



# STAMFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## ALLIANCE GRANT APPLICATION

### YEAR 2



**Winifred Hamilton, Ph.D.**  
Superintendent of Schools  
June 28, 2013





## PART II: YEAR 2 ALLIANCE DISTRICT PLAN AMENDMENT

### 1. District Contact Information

**Instructions:** Using the space provided below, please identify a main point of contact for the year two Alliance District plan amendment and provide that individual's contact information.

Name of School District:	Stamford Public Schools		
Name of Grant Contact Person:	Dr. Judith Singer, Executive Director of Research and Accountability		
Phone # of Contact Person:	(203) 977-4320		
Email of Contact Person:	jsinger@ci.stamford.ct.us		
Address of Contact Person:	Street Address:	888 Washington Blvd.	
	City:	Stamford	Zip Code: 06901
Name of Superintendent:	Dr. Winifred Hamilton		
Signature of Superintendent:		Date:	06/28/13
Name of Board Chair:	Geoffrey Alswanger		
Signature of Board Chair:		Date:	06/28/13
Local Board Approval of Plan: <sup>1</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No    To be submitted to Board of Education on July 30		
Date of Plan Presentation to the Local Board:	To be submitted to Board of Education at its meeting on July 30.		
Priority School District?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		

<sup>1</sup> Due to the iterative process by which Alliance District plans will be submitted, reviewed, and re-submitted, seeking local board of education approval may be most appropriate toward the conclusion of the application process. Districts must obtain board approval, but should submit completed plans regardless of whether approval has been obtained.

## 2. District Vision, Mission & Values

**Instructions:** Please provide the district’s vision and mission statements below. Insert the district’s core values or guiding beliefs that are to be embodied by all staff, students, and members of the district community. This can come directly from your district strategic plan or district Improvement Plan.

What is the district’s **vision statement**?

The Stamford Public Schools (SPS) aspires to be a model of educational excellence as a mid-range urban/suburban district that includes a diverse student population with regard to race/ethnicity, language and socio-economic background. For SPS, “Excellence is the Point.”

What is the district’s **mission statement**?

The mission statement of the Stamford Schools is “to prepare each and every student for higher education and success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.”

What are the district’s core **beliefs or values**?

Core beliefs of the SPS include:

- All students can learn such that they are prepared for higher education and success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- All staff members are committed to preparing students for higher education and success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- All families and the larger Stamford community are partners in preparing students for higher education and success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- The SPS is a school district, not a district of schools. Therefore, consistency across schools is essential with regard to resources, curriculum, professional development, assessment and academic supports for students.
- Student diversity is strength of the school district.
- Achievement gaps among student groups can be addressed by equity of access by all students to a rigorous, high level educational program, instruction by highly competent teachers who use research based best practices, frequent formative assessments to guide instruction and a hierarchy of interventions.
- An expanded school day would provide opportunities for learning and enrichment to improve student achievement.
- Decisions should be rooted in data.

Describe the district's overarching strategy and/or **theory of change** to dramatically improve student achievement district-wide. The theory of change should describe a core set of inputs or strategies leading to several desired outcomes. What major changes or shifts will result in improved student outcomes district-wide?

If students have access to a rigorous curriculum; and highly competent teachers who are provided with ongoing, embedded professional development around research based best practices; and multiple assessments are used by teachers to guide instruction; and a hierarchy of instructional interventions is provided to struggling students; then all students will be academically successful.

SPS has established a coherent, high quality curriculum, K-12, in math, literacy (reading, writing, listening and speaking) and science. A great deal of professional development has been provided to teachers K-12 to implement the math, literacy and science curricula. Formative and summative assessments are administered and results are analyzed in Instructional Data Teams and School Data Teams, using the "Five Step Cycle of Continuous Improvement."

**At this time, major changes or shifts that will result in improved student achievement include the following:**

- High level understanding by teachers of the Common Core State Standards and how to implement curricula based on these standards
- High level capacity of teachers and administrators to analyze student data and write Student Learning Objectives as required by the new SPS educator evaluation process
- High level capacity of classroom teachers to assist ELL students to access core instruction
- Expanded school day for students to improve student achievement
- Execution of recommendations included in the High School Call to Action Committee report to "personalize" the high school experience for students in five areas: Policies, Processes and Operations; Leadership; Climate; Teaching; and Learning

### 3. District Data Profile

**Instructions:** Complete the district data profile below by providing student and staff information for the current school year (2012-13), and aggregate performance data from the past four school years (2009-10 to present).

<b>District Overview (2012-13):</b>					
Total Enrollment:		15,941	Per Pupil Allocation: <sup>2</sup>		\$16,834
Total # Schools:		20	Operating Budget:		\$245,846,959
# Review Schools: <sup>3</sup>		0	# Turnaround Schools:		0
<b>Student Demographics (2012-13):</b>					
% White:		35.0%	% F/R Lunch:		50.6%
% Black:		20.3%	% IEP:		10.1%
% Hispanic:		35.8%	% ELL:		12.7%
% Other:		8.9%	Attendance Rate:		9.5%
<b>District Personnel (2012-13):</b>					
# Certified School-Based Staff:		1425.9	Median Teacher Salary: <sup>4</sup>		\$80,677
Student/Teacher Ratio: <sup>5</sup>		11.4:1	# Central Office Administrators:		29
# School Administrators:		68	# Central Office Support Staff:		43
<b>Student Achievement:</b>		<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>	<b>2012-13</b>
District Performance Index:				CMT 74.1 CAPT 66.0	N/A
Math	Gr. 3 at/above Goal:	55.8%	59.3%	62.3%	N/A
	Gr. 5 at/above Goal:	72.1%	69.6%	69.7%	N/A
	Gr. 8 at/above Goal:	58.4%	55.2%	56.4%	N/A
	Gr. 10 at/above Goal:	34.5%	37.7%	38.3%	N/A
Reading	Gr. 3 at/above Goal:	50.2%	52.3%	55.6%	N/A
	Gr. 5 at/above Goal:	55.6%	48.7%	61.6%	N/A
	Gr. 8 at/above Goal:	66.9%	68.2%	68.7%	N/A
	Gr. 10 at/above Goal:	33.5%	34.0%	33.3%	N/A
Chronic Absenteeism Rate: <sup>6</sup>		9.5%	9.3%	9%	10.4%
Graduation Rate:		82.2%	85.3%	85.3%	N/A
% Pursuing Higher Education:		85.0%	85%	86.9%	N/A

