



## Western Connecticut Academy of International Studies Elementary Magnet School

January 1, 2015

Dear Parents/Guardians:

The Boards of Education from Brookfield, Danbury, New Fairfield, New Milford, Newtown and Redding invite you to apply for enrollment of your child to the Western Connecticut Academy of International Studies Elementary Magnet School.

The Western Connecticut Academy of International Studies Elementary Magnet School is an innovative, K-5 school of global studies located in a new state-of-the-art facility in Danbury, adjacent to the wooded west-side campus of Western Connecticut State University. This packet contains information about the school. Additional information is available on the School's Website [www.danbury.k12.ct.us](http://www.danbury.k12.ct.us) under Schools click on AIS Magnet School). You are invited to contact your local school district for additional information.

The Western Connecticut Academy of International Studies Elementary Magnet School operates under the state guidelines as a Public School of Choice. It is managed by a representative Advisory Trustee Board and governed by the Danbury Board of Education. A child's selection to the school will be made by application and a lottery.

Applications for admission are available online at Danbury Public Schools website: [www.danbury.k12.ct.us](http://www.danbury.k12.ct.us).

If you sent in an application last year and your child was placed on the waiting list please remember that the waiting list from last year expires January 1, 2015 and you need to reapply for the 2015-2016 school year.

The application deadline is January 21, 2015.



# Western Connecticut Academy of International Studies Elementary Magnet School

The early years of elementary school are crucial to the way children define the world and their place in it. The Western Connecticut Academy of International Studies is an innovative and challenging elementary magnet school designed to begin preparing children in Grades K through 5 to live and thrive in a global community.

With the instructional theme of International Studies, the Academy offers youngsters from the school districts of Brookfield, Danbury, New Fairfield, Newtown, New Milford and Redding an exciting multinational educational adventure.

The Academy is the child's "passport" to learning about the global community. They begin learning and using Spanish from kindergarten. The extensive use of technology enables our children to travel the world on a virtual electronic journey.

Using various teaching strategies and an integrated approach to learning, teachers challenge each child to perform at their highest levels.

As they study at the Academy, students acquire and demonstrate developmentally appropriate mastery of core content matter. They apply that knowledge in contexts that relate to foreign countries, their cultures, traditions, economies, and geographic/ historic frameworks.

As the program of study gives the student an international perspective on knowledge, the school community itself provides a climate of localized individual nurturing. Enrollment of students who represent the diversity of the partner school districts heightens the child/s appreciation for human differences.

Together the school instructional program and the school climate will enhance children's comprehension of their relationship to their personal community and to the world community. The collaboration of parents, community, and school enhances learning opportunities for students. Parents participate actively in the operation of various Academy components.

The child learns about the world in an environment of trust and acceptance among students and adults. By the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> grade in the Academy of International Studies, the students understand and appreciate that global citizenship begins with responsible citizenship in one's own world.

# WESTERN CONNECTICUT ACADEMY OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES ELEMENTARY MAGNET SCHOOL

Participating Districts: Brookfield, Danbury, New Fairfield, New Milford, Newtown, Redding

## WHAT IS A MAGNET SCHOOL?

A magnet school is a publicly funded school operated by a local or regional school district or by a cooperative agreement involving two or more districts. Each magnet school has an educational theme or focus; students choose to enroll based on their interest in the school's theme.

## WHAT IS THE THEME OF THE SCHOOL?

As the title indicates, the Academy of International Studies will engage students in a curriculum and a structure that will encourage them to develop and use a global perspective early in their educational career. The international theme, woven through all subjects, will be supported with units of study based on countries, continents, and cultures; engaging young students' innate curiosity and openness to learning. Spanish, one of the leading languages in the world, will be the initial World Language taught, beginning in kindergarten.

## WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO ATTEND?

All students in the school districts participating in the magnet school program are eligible. Districts may limit the number of participants and must hold a lottery if there are more applicants than space available. No student may be denied enrollment because of ethnicity or disability. The General Assembly has recently reaffirmed its commitment to fully enrolling its magnet schools by adopting Section 42 of P.A. 07-3 of the June 2007 Special Session, *An Act Concerning Implementing the Provisions of the Budget Concerning Education*. That section provides, in part as follows: "After accommodating students from participating districts in accordance with the approved enrollment agreement, an interdistrict magnet school that has unused student capacity may enroll directly into its program any interested student. A student from a district that is not participating in the interdistrict magnet school shall be given preference. The local or regional board of education otherwise responsible for educating such student shall contribute funds to support the operation of the interdistrict magnet school in an amount equal to the per student tuition, if any, charged to participating districts."

## IF I AM A DANBURY RESIDENT AND MY CHILD ATTENDS A NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL, CAN WE APPLY?

Yes, but you must submit proof of residency with your application. To verify legal residence of the parent/guardian, renters must supply a current notarized lease or notarized letter from landlord. Homeowners must supply a recorded deed showing ownership or a current tax bill. In addition to the above, you must show one utility bill (gas, electric, phone).

## WHAT IF WE MOVE?

If your child is selected for enrollment and you move out of your current district prior to the beginning of the school year your child's slot is at the discretion of the receiving district.

## WHERE IS THE SCHOOL LOCATED?

The Western Connecticut Academy of International Studies Elementary Magnet School is located in Danbury on University Boulevard (adjacent to the Westside Campus of Western Connecticut State University).

## WHAT GRADES DOES THE SCHOOL OFFER?

Kindergarten through fifth grade.

## DOES THE SCHOOL PROVIDE FOR THE NEEDS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS?

Yes. The responsibility for holding the planning and placement team meeting belongs to the district where the student lives. The magnet school is responsible for ensuring that the student receives the services required by the student's individualized educational program (IEP) whether those services are provided by the magnet school or by the school district in which the student resides.

## WILL THERE BE BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS?

Yes. The sense of safety and freedom to realize one's potential will be enhanced by the inclusion of before and after school childcare components in the school design.

## WHAT IS THE ADMISSIONS POLICY PERTAINING TO SIBLINGS?

Preference will be given to an applicant whose sibling is currently enrolled in the school. The brother or sister must reside in the same household.

## APPLICATION PROCESS:

1. If a student is not randomly selected, they will be placed on a waiting list. Should a vacancy occur, students on the waiting list will be called based on their randomly selected lottery number.
2. The waiting list will be maintained until January 1, 2016. After that time, the waiting list will be discontinued.
3. Once a parent has confirmed or declined their child's acceptance to the Magnet School, the child's name will be removed from the waiting list.
4. In the event that a student is retained in a grade other than the grade to which they applied, their application will be considered null and void. A new application must be submitted for the proper grade. Applications will not be accepted for a grade that your child has successfully completed.
5. Late applications will be accepted, but placed at the end of the waiting list.