

STRATEGIC SCHOOL PROFILE 2011-12

Middle and Junior High School Edition

Interdistrict School For Arts And Communication**Interdistrict School for Arts and Communication District**

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Location: 190 Governor Winthrop Boulev
 New London,
 Connecticut

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: Charter School
 School Grade Range: 6 - 8
 Instructional Focus: Arts and Experiential learning

STUDENT ENROLLMENT

Enrollment on October 1, 2011: 191
 5-Year Enrollment Change: 5.5%

INDICATORS OF EDUCATIONAL NEED

Need Indicator	Number in School	Percent in School	Middle/Jr. High Schools	
			% in District	% in State
Students Eligible for Free/Reduced-Price Meals	135	70.7	70.7	30.0
Students Who Are Not Fluent in English	20	10.5	10.5	3.4
Students with Disabilities	32	16.8	16.8	12.0
Students Identified as Gifted and/or Talented	0	0.0	0.0	7.3
Students in Grades Above School's Entry Grade Who Attended Same School the Previous Year	165	100.0	131.0	98.1

PROGRAM AND INSTRUCTION

Instructional Time	School	State Middle/Jr. High Schools
Total Days per Year	183	181
Total Hours per Year	1,046	1,024

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.

Average Class Size	School	District	State
Grade 5	N/A	N/A	N/A
Grade 7	15.0	15.0	20.3

Enrollment in Selected High School Level Courses			
Percent of Grade 8 Students Taking	School	District	State
Mathematics	36.7	36.7	37.2
World Language	30.0	30.0	49.9

Required Hours of Instruction Per Year in Selected Subject Areas		
Grade 8	School	State
Art ***	30	37
Computer Education ***	30	18
English Language Arts	150	226
Family and Consumer Science	0	12
Health	30	24
Library Media Skills **	30	9
Mathematics	150	159
Music *	68	35
Physical Education	68	55
Science	150	149
Social Studies	150	147
Technology Education ***	30	24
World Languages	68	91

World Language

Formal instruction (at least 1 hour per week) in Spanish starts in Grade 6 in this school. Statewide, 15.4% of elementary and middle schools that serve Grade 6 start world language instruction by this grade.

Lunch

An average of 21 minutes is provided for lunch during full school days.

** Interdisciplinary approach
* Elective hours also offered

Special Programs	School	Middle/Jr. High Schools	
		District	State
% of K-12 Students in Bilingual Education Program or Receiving English as a Second Language Services	10.5	10.5	3.2
% of Identified Gifted and/or Talented Students Who Received Services	N/A	N/A	N/A
% of Special Education Students Attending This School Who Spent Over 79% of Their Time with Their Non-Disabled Peers	100.0	100.0	76.3

LIBRARY AND COMPUTERS

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

Instructional Computers and Library Materials	School	Middle/Jr. High Schools	
		District	State
# of Students Per Computer	1.4	1.4	2.2
% of Computers with Internet Access	100.0	100.0	98.8
% of Computers that are High or Moderate Power	100.0	100.0	97.2
# of Print Volumes Per Student*	N/A	N/A	21.6
# of Print Periodical Subscriptions	N/A	0	20

*This school does not have its own library.

SCHOOL STAFF

Full-Time Equivalent Count of School Staff	
General Education: Teachers and Instructors	13.52
Paraprofessional Instructional Assistants	0.00
Special Education: Teachers and Instructors	4.00
Paraprofessional Instructional Assistants	5.00
Library/Media Specialists and/or Assistants	0.00
Administrators, Coordinators, and Department Chairs	2.00
Instructional Specialists Who Support Teachers (e.g., subject area specialists)	0.00
Counselors, Social Workers, and School Psychologists	1.00
School Nurses	1.00
Other Staff Providing Non-Instructional Services and Support	4.50

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.