<sup>2</sup> Per pupil allocation should include all sources of funds (including local operating, state, federal, and private funds).

<sup>3</sup> Review category includes "Review" and "Focus" schools.

<sup>4</sup> Median salary should reflect the median for all certified staff.

<sup>5</sup> Ratio should include all certified staff.

<sup>6</sup> Chronic absenteeism is defined as the percentage of students missing 10 percent or more of school days.

## 4. District Needs Analysis

**Instructions:** Using the spaces provided below, identify the district’s greatest strengths and areas of need using findings from the CSDE planning site visit and other relevant district information and data. Be sure to include a root cause analysis identifying the factors contributing to current performance levels. Although you are encouraged to consider strengths and growth areas across all four district domains, you may choose to prioritize and are not required to cite strengths and growth areas in each of the four areas.

For the following domains, identify the district’s greatest **strengths**.  
The strengths of SPS noted below come from the CSDE report.

Academics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Substantial progress in revising ELA and math curricula to ensure alignment with Common Core State Standards.</li> <li>• Strong alignment between district and school strategic goals.</li> <li>• Demonstration of continuous improvement in PLC and data-team practices .</li> <li>• Solid efforts to build a balanced assessment system at four levels (classroom, school, district, external) that is aligned with CCSS.</li> </ul>
Human Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong systems for recruitment and selection of highly qualified staff.</li> <li>• Diverse candidates are identified, in part, through the district’s participation in the Urban Fellows Program and through the in-house Administrators Academy initiative.</li> <li>• The district’s hiring system offers strong central office support by providing pools of qualified candidates and systematic hiring processes.</li> </ul>
Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The use of a wide range of integrated technology systems to maximize district effectiveness and efficiency.</li> <li>• A strong finance and budgeting process that is fully aligned with district strategies and goals.</li> <li>• Aggressive and successful pursuit of private funding and foundation support.</li> </ul>
Culture and Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A board of education that has been strongly supportive of the district’s reform efforts and has monitored progress of reform initiatives on a regular basis.</li> <li>• Emergent PBIS infrastructure in place throughout the district.</li> <li>• Implementation of strategies promoting family engagement.</li> </ul>

For the following domains, identify the district’s most significant **growth areas**.  
The growth areas noted below come from the CSDE report.

Academics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improvement in knowledge and use of instructional technology throughout the system. – A new Director of Technology will be hired to implement a job description that focuses on promoting the Technology Plan for SPS. The Chief Information Officer, responsible for technology in SPS resigned in July 2013, to be replaced by a Director of Technology. While the City IT Department supports hardware and infrastructure, the SPS Director of Technology will be responsible for integrating technology into the instructional programs in the schools.</li> <li>Consistent instructional support for English Language Learners and professional development for all district educators to enable ELL students to access the core curriculum – The SPS is presently working with the Department of Justice to strengthen the instructional program for ELL students. A three year plan which focuses on extending instructional time for ELL students, providing extending PD to all teachers to help ELL students’ access core curriculum, and supplementing instructional materials to enable ELL students to access the curriculum has been developed and is being negotiated with the Department of Justice. For the 2013-14 school year, additional staff has been hired to support ELL students.</li> <li>Development of an SRBI system of Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports in mathematics. – In 2013-14 a committee will be organized to study resources available for math remediation, grades K-12. Among materials to be reviewed, will be Fast Math, Fractionation and recommendations from the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.</li> </ul>
Human Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation of the new evaluation process for teachers and administrators will be the growth area addressed under Human Capital.</li> </ul>
Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A centralized registration system to improve efficiency, consistency, and quality control. – Will be expanded in 2013-14. At present, centralized registration is limited to selected days in spring and summer. Centralized registration is intended to provide more timely, efficient and consistent services for families. At present, registration procedures at 20 schools are not always consistent; nurses are not always available to review records; and language testing for the potential ELL students is limited.</li> </ul>

Culture and Climate

- Promotion of the Positive Behavior Support (PBS) program to “personalize” the school environment for students and teachers. – Will be supported by the addition of one staff psychologist who will lead the district PBS effort. This position is funded by the SPS Operating Budget.
- Reduction in the disproportionality of behavioral incidents among student subgroups.- The initiatives described in Priority #3 (Interventions) and Priority #5 (School Culture) should address the root causes of behavioral infractions.

## 5. District Strategy and Year 1 Reflection

**Instructions:** Summarize the district's overarching strategy and key initiatives from year one of the Alliance District program. Describe successes and progress made in year one. Provide specific data points to support the analysis.

Articulate the **district's key initiatives from year one** of the Alliance District program.

