Mitchell Elementary School

School Improvement Plan
2009-2010

Dawn L. Hochsprung
Principal
September 15, 2009
Region 14 Norms and Core Beliefs

1. Region 14 has the capacity to make major improvements in student achievement.

2. Region 14’s leadership makes a difference both in schools and school systems.

3. Region 14 personnel must be held to a standard of excellence by the administration and are expected to contribute to the successful school experience of every student.

4. Every Region 14 student is entitled to highly effective instruction every day.

5. Learning must be relevant, engaging, and challenging for Region 14 students.

Region 14 Mission Statement

We, the educational community of the Region 14 School District, are dedicated to creating a quality, dynamic learning environment so that each individual learner becomes a respected contributing member of the community with values, skills, and resources that promote the advancement of society.
Mitchell Elementary School Mission Statement

Mitchell Elementary School, in partnership with the communities of Woodbury and Bethlehem, guarantees rich learning experiences for students. We support students in setting goals for intellectual development by maintaining high expectations. We provide opportunities for students to engage actively in problem solving in all aspects of their lives. Our school code fosters the development of high personal standards so that students become responsible and caring citizens in a global society.

Mitchell Elementary School VALUES...

Quality Education
Our School Code
Our Community of Learners
Passion for Learning

Mitchell Elementary School
BELIEFS ABOUT TEACHING

▪ Teaching reflects individual style and creativity through a lens of kindness and respect.

▪ Teaching fosters lifelong learning habits and skills, supporting the development of the intellectual, social, emotional, and physical aspects of every child.

▪ Teachers believe in every child’s ability to achieve, challenge every child to reach a higher level, and measure every child’s individual success.

▪ Teaching requires a dynamic response in order to prepare every child for success in today’s changing society.

Mitchell Elementary School
BELIEFS ABOUT LEARNING

▪ Learning is a journey that connects prior knowledge with meaningful educational opportunities.

▪ Learners will reach the height of their learning potential through hands-on, highly motivating, authentic experiences.

▪ Learners must be aware of their strengths and weaknesses and share responsibility for their learning.

▪ Learning is dependent upon communication and the exchange of ideas.
INTRODUCTION

The faculty of Mitchell Elementary School is committed to continuous improvement. This School Improvement Plan charts our course to provide the best possible educational opportunities for each of our 415 learners.

Our efforts to increase the academic achievement of Mitchell students in Language Arts and Mathematics are enhanced this year as we apply lessons learned through the implementation of the 2008-2009 School Improvement Plan. Specifically, we will increase the impact of Action Research through Professional Growth Goals by providing more opportunities for our 33 full time and 9 part time teachers to share their learning with colleagues via Grade Level Team meetings and topic-specific book studies. Student work and assessment data will continue to be used to inform instruction, both on the programmatic level and for individual student interventions.

The membership of Grade Level Teams at Mitchell Elementary School has changed. Team members will continue to work together to build professional learning communities. This work will be supported by key staff members, including the Language Arts and Mathematics Coordinators and Specialists.

The culture of Mitchell Elementary School supports students and teachers in reaching their teaching and learning goals in a climate of safety, responsibility, respectfulness, and preparedness.

Key Objectives of the 2009 – 2010 Mitchell Elementary School Improvement Plan:
1. The MES faculty will use assessment data to make informed instructional decisions for students at all levels.
2. Data collected will provide information regarding individual students’ strengths and weaknesses.
3. Data collected will be analyzed by K-5 principals, coordinators, specialists, and faculty to identify and address programmatic needs.
4. Professional development throughout the year will address effective instructional practices.
Goal 1- Language Arts

All Students will increase their performance in Reading and Writing as measured by the Connecticut Mastery Test as well as the Degrees of Reading Power, the Developmental Reading Assessment 2, and District Writing Prompts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL for 2010 CMT Percentage of Students at Goal in Language Arts</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
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</tbody>
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GOAL for 2009 – 2010 District Assessments Percentage of Students Achieving Benchmark at all Grade Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degrees of Reading Power</th>
<th>70%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developmental Reading Assessment 2</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Prompt</td>
<td>75%</td>
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Implementation and Monitoring Plan: The principal, language arts coordinator, literacy specialist, special education team leader, lead teacher, and classroom teachers will collect, organize, analyze, and report on data from a variety of performance measures including the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT), the Developmental Reading Assessment 2 (DRA2), the Degrees of Reading Power (DRP), Region 14 benchmark writing prompts, and samples of student work. We will use the district’s Language Arts curriculum as the foundation for our focus on the components of balanced literacy.