Teachers and Instructors	School	Middle/Jr. High Schools	
		District	State
Average Number of Years of Experience in Education	7.4	7.0	14.2
% with Master's Degree or Above	78.9	78.9	79.3
Classroom Teacher Attendance, 2010-11: Average # of Days Absent Due to Illness or Personal Time	11.1	11.1	8.9
% Assigned to Same School the Previous Year	73.7	73.7	88.2

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's website is devoted to homework pages.

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

ISAAC is an interdistrict school dedicated to fostering a sense of community for its students, parents and staff. This year we set a goal of increasing options for school to home communication which included the addition of an automated dialer system to send automated phone messages and announcements to families in both English and Spanish. Our web site includes homework pages for teachers as well as links to individual teacher websites. Progress reports are sent home six times a year and there are two Parent/Teacher conference times scheduled during the year. This year we instituted a new student information system, PowerSchool, which allows more consistent and progressive monitoring of student data. PowerSchool provides a secure web-based parent portal by which our parents can access their child's academic data via the website at any time. We also created a Facebook page for ISAAC which includes announcements about school activities and events. Our Student Support Center, SSC, assists families with resources for both physical as well as emotional needs. Our School Based Health Clinic provides in-school health services for families including school physicals, behavioral health services, prescriptions, and health screenings. For students in eighth grade, we provide a high school planning program including information for parents on high school options, personalized planning meetings as well as a high school fair. Parents are encouraged to support our school with volunteer opportunities throughout the year. Parents chaperone for field trips, support our Early Birds Fitness program, help with fund-raising efforts, school events such as our Multi-cultural Dinner, our annual Book Fair, and school concerts and events. Our parent support group, the ISAAC Parent Action Team, IPAT, meets on a monthly basis to help support school initiatives and help with parent communication.

SCHOOL DIVERSITY

Student Race/Ethnicity		
Race/Ethnicity	Number	Percent
American Indian	4	2.1
Asian American	1	0.5
Black	52	27.2
Hispanic	83	43.5
Pacific Islander	0	0.0
White	51	26.7
Two or more races	0	0.0
Total Minority	140	73.3

Percent of Minority Professional Staff: 0.0%

Non-English Home Language:

18.3% 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 2.

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.

ISAAC was founded in 1997 by parents as a Connecticut charter school, with the goal to reduce racial and economic isolation in southeastern Connecticut for middle school students. The school opened that fall with 45 students in 6th grade. Since that time, ISAAC has grown to 191 students in all three middle school grades with students from twelve communities. Our students and families represent different races, ethnicities, economic status and come from urban, suburban and rural communities. The percentage of students who qualify for free or reduced lunch has grown from about 30% in 1997 to over 70% in 2011. In addition to being founded to reduce racial and economic isolation, ISAAC staff infuses multicultural education in its program through our unique curriculum and experiences in the greater community. Teacher representatives attend the National Association for Multicultural Education Conference each year. The workshops provided at that conference help our staff to be more aware, sensitive and skilled at infusing multicultural education into our curriculum. We work with area art centers and invite global artists to our school to give presentations and to work with our teachers on classroom projects. We have hosted artists from South America, Cuba, Africa, Jamaica and many other countries. This year as an effort to reach out to our non-English speaking parents, we conducted two informational sessions in Spanish to provide information on school and community resources to our families. Furthermore, ISAAC provides time during each day for "Crew" to teach students about differences through our social curriculum called Responsive Classroom. Each spring we hold a school wide Multicultural Dinner each spring which is a celebration of cultural diversity with food, music and activities.