1. Interventions in the elementary grades were provided to students before and after the school day, rather than during the school day as in previous years.
2. Wrap Around services were provided to students in the Focus Schools (Davenport and Roxbury) by their teachers in afternoon centers close to student homes.
3. The number of Pre-k and kindergarten students attending Summer School 2012 was an increase from previous years.
4. Efficacy training was provided to teachers at the Focus Schools (Davenport and Roxbury). Efficacy principles emphasize a "growth mindset" whereby teachers expect students to get smart by working hard.
5. Project Opening Doors (POD) continued; Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID) continued.
6. The High School Call to Action Committee included 90 members. The committee met monthly between January and June, researched literature and attended conferences focused on high school reform and preparation of students for success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Briefly describe the district's year one Alliance District **accomplishments** citing specific data, where appropriate.

1. Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) scores (May 2013) for students in grades K, 1 and 2 show a reduction in the percent of students scoring in the remedial category and a concomitant increase in the percent of students scoring at/above proficient.
2. DRA analysis (May 2013) for Focus Schools is in process.
3. DRA analysis (May 2013) by intervention is in process to include:
  - Leveled Literacy Intervention
  - Orton Gillingham
4. DRA analysis (May 2013) for students in Summer School 2012, currently in grades K and 1 is in process.
5. Read 180 results, (grades 3-8) for 2012-13 will be examined using read 180 lexile data and Spring 2013 CMT results when these become available in Summer 2013.
6. Participation in Advanced Placement (AP) courses and AP results for 2012-13 will be analyzed when these become available in July 2013.
7. An evaluation of the AVID (Advancement Via individual Determination) Program is in process.
8. CMT/CAPT results, Spring 2013, will be analyzed when these become available in Summer 2013.

9. In 2013-14, following a study of research based enrichment models; Stamford's Focus Schools will implement the School Wide Enrichment Model (Drs. Joseph Renzulli and Sally Reiss, UConn). Selected teachers will be attending the UConn Confrutite Conference in July 2013.
10. A 90 member High School Call to Action Committee met monthly between January and June 2013 to study reform initiatives. The Committee reviewed SPS achievement results, teacher and student survey data, student Focus Group comments and literature on high school reform and 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. A comprehensive report , issued in June 2013, included 29 specific recommendations In 2013-14 a Task Force, to include multiple subcommittees, will continue the work by prioritizing recommendations to be implemented over the next one to three years. Action Plans to include timelines and criteria by which to evaluate effectiveness will be developed.
11. SPS has begun the STRIVE initiative (Collective Impact) in conjunction with more than 25 Stamford agencies to study the possibility of joining the national STRIVE program.

Explain any key initiatives that the district will **stop or discontinue** and why. Note that districts must consider discontinuing less effective strategies before adding new initiatives.

The elementary, middle and high schools have submitted summaries describing the intervention programs they implemented in 2012-13 along with anecdotal comments relating successes and limitations. These reports will be used by building leaders along with quantitative data to refine intervention programs for 2013-14.

Two math intervention programs, Fast Math and Fractionalization, have been used in SPS but not with consistency. In 2013-14, the implementation of these programs will be monitored and evaluated. Additionally, we will be exploring other on-line math intervention programs, including Dream Box.

## 6. Year 2 Priorities

**Instructions:** District improvement requires a targeted investment aligned to the district’s most pressing needs. Please reflect upon district data, the CSDE planning site visit, year one progress, and the needs analysis to identify three to four priority areas for the year two Alliance District plan.

The CSDE has identified three focus areas the second year of the Alliance District program: (1) the transition to Common Core State Standards and new assessments, (2) educator evaluation and support (for both teachers and administrators), and (3) interventions in low-performing schools. Your application must explain how these three areas will be addressed, either through the Alliance District spending plan or via separate district initiatives. Below, identify three to four district-specific priority areas for year two and indicate whether they are new or continued initiatives from year one. Then, explain how these priorities align to and reinforce the district’s broader strategic plan and/or vision.

Priority #1	Promote the implementation of Common Core State Standards by: aligning curriculum; changing pedagogy; and developing formative and summative assessments aligned to the CCSS.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continued from Year 1 <input type="checkbox"/> New priority
Priority #2	Implement new educator evaluations for teachers and administrators.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continued from Year 1 <input type="checkbox"/> New priority
Priority #3	Provide intervention for struggling students in literacy to raise student achievement and reduce achievement gaps among student groups.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continued from Year 1 <input type="checkbox"/> New priority
Priority #4 (optional)	Promote college readiness for high school students and reduce achievement gaps around course taking patterns, graduation rates and post-secondary plans.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continued from Year 1 <input type="checkbox"/> New priority
Priority #5 (optional)	Ensure a safe, orderly and positive social and emotional environment at all schools to enable all students to achieve at high levels.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continued from Year 1 <input type="checkbox"/> New priority



Briefly describe how the priorities listed above **support the district's theory of change** and strategic direction.

The theory of action for SPS assumes the following inputs to ensure academic success for students.

- High quality curriculum with embedded professional development around research based practices
- Ongoing assessments and
- Hierarchy of instructional interventions

Priority #1 addresses the high quality curriculum, embedded professional development and ongoing assessments.

Priority #2 addresses the need for highly competent staff.

Priority #3 addresses the hierarchy of interventions.

Priority #4 targets high school programming and implicitly addresses curriculum and instruction (Priority #1) and intervention (Priority #3).

Priority #5 addresses school culture. School culture provides the social/emotional context, necessary for student achievement.