Action Steps

1.1 Classroom teachers will plan and implement explicit instruction in test-taking strategies including familiarity with assessment language, test format, and using background knowledge in lieu of actual experience in responding to a prompt topic.

1.2 Classroom teachers will support students’ metacognition by articulating the writing process and encourage students to discuss what they are learning and have learned relative to the writing process. Some classroom teachers will also introduce student-led conferences to encourage students’ ownership of their writing.

1.3 Classroom teachers will ensure that every student will have the opportunity to read at his or her independent level each day in order to facilitate the development of fluency and vocabulary, and to expand students’ background knowledge.

1.4 Classroom teachers will embed writing into their daily instruction through both explicit instruction and written responses to text.
1.5 Classroom teachers will provide students with daily opportunities for writing across the curriculum to promote learning and assess understanding.

1.6 Classroom teachers will maintain current literacy data for all students. This data will be reviewed regularly by the building principal, language arts coordinator, and literacy specialist. Classroom data as it relates to student achievement will be reviewed at grade level team meetings and at Student Consultation Team (SCT) meetings to plan appropriate instruction and intervention for students.

1.7 The literacy specialist will work with students who have a specific, significant need in the area of reading comprehension, targeting interventions to maximize their learning in both the intervention and regular classroom settings.

1.8 Literacy tutors will work with students who are not performing at the district benchmark in reading. They will provide explicit, targeted instruction to small groups. The literacy specialist will track student achievement of intervention group students and will provide direct instruction as indicated.

1.9 Grade level teams will develop interventions to address discrepancies in the performance of girls versus boys, such as encouraging boys to connect the theme of a piece to a feeling when making connections to text, incorporating more movement into the language arts block, and site visits to schools in which boys’ performance in language arts is commensurate with girls’ performance. Twice weekly, during grade level meetings throughout the year, the literacy specialist will work with grade level teams around best practices in literacy instruction including: word study, writing, specific instructional strategies, incorporating Connecticut Mastery Test language into instruction, using assessment data to inform instruction, and scheduling and management of the literacy block.

1.10 The literacy specialist will provide support to individual teachers through modeling of lessons and coaching teachers with a focus on specific instructional practices.

1.11 The principal and literacy specialist will work with new teachers to ensure that they are able to: effectively implement all components of balanced literacy, design an appropriate literacy block, and monitor student progress by looking at student work as well as assessment data.

1.12 The principal and the literacy specialist will work with teachers to share their work on professional growth goals (developed with respect to recent data trends) both horizontally across grade levels and vertically across grades three through five through grade level meetings, cross-grade book studies, and other avenues of professional development.

1.13 The principal, language arts coordinator, and literacy specialist will meet with each grade level team to facilitate a discussion of their needs around literacy instruction and will work to provide additional professional development in these areas.

1.14 District writing prompts will be given three times (fall, winter and spring). Grade level teams will work with the literacy specialist to holistically score these writing assessments. The principal, language arts coordinator, and literacy specialist will meet with teachers to examine students’ performance on writing prompts and plan instruction based on class-wide trends.

1.15 The principal, language arts coordinator, and literacy specialist will collect and analyze school-wide writing data to gather information on the strengths and weaknesses of the MES writing program in order to plan future professional development.

1.16 The principal, language arts coordinator, and literacy specialist will continue to expand the collection in the MES bookroom. Classroom libraries will also be enhanced with specific
attention to ensuring a broad selection of texts at all levels. A variety of nonfiction books aligned to our science and social studies curricula will also be available to students at all levels.

1.17 In September, the literacy specialist will distribute the Fountas & Pinnell Assessment Kits. She will review taking and interpreting running records with classroom teachers, who will complete running records for students as indicated by the assessment map developed by the Region 14 Literacy Team.

1.18 On November 3, 2009, teachers will participate in school-based professional development during which they will develop lessons to support Connecticut Mastery Test Reading Strand 3 (Making Reader/Text Connections) and Writing Strands 1 (Composing/Revising) and 2 (Editing) as well as pre- and post-tests to evaluate the effectiveness of these lessons over time.

1.19 During the month of January, teachers will meet individually with the literacy specialist to analyze running record information and to plan modifications in guided reading instruction for individual students as needed.

1.20 During school-based professional development on January 15, 2010, grade level teams will review the CMT intervention lessons’ post-test results and modify instruction where necessary for language arts lessons for the second half of the school year.

