



Integrated VOICES

Sheff Movement
Quality Integrated Education
for All Children



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CREC Magnet Schools Under Sheff Settlement Outperforming State Averages and Reducing the Achievement Gap



CREC school students

Recent results of the 2012 Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) and Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) for Capitol Region Education Council (CREC) Magnet Schools confirm that the state's efforts to reduce the nation's largest Achievement Gap, in Connecticut, are working through magnet school education.

"CREC Magnet Schools have demonstrated that racially and economically integrated schools can guarantee equitable and high achievement for all students. CREC students outperformed the state in virtually all areas and for all subgroups on the CMT and CAPT," according to recent report issued by CREC.

The report also noted that "in keeping with previous years' trends, CREC Magnet Schools in 2012 showed dramatic results for the state's most disenfranchised populations." In addition, CREC Magnet Schools, serving 30% white students, 33% black students, 28% Hispanic students and 47% students eligible for free and reduced priced lunch, "are more racially and economically diverse than" the state's school populations.

Since 2007, in order to assist the state in meeting participation benchmarks under the Sheff Settlement Agreement, CREC increased enrollment in CREC Magnet Schools, and the percentage of eligible students taking the CAPT increased by more than 7 times since then. (See details on testing in 2012 since 2007 in full report).

Despite this enormous growth, CREC has sustained exceptional achievement results with these schools consistently and significantly reducing or eliminating Connecticut's Achievement Gaps. For example, in CREC Magnet Schools, there is no Achievement Gap between White and Hispanic students in either math or reading in the 5th grade. (To see full press release, visit <http://www.crec.org/news/articles/2012/72012.php>)

Roughly half of the magnet schools in the Hartford region are CREC magnets; the remainders are run by the Hartford Public Schools. We are looking forward to reporting the Hartford magnet results in a future issue, as soon as Hartford reports scores separately for Hartford vs. suburban students (the scores are

MAGNET SCHOOL SPOTLIGHT

Annie Fisher STEM

(Science, Technology, Engineering & Math)
Magnet School (K- Grade 8), Hartford

The Annie Fisher STEM Magnet School in Hartford offers an advanced academic program focused on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Students receive a rigorous, hands-on, inquiry-based learning experience driven by their interests. The curriculum uses a three-step process in all content areas – observation, investigation and communication of findings through authentic presentations of what students have learned. Upon completion of the STEM at Annie Fisher curriculum, students are offered a preference into the University High School of Science and Engineering. Based on the 2011-2012 enrollment data, the school meets the state integration standard.

PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE

Q: Annie Fisher STEM Magnet School has students from 34 different suburban towns. What is the benefit for students and staff being a diverse magnet school educational environment?

A: "As a principal, I've been in Hartford Public Schools now for going on 11 years and having always been in a magnet school; I've seen the beauty of what multicultural education can do for children. I think it's brought a different lens from everybody that attends the school... it's brought a very clear understanding of how people operate. There are a lot of misconceptions that people had about other people and [it] sheds light on the fact that we're all from the same place."

Melony Brady, Principal,
Annie Fisher STEM Magnet School, Hartford

Annie Fisher STEM Magnet School (K-8) is located at 280 Plainfield Street, Hartford, CT. 860.695.3503. For more information about the school, visit <http://www.magneteducation.org/science-technology-engineering-and-math-stem-magnet-school-annie-fisher3>.

Hartford Area Parents Attend National Conference on School Diversity

WASHINGTON, DC (MAY, 2012) - About a dozen Hartford and suburban parents, Sheff Movement staff and CREC (Capitol Region Education Council) attended this year's National Conference on School Diversity in Washington, DC. Parent attendees were: Rosaline Mitchell, Bloomfield; Anita Jackson, Wethersfield; Mara Whitman, West Hartford; Mallory Edrich, West Hartford; Brightet Alvarez, New Britain; Paula Williams, Windsor; Denise Patterson, Hartford; Linda Martin, Hartford; Lorrain Hawthorn, Hartford; Emanuel Blake, Hartford; Felicia Brown, Hartford; and Talitha Coggins, Windsor. Sheff Movement staff attendees were Elizabeth Horton Sheff, Phil Tegeler, Liz Dupont-Diehl and Grace Clark.



Bruce Douglas (C), Executive Director of Capitol Region Education Council (CREC), other CREC staff, and a contingent of Hartford and area suburban parents, along with Elizabeth Horton Sheff, Co-Chair of the Sheff Movement.