If not explicitly identified as priority areas, explain how the district will address the CSDE's three focus areas for year two of the Alliance District program. Briefly describe the district's strategy and level of preparedness to (1) transition to **Common Core State Standards** and new assessments, and (2) fully implement **educator evaluation and support** systems. You will be asked to describe your district's strategy to intervene in its lowest-performing schools in Section #7.

*Does not apply*



<b>Priority #1:</b> Insert the year two priority below.						
Promote the implementation of Common Core State Standards by: aligning curriculum; changing pedagogy; and developing formative and summative assessments aligned to the CCSS.						
<b>Summary:</b> Briefly describe the district's comprehensive approach to implement this priority.						
To implement Priority #1, SPS will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue work of curriculum committees led by the Office of Curriculum and Instruction to implement Year 2 of Stamford's Three Year CCSS Plan to align curriculum, instruction and assessment to the CCSS.</li> <li>Provide PD to teachers in pedagogical strategies to implement CCSS.</li> </ul>						
<b>Outcome Metric:</b> What is the desired result of the implementation of Priority #1?						
It is expected that curricula, K-12, in ELA and math will be aligned to CCSS; assessments in K-12 ELA and math will be aligned to CCSS; teachers will indicate satisfaction with PD around CCSS pedagogy. As a result of these strategies, student achievement in math and ELA will improve as measured by the DRA, District Benchmark Assessments and End of Year Common Assessments.						
<b>Aligned Strategies:</b> Identify a core set of strategies to implement this district priority.	<b>Progress Metrics:</b> Identify a progress indicator for each strategy.	<b>Timeline:</b>				
		Su `13	F `13	W `14	Sp `14	Su `14
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PD by consultants to assist teachers on curricular committees write instructional units aligned to CCSS in ELA K-12 and to write summative and formative assessments aligned to CCSS K-12 in both ELA and math</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of sessions; attendance; teacher survey assessments of PD.</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Classroom embedded PD by consultants for K-12 teachers on implementing math content and mathematical practices aligned to CCSS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of sessions; attendance; teacher survey assessments of PD</li> </ul>		X	X	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Classroom embedded PD by consultants for K-12 teachers on implementing reading strategies aligned to CCSS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of sessions; attendance; teacher survey assessments of PD.</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training of selected teachers in the School wide Enrichment Model (Drs. Joseph Renzulli and Sally Reiss, UConn) at the Confratute Institute, Summer 2013; one staff support position to implement the School Wide Enrichment Model (SEM) in Stamford's two Focus Schools, Davenport and Roxbury</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher, student, administrator and parent survey assessments of SEM.</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X	X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Purchase nonfiction instructional materials to provide students with rich nonfiction content and current news stories; provide PD for teachers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher survey assessments of PD</li> </ul>	X	X			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher on Special Assignment to prepare students district wide for Common Core assessments using technology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of sessions; teacher survey assessment of training sessions</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training for teachers and administrators on practices to strengthen School Data Teams and Instructional Data Teams</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of sessions; staff survey</li> </ul>		X	X	X	

<b>Priority #2:</b> Insert the year two priority below.						
Implement new educator evaluations for teachers and administrators.						
<b>Summary:</b> Briefly describe the district’s comprehensive approach to implement this priority.						
<p>To implement Priority #2, SPS will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to provide training on new evaluation processes to principals and assistant principals.</li> <li>• Provide orientation and support for all teachers.</li> <li>• Provide tablets or laptops for principals and assistant principals to record observations.</li> <li>• Provide a data system to organize, plan and track the evaluation process for teachers and administrators.</li> <li>• Provide a data system to ensure professional development that is responsive to the needs identified through the teacher evaluation system</li> <li>• Provide resources to implement monitor and ensure compliance with the district Evaluation plans.</li> <li>• Expand the teacher/administrator Steering Committee to regularly assess progress and assist with plan implementation and training.</li> </ul>						
<b>Outcome Metric:</b> What is the desired result of the implementation of Priority #2?						
Teachers and administrators will indicate satisfaction with the implementation of the new educator evaluation processes and procedures.						
<b>Aligned Strategies:</b> Identify a core set of strategies to implement this district priority.	<b>Progress Metrics:</b> Identify a progress indicator for each strategy.	<b>Timeline:</b>				
		Su `13	F `13	W `14	Sp `14	Su `14
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PD for principals and assistant principals on evaluation of teacher performance, details of the Stamford Evaluation process and the data system.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All district principals and assistant principals trained on teacher performance evaluation; number of sessions; attendance; survey assessments of PD by principals and assistant principals</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tablets or laptops for administrators to record observations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Penetration of use; survey assessments by administrators.</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultant position to support implementation of educator evaluation process. A retired, experienced school administrator will work as a .5 Chief Compliance Officer to support implementation and ensure compliance with Stamford’s Administrative and teacher Evaluation plans.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation Plan will be implemented according to state guidelines.</li> <li>• End of year survey assessments by teachers and administrators of Year 1 implementation of educator evaluation system.</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a data system to organize, plan and track the evaluation of certified staff..</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>System selected implementation completed, training sessions for all users, attendance, user survey of satisfaction</li> </ul>		X	X	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a data system to identify, plan and register certified staff for professional development opportunities tailored to their needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>System selected, implementation completed, training sessions for all users, attendance, user survey of satisfaction.</li> </ul>		X	X	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand Steering Committee to monitor and support implementation of Evaluation Plans.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Members selected, number of sessions, minutes of meetings, attendance, training session plans and materials.</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X	X