1.21 In January and May, the principal will meet with individual teachers to review student data and progress on professional growth goals.

1.22 By year end, teachers in all grades will complete final reading assessments, and report to the principal, language arts coordinator, and literacy specialist on the progress of all students toward meeting or exceeding district grade level standards.

1.23 The literacy specialist, language arts coordinator, and principal will summarize school data to be shared with both the MES faculty and the Superintendent of Schools. This performance data will be used to develop the Mitchell Elementary School 2010 – 2011 School Improvement Plan.

1.24 Through the Literacy in Action Instructional Practices Academy, the principal will work with the Administrative Council and Region 14 Coordinators to identify and expand upon effective teaching and learning behaviors in Region 14 schools, specifically studying their application within Mitchell Elementary School classrooms.
Goal 2 - Mathematics

All Students will increase their performance in Mathematics as measured by the Connecticut Mastery Test as well as Growing with Mathematics Topic Assessments and District Benchmark Assessments.

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<th>GOAL for 2010 CMT Percentage of Students at Goal in Mathematics</th>
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<tr>
<td>Grade 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Math</td>
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GOAL for 2009 – 2010 District Assessment

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Percentage of Students Achieving Benchmark at all Grade Levels</th>
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<tr>
<td>Region 14 Benchmark Assessment</td>
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Implementation and Monitoring Plan: The principal, mathematics coach, special education team leader, lead teacher, and classroom teachers will collect, organize, analyze, and report on mathematics assessment data. Performance measures will include the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT), mathematics topic assessments, and Region 14 benchmark mathematics assessments. Data collected will provide information to be used both in meeting students’ individual learning needs throughout the year and to highlight programmatic needs in the area of mathematics.

Action Steps

2.1 Classroom teachers will work closely with the mathematics coordinator and the mathematics specialist each week during grade level meetings to plan and implement mathematics instruction for all students.

2.2 Classroom teachers will work with the mathematics coordinator and the mathematics specialist to develop specific lessons in the areas of fractions, estimating, and measurement, including a “problem of the day” model across grade levels.

2.3 Classroom teachers will work with the mathematics coordinator and mathematics specialist to investigate the positive trajectory of student performance in mathematical applications and to replicate the instructional practices that drive this successful result.

2.4 Classroom teachers will work with the principal, mathematics coordinator, and mathematics specialist to analyze data from mathematics benchmark assessments to plan and implement differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all learners.

2.5 Classroom teachers will work with the mathematics coordinator and mathematics specialist to use mathematics benchmark data to drive instruction for individual students and groups of students, particularly between the January mid-year assessment and the March administration of the Connecticut Mastery Test.

2.6 Beginning in September 2009, classroom teachers will use Connecticut Mastery Test, Benchmark assessments, and Growing with Mathematics topic assessment data to provide differentiated instruction across the grade level via flexible grouping.

2.7 The principal, the mathematics coordinator, mathematics specialist, and classroom teachers will collect and analyze assessment data in order to determine individual and programmatic needs for MES students in the area of mathematics.
2.8 Through the Literacy in Action Instructional Practices Academy, the principal will work with the Administrative Council and Region 14 Coordinators to identify and expand upon effective teaching and learning behaviors in Region 14 schools, specifically studying their application within Mitchell Elementary School classrooms.
Goal 3- School Culture

Mitchell Elementary School will continue to develop a school culture reflective of our mission, values, and beliefs as measured by staff, student, and parent surveys as well as by rates of participation in school initiatives.

Implementation and Monitoring Plan: The Creating Community Committee will develop, administer, and analyze school climate surveys to be administered in fall 2009 and in spring 2010. Interventions for areas identified as needing improvement in the fall surveys will be developed and implemented prior to the spring surveys administration. The Creating Community Committee will also track students’ rate of participation in various school initiatives throughout the year.

Action Steps

3.1 Members of the Student Council will take an active role in planning and running monthly Community Meetings.

3.2 The peer mediation program will be further developed in accordance with the Region 14 model for conflict resolution with students playing an active role in both self-advocacy and peer leadership.

3.3 Climate surveys will be modified in several ways: a parent survey will be added, an online version of the surveys will be explored, and questions will be rephrased based on results of the 2008 – 2009 surveys.

3.4 The live the code campaign will be expanded to include the code marathon: reading, running, doing right to encourage students to maintain healthy minds and bodies while giving back to the communities of Woodbury and Bethlehem.