Conference workshop presenter, lead *Sheff v. O'Neill* plaintiff Elizabeth Horton Sheff, also Co-Chair of the



Sheff Movement, delivered an impassioned perspective on the state of quality integrated education and how it can be achieved.



Congratulations to Hartford Teacher of the Year Keith Seigny – from the Annie Fisher STEM Magnet School! Read some of Keith's reflections on his award, compiled by the advocacy group Achieve Hartford: <http://library.constantcontact.com/download/get/file/1102778616856-777/5-31-12---PUBLICInsights--3Dimensions.pdf>

Congratulations Autumn Baltimore, 7th grade teacher at Hartford Magnet Trinity College Academy in Hartford, selected as Teacher of the Year (2011-2012) by the Connecticut Association of Schools.



Whitney Bartell of Simsbury, CT credits her magnet school education at the Greater Hartford Academy of Math and Science in Hartford with her desire to work as a teacher in Washington, DC city schools.

A City Magnet Inspires A Former Suburban Student To Teach D.C. Youth

By Grace Clark

WASHINGTON, DC – Even though she was attending one of the state's best public school systems, Whitney Bartell of Simsbury, CT always wanted a different educational experience. While Whitney and her family believed she received

a solid education since kindergarten in her predominantly white school system, something was missing - diversity. It wasn't until high school that Whitney found it, at the Greater Hartford Academy of Math and Science (GHAMS) in Hartford – a magnet school experience that would define her life's journey.

"We thought Simsbury, while magnificent, did not resemble America in any way," said Whitney's mother, Cathy Bartell. "Not only did the magnet school offer this premier math and science curriculum, but it offered diversity. [Whitney] thought, get out of her element and learn other things, other places, other people."

Whitney, whose father is an attorney and mother works in health care administration, was impressed not only by the magnet school curriculum, but the educators, who she thought showed a discipline and value for education.

"It was a very new and novel experience for me," said Whitney Bartell, recently. "It offered a new perspective that there

"I realized that everyone should have that opportunity for racially and economically diverse education, regardless of where they grew up."

were people very different from me in Connecticut, and it started a fundamental interest for me in education. I realized that everyone should have that opportunity for racially and economically diverse education, regardless of where they grew up."

This past June, shortly after Whitney graduated from Cornell University in New York with a Bachelor's degree in Human Development and Education, her minor, the Washington DC Fellows Program

(www.dcteachingfellows.ttrack.org) gave Whitney a chance to put her passion for quality, diverse education to work. She was selected from thousands of applicants across the country to join its prestigious and intensive teaching training program that recruits college graduates from across the country to teach in inner city schools in Washington, DC. After two years in the program, these graduates earn their teaching license. Now teaching second-graders at Washington, DC's Noyes School, Whitney is excited about getting a permanent position in the nation's Capital in the coming academic school year.

"Much like Hartford, they've had a lot of issues in DC. These urban school districts pale in comparison to wealthy suburbs," said Whitney. "My class is 99% percent black students, and is pretty reflective of Hartford Public Schools. There is a burgeoning market of charter schools in DC.... so it's a good place to build momentum."

Whitney said coming from magnet schools in Connecticut and strong suburban education in Simsbury has taught her that high expectations are needed to give students the quality education they need to excel.



Parent's Corner

BY LORENZO BLAKE, HARTFORD

Anyone who is a parent can relate to the elation of witnessing their child learn something or vicariously reliving the amazement in their eyes when they have an experience that is completely new. Now, couple that with an accurate perspective of the disparity across the diaspora of educational models we have in the US, that impose obstacles based on class, color and creed. Then, add strides that have been and continue to be made by organizations like the Sheff Movement in Connecticut and The Metropolitan Council for Education Opportunity (METCO) in Massachusetts. You will now begin the sense of the fervor being generated around the education of children being raised in these urban centers.

Whether through magnet schools in their own neighborhoods or the busing system offered by the Capitol Region Education Council (CREC), Hartford County parents are availed options worthy of consideration. The Sheff Movement collaborates and supports the magnet schools and the Open Choice programs with advocacy. The unique interactions and mixing of cultures and customs can provide benefits for all concerned. Our children hone their ability to navigate unfamiliar situations and new experiences. As parents, we are given more opportunity to guide and mold them as they gain understanding of their larger community. Currently, the demand of students wanting to participate is far greater than the availability of seats.

Hartford's magnet schools provide a learning environment focused on education specific to the children's talents and potential. Children, like my daughter Noelle, who are in the Open Choice program through CREC are immersed in a suburban learning environment. This affords them chances to compete and prove themselves using their strengths and abilities. Commonly, it is through these new experiences that confidence is built, bonds are created and possibilities are explored.