<b>Priority #3:</b> Insert the year two priority below.								
Provide intervention for struggling students in literacy to raise student achievement and reduce achievement gaps among student groups.								
<b>Summary:</b> Briefly describe the district’s comprehensive approach to implement this priority.								
The educational research is clear that student learning is promoted by time on task and the quality of instruction. Therefore, Priority #3 highlights extended learning time (before and after school interventions and expanded Summer School opportunities) as well as enhanced instruction (PD for all teachers on strategies for ELL students, Efficacy training, and wrap around services at Community Centers by SPS teachers) To implement Priority #3, SPS will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand before and after school interventions to the middle and high schools.</li> <li>• Continue expanded Summer School opportunities for incoming kindergartners and first graders.</li> <li>• Provide extensive PD to classroom teachers, K-12 in strategies to assist ELL students access instruction.</li> <li>• At Stamford’s two Focus Schools, Davenport and Roxbury, continue wraparound services at community centers and continue Efficacy training for teachers, K-5.</li> </ul>								
<b>Outcome Metric:</b> What is the desired result of the implementation of Priority #3?								
It is expected that student achievement will improve as measured by the Developmental reading Assessment (DRA) and CMTs.								
<b>Aligned Strategies:</b> Identify a core set of strategies to implement this district priority.		<b>Progress Metrics:</b> Identify a progress indicator for each strategy.		<b>Timeline:</b>				
				Su `13	F `13	W `14	Sp `14	Su `14
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fund teachers and provide transportation for before and after school intervention programs.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of students; attendance; student achievement measures.</li> </ul>			X	X	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement PD for classroom teachers, K-12 to learn how to enable ELL students to access core instruction.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey assessments by teachers; student achievement measures for ELLs.</li> </ul>			X	X	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue Efficacy training to include: teachers at Focus Schools, Davenport and Roxbury, middle school teachers new to SPS and interested high school teachers</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of teachers participating; student attendance; achievement measures.</li> </ul>			X	X	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add two Instructional Support Teachers (ISTs) at Focus Schools, Davenport and Roxbury, to support math/literacy instruction</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student achievement measures</li> </ul>			X	X	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue Family Outreach Coordinator position at Focus Schools, Davenport and Roxbury, to work with parents and students at the schools during the school day and at the community centers associated with these schools in the afternoons</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of participating students and parents</li> </ul>			X	X	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide supplies and translation services for Family nights at the Focus Schools, Davenport and Roxbury</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of participating students and parents</li> </ul>			X	X	X	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue expanded Summer School for incoming kindergartners and first graders.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student achievement measures.</li> </ul>						X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold Read Aloud workshops with parents and children entering kindergarten and grade 1 at community centers, beginning in August 2013 and extending through the school year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of participating students and parent</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor and evaluate implementation of Fast Math and Fractionation; study possibilities for alternative math interventions by searching the literature, contacting math “experts” and visiting schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survey assessments by teachers and students; student achievement measures.</li> </ul>		X	X	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hire an Early Childhood Positive Behavior Support consultant to assist staff address students with serious behavioral issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of suspensions and expulsions</li> </ul>		X	X	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review SPS Technology Plan; revise with action plans and timelines; disseminate to all staff.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revised Technology Plan completed and disseminated.</li> </ul>		X	X	X		

<b>Priority #4 (optional):</b> Insert the year two priority below.					
Promote college readiness for high school students and reduce achievement gaps around course taking patterns, graduation rates and post-secondary plans.					
<b>Summary:</b> Briefly describe the district’s comprehensive approach to implement this priority.					
<p>To implement Priority #4, SPS will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support programs that promote rigor and personalize the high school experience for students.</li> <li>• Support the recommendations of the High School Call to Action Committee</li> </ul>					
<b>Outcome Metric:</b> What is the desired result of the implementation of Priority #4?					
Improved student achievement on CAPT; reduction in the achievement gaps in course taking patterns, AP participation, SAT performance and graduation rates.					
<b>Aligned Strategies:</b> Identify a core set of strategies to implement this district priority.	<b>Progress Metrics:</b> Identify a progress indicator for each strategy.	<b>Timeline:</b>			
		Su `13	F `13	W `14	Sp `14
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support Project Opening Doors (POD) at Westhill High School.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of students taking AP courses and AP exams; results of AP exams disaggregated by race/ethnicity.</li> </ul>		X	X	X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID) in the middle and high schools.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of students; course taking patterns; grades; attendance.</li> </ul>		X	X	X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan for new CSDE high school graduation requirements; incorporate expectations by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASCC) for an Advisory period; and address recommendations of the High School Call to Action Committee to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development of an Advisory Program</li> <li>- Development of a HS Transition Program</li> <li>- Infusion of technology</li> <li>- Capstone Project</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advisory Program developed for the 2014-15 school year</li> <li>• HS Transition Program developed for the 2014-15school year</li> <li>• Technology Plan reviewed, revised and disseminated.</li> <li>• Requirements for a Capstone Project developed for seniors, with building blocks defined for 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> graders</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X

**Priority #5: (Optional)**

SPS will ensure a safe, orderly and positive social and emotional environment to enable all students to achieve at high levels.

**Summary:** Briefly describe the district’s comprehensive approach to implement this priority.

To implement Priority #5, SPS will:

- Implement an online Behavior Incident Form to track disciplinary incidents.
- Implement SET Action Plans at schools.
- Implement recommendations of Transition Committee, 2012-13.
- Continue implementation of Student Success Plans, grades K-12.
- Initiate Parent Portal as part of Power School.
- Continue participation of SPS in STRIVE community collaboration initiative.
- Expand School governance.

**Outcome Metric:** What is the desired result of the implementation of Priority #2?

Behavioral incidents will decline; disproportionality of behavioral incidents will decrease; student attendance will improve across all student groups.