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	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Grade 6	23.4	23.4	50.7	8.8
Grade 8	33.3	33.3	49.8	21.4

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

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

Grade and CMT Subject Area	School	District	State	% of Schools in State with Equal or Lower Percent Meeting Goal
Grade 4 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
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	42.4	42.4	74.1	15.5
Writing	25.8	25.8	67.4	9.4
Mathematics	36.7	36.7	69.3	18.2
Grade 7 Reading	56.5	56.5	79.8	17.5
Writing	46.8	46.8	65.6	26.3
Mathematics	31.1	31.1	68.1	14.1
Grade 8 Reading	62.1	62.1	76.8	26.6
Writing	47.5	47.5	68.3	26.3
Mathematics	35.1	35.1	67.2	19.1
Science	49.2	49.2	61.9	35.0

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 Middle/Jr. High Schools	State Middle/Jr. High Schools
% Present on October 1	97.4	97.4	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. In the 2010-11 school year, 24 students were responsible for these incidents. These students represent 13.2% of the estimated number of students who attended this school at some point during the 2010-11 school year.

Truancy

During the 2010-11 school year, 2 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	0	0
Sexually Related Behavior	6	0
Personally Threatening Behavior	3	1
Theft	0	0
Physical/Verbal Confrontation	4	2
Fighting/Battery	3	6
Property Damage	0	0
Weapons	1	0
Drugs/Alcohol/Tobacco	0	0
School Policy Violations	12	1
Total	29	10

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANS AND ACTIVITIES

The following narrative was submitted by this school.

As an effort to support students in the areas of Math, Reading and Writing, we created Math and Literacy Academies this year. These Academy classes utilize both teacher instruction as well as computer-based programs that assist our students in improving skills in mathematics and reading. In the area of special education, we follow the inclusion model for all special education students and have begun efforts in implementing co-teaching in core subject areas. We have increased the number of special education support staff working in our co-taught classes due to an increase in enrollment of students with special needs. Some students also have Resource periods during the day to provide additional support to work on specific IEP goals. Throughout the year, professional development activities involved a large number of staff in “Effective Teaching Strategies” and “Differentiated Instruction” for the regular education classroom. The intent of this training is to help teachers in meeting the varied needs of all students in their classrooms. We are engaged in a school improvement process that will frame our improvement efforts for the next several years. Utilizing Blue Ribbon Improvement Committees, I-BRIC’s, consisting of teachers, parents, staff members, community members, board members, and administrators, focus areas of improvement were targeted. Three initial key areas included school management and organization, school climate, and school mission and purpose. These teams completed a needs assessment and strategic planning to identify and meet those needs. As an outcome of the Mission and Purpose I-BRIC, ISAAC has returned to the Expeditionary Learning comprehensive school model for improvement and will be working with EL school designers to implement instructional coaching and school-wide targets that will improve student achievement and school culture and climate. This year we created an attendance intervention program that included progressive notification to parents, counseling for students, parent meetings and a parent/student/school contract to guide families to improve their child’s attendance rate. This effort resulted in increased attendance with the few students with frequent absences.

SUPPLEMENTAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

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

ISAAC continues to provide a unique middle school experience, integrating the Arts and Communication within its core curriculum. Music education is a key element to our students’ experience and all students participate in either instrumental or voice instruction. Visual Arts integration in the core curriculum is one of the key vehicles of our experiential learning approach. Technology plays a key role in delivering our curriculum and we are approaching our goal of one computer for every student. The curriculum at ISAAC is designed to be expeditionary and hands-on, with a focus on exploratory learning. Our goal is to create inquisitive and high achieving students who are ready for the 21st century world. One of our greatest assets is community partnerships. A new three-year collaboration was formed this year with the United States Coast Guard Research and Development Center. Students in science classes at ISAAC have been working side-by-side with Coast Guard personnel who show them real-world applications of their classroom studies and expose them to what the Coast Guard does. It lends a touch of reality that encourages and motivates students and ties nicely into our experiential learning model. Additional community partnerships with the Writer’s Block and the Hygienic Arts Gallery provided enriching activities in creative writing, photo-journalism and performing arts. ISAAC has embraced Expeditionary Learning, EL, as a comprehensive school improvement model. Two EL School Designers will be working closely with our school over the next few years to provide individual coaching for administrators and teachers, as well as school wide professional development to assist us in reaching our achievement goals.
