and sharing are addressed throughout the year. Themes focus on diversity of race and religion, cultural and ethnic differences, and differences which relate to ability, and viewpoints. Our students meet in Community Circle (assemblies with representation from each grade) to further develop traits including trustworthiness, empathy, and perseverance. Fourth grade students participate in Differences Day, which provides learning centers with opportunities for students to explore and experience physical handicaps and gives participants a new appreciation for how these differences effect people’s lives. In morning meetings (part of our Responsive Classroom approach), class activities and through school-wide initiatives, students practice actions related to the monthly theme to reinforce desired behaviors. In addition, teachers implement lessons based on cultural themes. Units of study that recognize the differences between cultures are promoted in all classrooms. Assemblies are purposefully chosen to foster an appreciation of differences. Before and after school language classes are available in French and Spanish. Rosetta Stone software is available in English, Spanish and Mandarin Chinese. At Middle Gate School, we celebrate the diversity present in our American culture, learning from one another and appreciating our differences.

STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND BEHAVIOR

Physical Fitness: % Reaching Health Standard on All Four Tests*	School	District	State	% of Schools in State with Equal or Lower Percent Reaching Standard
Grade 4	82.1	78.6	50.9	95.2
Grade 6	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

*Includes tests for flexibility, abdominal strength and endurance, upper-body strength and aerobic endurance.

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	School	District	State	% of Schools in State with Equal or Lower Percent Meeting Goal
Grade 3 Reading	79.4	80.8	59.2	86.0
Writing	83.5	84.1	62.7	88.8
Mathematics	89.7	89.7	66.5	91.1
Grade 4 Reading	83.3	84.5	64.1	85.4
Writing	87.5	87.5	65.3	91.5
Mathematics	93.6	90.4	68.0	96.1
Grade 5 Reading	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Writing	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Mathematics	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Science	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Grade 6 Reading	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Writing	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Mathematics	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

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."

Student Attendance	School	District Elementary Sch.	State Elementary Sch.
% Present on October 1	96.0	95.4	95.9

Disciplinary Offenses

Disciplinary offenses committed by students include all serious offenses, offenses involving drugs, alcohol, or tobacco, and all incidents resulting in suspension or expulsion.

Truancy

During the 2010-11 school year, No students qualified as truant under state statute. As these counts rely on school-level policies regarding unexcused absences, they are not comparable between schools.

Number of Incidents by Disciplinary Offense Category, 2010-11		
Offense Category*	Location of Incident	
	School	Other Location
Violent Crimes Against Persons	N/A	N/A
Sexually Related Behavior	N/A	N/A
Personally Threatening Behavior	N/A	N/A
Theft	N/A	N/A
Physical/Verbal Confrontation	N/A	N/A
Fighting/Battery	N/A	N/A
Property Damage	N/A	N/A
Weapons	N/A	N/A
Drugs/Alcohol/Tobacco	N/A	N/A
School Policy Violations	N/A	N/A
Total	0	0

* Counts by category may be suppressed to protect student privacy.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANS AND ACTIVITIES

The following narrative was submitted by this school.

Our School Improvement Plan is developed by our Leadership Team, which consists of teachers, leaders in literacy and mathematics, members of the Middle Gate staff, and administrators. The Leadership Team meets together as a professional learning community to review formative and standardized data to develop a plan to ensure student achievement. Curriculum maps are reviewed in order to assess whether our performance standards and teaching objectives are consistent with high levels of student achievement. Teachers meet in teams throughout the year to ensure that all students have access to best practice techniques in the five key areas of reading instruction, such as fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, decoding, and phonics. Teachers at Middle Gate School implement the Responsive Classroom approach at each grade level and participate in Compelling Conversations with administrators and building leaders. Each member of the certified staff contributes to at least one committee and several teacher-leaders offer voluntary workshops for their colleagues. All grade levels meet as data teams to study our curriculum-based Language Arts and Mathematics data to assess student progress throughout the year. Teams set SMART goals, and track and assess progress toward the goals. Teachers design their instruction based on this data as well as daily assessment of each student. We set measurable goals for students experiencing difficulty and work toward achieving the goal using best practice strategies and differentiated instruction. In alignment with the State of Connecticut's scientifically based research model (SRBI) we are monitoring student progress using universal screening assessments. Our efforts are supported by the work of grade level teams, support staff, the Early Intervention Team and the Safe School Climate Committee. Student progress is monitored weekly or biweekly when students fall below expected benchmarks. Teachers use instructional specialists and flexible grouping during their Language Arts Power Block to further individualize instruction for students.

SUPPLEMENTAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

The space below was optionally used by this school to describe aspects of the school not presented elsewhere in the profile.

A rigorous program of education is the norm at Middle Gate School. Continuous improvement is at the core of all we do. Students in all grades are exposed to an enriched, meaning-centered curriculum grounded upon sound research, policies, practices, and beliefs. Middle Gate School maintains the highest standards while not losing sight of the whole child and specific identified needs. Our language arts and math/science specialists promote sound practice in the teaching of their subjects, helping teachers to develop and enrich their classroom programs, and providing differentiated instruction for each student. Students benefit from a school-wide emphasis on science. We believe that students need to experience science and every student benefits from exploratory studies in our laboratory environment. Each classroom in Middle Gate School is equipped with a SmartBoard and all grade levels produce a unit promoting 21st Century skills. A Publishing Center operated by parent volunteers provides the opportunity for students to have their writing published in hardcover form at least once a year. Students participate in Middle Gate Loves to Read Week, where they take part in school-wide activities that promote reading and celebrate books, as well as an all-school Math day on the 100th day of school. Our annual Turkey Trot, along with our Jump Rope for Heart, Walking Club and Marathon Club are a few of the many ways we build lifelong healthy habits. Middle Gate School is a service-oriented community. Students on our Green Team lead our recycling efforts by collecting and recycling paper from classrooms. Last year, classrooms "adopted" over twenty families and provided Thanksgiving Dinner in conjunction with the Women Involved in Newtown Thanksgiving Basket Program. Middle Gate students also participated in a sock and mitten drive, ASPCA awareness/fundraiser activities, Earth Day Festival, Valentine's for the Troops, "Souper" Bowl food drive, and raised money for victims of natural disasters.