Aligned Strategies: Identify a core set of strategies to implement this district priority.	Progress Metrics: Identify a progress indicator for each strategy.	Timeline:				
		Su `13	F `13	W `14	Sp `14	Su `14
• Complete online Behavior Incident Form on Power School, new SIS for SPS; train users.	• Form completed; users trained; magnitude of forms completed online			X	X	
• Support schools in implementing SET Action Plans.	• SET Action Plan reports.	X	X	X	X	
• Provide PD for school principals and office staff in management of student cumulative folders.	• PD sessions held.		X	X		
• Generate reports from Naviance to support Student Success Plans; monitor use of reports.	• Naviance reports developed; number of students/teachers entering data on Student Success measures tracked,			X	X	X
• Provide parents access to Parent Portal	• Parents given access to portal; parent use monitored by schools.			X	X	X
• Provide PD to schools initiating School Governance	• School Governance committees selected at new schools; norms established.		X	X	X	

## 7. School Turnaround Strategy

**Instructions:** Describe the district’s strategy or approach to school improvement. Using the spaces provided below, explain how the district will support and enable dramatic school improvement, focusing resources and attention on the district’s chronically underperforming schools. In Appendix B, districts with Review and Turnaround schools will be asked to identify a strategy to develop school-specific plans for identified school.

Explain the **district’s capacity** to support school turnaround. Specifically, how is the central office structured to drive significant gains in the district’s lowest-performing schools?

SPS has a coherent approach to school improvement. Components include the following:

- A three tiered accountability model is in place. It includes at the district level the District Data Team, at the school level, the School Data Teams and at the classroom level, Instructional Data Teams to implement and monitor initiatives. At all three levels, the Five Step Cycle Continuous Improvement model is used to drive the implementation of initiatives..
- For the 2013-14 school year, the Superintendent has initiated efforts to “transform” Central Office for district wide teaching and learning improvement. The heart of the transformation effort involves creating direct personal relationships between individual central office administrators and school principals focused on helping every school principal become a stronger instructional leader. Central Office staff will be visible, active participants in the lives of schools.
- To strengthen central office staff in the support of building leaders, an Associate Superintendent and two Assistant Superintendents have been hired for 2013-14 to promote school improvement at the elementary and secondary schools. The new staff additions to central office have had many years of experience as building principals
- A second Director of School Improvement has been hired for 2013-14; one Director will be assigned to the elementary schools and one Director will be assigned to the secondary schools. Again, the role of the Directors of School Improvement is to support the schools. More specifically, they are charged with the responsibility of assisting schools in the development of School Improvement Plans, linked to the Alliance District Improvement Plan, and monitoring the implementation of the School Improvement Plans.

Describe the **district's school turnaround strategy**. How will the district differentiate support and accountability for its schools? How does this relate the district's overall theory of change? What new flexibility and resources will low-performing schools receive?

for its schools? How does this relate the district's overall theory of change? What new flexibility and resources will low-performing schools receive?

Although not explicitly stated in the SPS theory of change, the district differentiates support and accountability for its schools as follows:

- The majority of the Alliance funds are dedicated to Stamford's two Focus Schools, Davenport and Roxbury.
- Alliance funds allocated to the remaining 18 schools in the district are proportioned according to need as determined by performance on the CMTs and CAPT.
- The Associate Superintendent, the two Assistant Superintendents and the two Directors of School Improvement will adjust the support they provide to schools, based on need, as measured by academic and school climate metrics. The two Directors of School Improvement may spend up to two days each week in the neediest schools; they may spend one day a week in schools of moderate need; and one to two days a month in the least needy schools,

## 8. Accountability and Support

**Instructions:** Explain how the district will promote accountability and ongoing progress monitoring to ensure the successful implementation of the Alliance District plan and school-specific improvement plans. What systems and processes are in place or will be developed to promote optimal accountability? At the district level, who will be responsible for ensuring that these systems and processes are executed throughout the year?

Explain the **district-level** monitoring strategy.

As noted above, Stamford Public Schools relies on a three tiered accountability model that incorporates standards at the district, school and classroom level. At the district level, the District Data Team (DDT) monitors the implementation of Stamford's District Improvement Plan (SDIP). Stamford's initial three year SDIP was written in Fall 2009 and approved by the CSDE and Stamford's Board of Education at that time. It has been the task of Stamford's 40 member District Data Team, representative of all 20 schools in the district, to monitor the SDIP. The SDIP was revised in Summer 2012 to reflect Alliance priorities.

As soon as the Year 2 Alliance District Plan is approved by the CSDE, the Stamford Strategic Improvement Plan will be updated to reflect the Alliance Plan. Please note that the SDIP incorporates Alliance initiatives, but is broader than the Alliance Plan. Initiatives in the SDIP are supported by Alliance funds as well as by monies from the Priority School District Grant, Title I, and operating budget dollars.

The Executive Director for Research and Accountability leads the District Data Team and reports to the district's School Superintendent. In monthly meetings, four subcommittees of the DDT report on "fidelity of implementation" in the following areas: Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment; Equity of Access to Instruction; Climate; and Instructional Data Teams/School Data Teams. In addition to fidelity of implementation, the DDT reviews multiple metrics on student achievement including formative and summative assessment data. Stamford's School Superintendent attends all District Data Team meetings. In the 2013-14 school year, the newly appointed Associate Superintendent and Assistant Superintendents for the Elementary and Secondary Schools will also attend the monthly DDT meetings.

The new additions to the central office reflect the intent to transform the central office to promote teaching and learning improvement. A research study by the Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy, "Central Office Transformations for District Wide Teaching and Learning Improvement," University of Washington, April 2010, concluded that districts do not see systemic improvement in teaching and learning without substantial engagement by their central offices.

Describe the district's strategy for **monitoring schools**.

At the school level, accountability rests with the School Data Teams which are responsible for monitoring School Improvement Plans (SIPs). To promote coherence, SIPs reflect Stamford's District Improvement Plan. The district has developed an extensive manual with processes and procedures for monitoring SIPs. In the 2013-14 school year, two Directors of School Improvement will assist with this work – one Director working with the newly appointed Assistant Superintendent for the Elementary Schools and one Director working with the newly appointed Assistant Superintendent for the secondary schools.

Directors for School Improvement will assist schools develop and monitor their School Improvement Plans. Finally, Focus Walk, initiated in 2011-12 will continue with the participation of Directors for School Improvement.

How can the **CSDE support the implementation** of the Alliance District plan and school-specific turnaround plans? Specifically, what trainings and technical assistance would you suggest the CSDE provide to school- and/or district-level staff?

As SPS moves forward, training and technical assistance from the CSDE would be helpful to promote the work of School Data Teams and Instructional Data Teams. While all schools have initiated norms, set schedules, appointed members and established rapport, many schools are not yet proficient in using the Five Step Cycle for Continuous Improvement. Training in data analysis and "what do you do next" would be most beneficial to staff.

Schedule meetings for representatives from Alliance Districts to share practices and successes.

## 9. Budget

**See attached Excel Worksheet**

## 10. Stakeholder Engagement

**Instructions:** Please describe stakeholder engagement throughout the planning process. Provide evidence that collective bargaining units, school and district personnel, School Governance Councils, Parent Advisory Councils, parents, students, and community members were engaged in the planning process and/or are aware the contents of this plan.

In planning for Year II of the Alliance Grant, the following stakeholders were included:

- Central office administrators including the Superintendent, Associate Superintendent, Assistant Superintendents, School Improvement Directors, and Executive Director for Student Support Programs and Parent/Community Engagement participated in planning for the Year II Alliance Grant.
- The District Data Team (DDT) which includes 40 members (teachers and administrators) representing all Stamford schools and central office reviewed the Year I Alliance Grant outcomes and proposed revisions for Year II.  
Note: Of the 40 DDT members, one third are selected by the Stamford Education Association, the bargaining unit for SPS teachers.
- Representatives of the District Data Team reviewed a preliminary version of the Year II Alliance Grant; recommendations from the District Data Team members are included in the final Year II Alliance Grant.
- Principals of Stamford's two Focus Schools, Davenport and Roxbury were included in all Year II Alliance Grant planning meetings.
- The Year II Alliance Grant was reviewed with the incoming President of the Stamford Education Association (SEA).
- Recommendations of the High School Call to Action are informed by a 90 member committee including teachers, parents, administrators, students and community representatives. Recommendations of this committee are incorporated in the Year II Alliance Grant.
- The approved Year II Alliance Grant will be shared with the Stamford Board of Education in July 2013.
- In September 2013, the Year II Alliance Grant will be shared with all principals along with an updated Strategic District Improvement Plan. At the buildings, these documents will be used by staff and School Governance Councils to draft School Improvement Plans for 2013-14.



### PART III: APPENDIX SECTION

#### A. Statement of Assurances

**CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
STANDARD STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES | GRANT PROGRAMS

**PROJECT TITLE:** Alliance District Grant

**THE APPLICANT:** Stamford Public Schools HEREBY ASSURES THAT:  
Stamford Public Schools  
(insert Agency/School/CBO Name)

- A. The applicant has the necessary legal authority to apply for and receive the proposed grant;
- B. The filing of this application has been authorized by the applicant's governing body, and the undersigned official has been duly authorized to file this application for and on behalf of said applicant, and otherwise to act as the authorized representative of the applicant in connection with this application;
- C. The activities and services for which assistance is sought under this grant will be administered by or under the supervision and control of the applicant;
- D. The project will be operated in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and in compliance with regulations and other policies and administrative directives of the State Board of Education and the Connecticut State Department of Education;
- E. Grant funds shall not be used to supplant funds normally budgeted by the agency;
- F. Fiscal control and accounting procedures will be used to ensure proper disbursement of all funds awarded;
- G. The applicant will submit a final project report (within 60 days of the project completion) and such other reports, as specified, to the Connecticut State Department of Education, including information relating to the project records and access thereto as the Connecticut State Department of Education may find necessary;
- H. The Connecticut State Department of Education reserves the exclusive right to use and grant the right to use and/or publish any part or parts of any summary, abstract, reports, publications, records and materials resulting from this project and this grant;
- I. If the project achieves the specified objectives, every reasonable effort will be made to continue the project and/or implement the results after the termination of state/federal funding;
- J. The applicant will protect and save harmless the State Board of Education from financial loss and expense, including legal fees and costs, if any, arising out of any breach of the duties, in whole or part, described in the application for the grant;

K. At the conclusion of each grant period, the applicant will provide for an independent audit report acceptable to the grantor in accordance with Sections 7-394a and 7-396a of the Connecticut General Statutes, and the applicant shall return to the Connecticut State Department of Education any moneys not expended in accordance with the approved program/operation budget as determined by the audit;

L. REQUIRED LANGUAGE (NON-DISCRIMINATION)

1) References in this section to “contract” shall mean this grant agreement and references to “contractor” shall mean the Grantee.

For the purposes of this section, “Commission” means the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities.

For the purposes of this section “minority business enterprise” means any small contractor or supplier of materials fifty-one percent or more of the capital stock, if any, or assets of which is owned by a person or persons: (1) Who are active in the daily affairs of the enterprise, (2) who have the power to direct the management and policies of the enterprise and (3) who are members of a minority, as such term is defined in subsection (a) of section 32-9n; and "good faith" means that degree of diligence which a reasonable person would exercise in the performance of legal duties and obligations. “Good faith efforts” shall include, but not be limited to, those reasonable initial efforts necessary to comply with statutory or regulatory requirements and additional or substituted efforts when it is determined that such initial efforts will not be sufficient to comply with such requirements.

2) (a) The contractor agrees and warrants that in the performance of the contract such contractor will not discriminate or permit discrimination against any person or group of persons on the grounds of race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, mental retardation or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness, unless it is shown by such contractor that such disability prevents performance of the work involved, in any manner prohibited by the laws of the United States or of the state of Connecticut. The contractor further agrees to take affirmative action to insure that applicants with job-related qualifications are employed and that employees are treated when employed without regard to their race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, mental retardation, or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness, unless it is shown by such contractor that such disability prevents performance of the work involved; (b) the contractor agrees, in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the contractor, to state that it is an "affirmative action-equal opportunity employer" in accordance with regulations adopted by the Commission; (c) the contractor agrees to provide each labor union or representative of workers with which such contractor has a collective bargaining agreement or other contract or understanding and each vendor with which such contractor has a contract or understanding, a notice to be provided by the Commission advising the labor union or workers' representative of the contractor's commitments under this section, and to post copies of the notice in conspicuous places available to employees and applicants for employment; (d) the contractor agrees to comply with each provision of this section and sections 46a-68e and 46a-68f and with each regulation or relevant order issued by said Commission pursuant to sections 46a-56, 46a-68e and 46a-68f; (e) the contractor agrees to provide the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities with such information requested by the Commission, and permit access to pertinent books, records and accounts, concerning the employment practices and procedures of the contractor as relate to the provisions of this section and section 46a-56.

3) Determination of the contractor’s good faith efforts shall include but shall not be limited to the following factors: the contractor’s employment and subcontracting policies, patterns and practices; affirmative advertising, recruitment and training; technical assistance activities and such other reasonable activities or



efforts as the Commission may prescribe that are designed to ensure the participation of minority business enterprises in public works projects.

4) The contractor shall develop and maintain adequate documentation, in a manner prescribed by the Commission, of its good faith efforts.

5) The contractor shall include the provisions of section (2) above in every subcontract or purchase order entered into in order to fulfill any obligation of a contract with the state and such provisions shall be binding on a subcontractor, vendor or manufacturer unless exempted by regulations or orders of the Commission. The contractor shall take such action with respect to any such subcontract or purchase order as the Commission may direct as a means of enforcing such provisions including sanctions for noncompliance in accordance with section 46a-56; provided, if such contractor becomes involved in, or is threatened with, litigation with a subcontractor or vendor as a result of such direction by the Commission, the contractor may request the state of Connecticut to enter into any such litigation or negotiation prior thereto to protect the interests of the state and the state may so enter.

6) The contractor agrees to comply with the regulations referred to in this section as the term of this contract and any amendments thereto as they exist on the date of the contract and as they may be adopted or amended from time to time during the term of this contract and any amendments thereto.

7) (a) The contractor agrees and warrants that in the performance of the contract such contractor will not discriminate or permit discrimination against any person or group of persons on the grounds of sexual orientation, in any manner prohibited by the laws of the United States or of the state of Connecticut, and that employees are treated when employed without regard to their sexual orientation; (b) the contractor agrees to provide each labor union or representative of workers with which such contractor has a collective bargaining agreement or other contract or understanding and each vendor with which such contractor has a contract or understanding, a notice to be provided by the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities advising the labor union or workers' representative of the contractor's commitments under this section, and to post copies of the notice in conspicuous places available to employees and applicants for employment; (c) the contractor agrees to comply with each provision of this section and with each regulation or relevant order issued by said Commission pursuant to section 46a-56; (d) the contractor agrees to provide the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities with such information requested by the Commission, and permit access to pertinent books, records and accounts, concerning the employment practices and procedures of the contractor which relate to the provisions of this section and section 46a-56.

8) The contractor shall include the provisions of section (7) above in every subcontract or purchase order entered into in order to fulfill any obligation of a contract with the state and such provisions shall be binding on a subcontractor, vendor or manufacturer unless exempted by regulations or orders of the Commission. The contractor shall take such action with respect to any such subcontract or purchase order as the Commission may direct as a means of enforcing such provisions including sanctions for noncompliance in accordance with section 46a-56; provided, if such contractor becomes involved in, or is threatened with, litigation with a subcontractor or vendor as a result of such direction by the Commission, the contractor may request the state of Connecticut to enter into any such litigation or negotiation prior thereto to protect the interests of the state and the state may so enter.

**M.** The grant award is subject to approval of the Connecticut State Department of Education and availability of state or federal funds.



**N.** The applicant agrees and warrants that Sections 4-190 to 4-197, inclusive, of the Connecticut General Statutes concerning the Personal Data Act and Sections 10-4-8 to 10-4-10, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies promulgated there under are hereby incorporated by reference.

I, the undersigned authorized official; hereby certify that these assurances shall be fully implemented.

Superintendent Signature:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Winifred Hamilton, Ph.D.

Name: *(typed)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Superintendent of Schools

Title: *(typed)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
June 26, 2013

Date:

\_\_\_\_\_