The knowledge and the social skills our children gain while in these programs become invaluable tools often utilized in their future careers. Support from parents with children in these programs, and in participating school districts, is crucial. METCO (documented for its efforts and progress in supporting integrated education and used as a strong argument for more state funding and program expansion) is often compared to the programs in Connecticut.

By examining different programs, one can explore how school integration provides benefits to students and school systems while it strengthens communities. The chances of success increase with the more support that is offered encouraging parent to be involved. As parents, it is our obligation to be engaged, involved and willing to fight to ensure the best circumstances for our children's education.

The "Year of Education" and Sheff

By Phil Tegeler

Connecticut Governor Dannel P. Malloy entered this past Legislative Session with an ambitious education reform agenda. It was designed in part to give Connecticut an edge in competitive funding applications to the U.S. Department of Education, and also to help qualify the state for a "waiver" of certain requirements of the federal "No Child Left Behind" law. The Sheff Movement coalition was generally supportive of the governor's



proposals, because they provided additional funding and support for poor districts and early childhood education. However, we raised concerns from the beginning of the Session that incentives and requirements for school integration were

missing from the bill. Please see the 2012 "Sheff Movement legislative agenda," and some of the key provisions of the final bill at www.sheffmovement.org.

Although there was little in the bill to directly support school integration, regional magnet schools are prominently identified as one of the models that can be used for "turnaround schools," and the charter school provisions of the bill leave in place diversity requirements for new charter schools (though they do not strengthen the requirements for diversity when existing charter schools expand).

Overall, we are pleased that the Governor's budget continues to support the expansion of Sheff programs in the Hartford region. We are also hopeful that over time, the Governor and State Education Commissioner Stefan Pryor will see the benefits of combining the proven education benefits of school integration with other aspects of the statewide school reform agenda. We hope to start this discussion again in the next Legislative Session.

Parent Trainings

A group of Sheff parent leaders and educators took part in our first interactive training session on the unique two-way integrated education system in Greater Hartford. Parent leaders will now share information with parent-teacher organizations (PTOs) and other community groups. Our Sheff

Parent Leader Network works towards the Sheff Movement goal of quality, integrated education for all children by helping educate other parents, lawmakers and the public. For more information, contact Grace Clark at grace.clark@sheffmovement.org or 860.509.3793.



The breathtaking and towering stone statue of Civil Rights leader, Martin Luther King, Jr., recently erected across from the Jefferson Memorial in Washington, DC, was the highlight of the parent site-seeing tour. The newest memorial sparked an emotional chord with Hartford area parents.

Seven Hartford Schools, Four CREC Schools Receive National Awards of Excellence

Seven Hartford Public Schools have been selected by Magnet Schools of America to receive Magnet Schools of Merit Awards, recognizing them as among the best schools of their kind in the United States.

Of these, three Hartford schools – the Hartford Magnet Trinity College Academy, Noah Webster MicroSociety Magnet School and University High School for Science & Engineering – were named Magnet Schools of Excellence, the top category given to select schools across the country. A total of 57 schools nationally received that designation this year.

Four other schools – Breakthrough Magnet, the Environmental Sciences Magnet School at Mary Hooker, R. J. Kinsella Magnet School of Performing Arts and the Sport and Medical Sciences Academy – were named to the second category of awards, Magnet Schools of Distinction.

For more on Hartford Public Schools Magnet Awards, read:

<http://www.hartfordschools.org/index.php/news/165-seven-hartford-magnet-schools-earn-national-awards>.

Three of the Capitol Region Education Council (CREC)'s Magnet Schools were also chosen by Magnet Schools of America (MSA) to receive the prestigious Magnet School of Distinction award, and one CREC Magnet School was awarded the top honor as a Magnet School of Excellence.

The Magnet Schools of Excellence honor was given to the Glastonbury-East Hartford Elementary Magnet School (K-5) in East Hartford. The Magnet Schools of Distinction winners are the Reggio Magnet School of the Arts (Pre-K-Grade 5) in Avon; the International Magnet School for Global Citizenship (Pre-K-Grade 5) in East Hartford; and the University of Hartford Magnet School (Pre-K-Grade 5) in West Hartford. CREC manages more than 30 facilities throughout the area, including 15 interdistrict magnet schools. For more, read:

http://www.crecschools.org/press_releases/four-crec-schools-win-magnet-school-of-america-awards-of-merit-for-excellence-and-distinction/.

These national merit awards are issued annually based on the school's commitment to high academic standards, curriculum innovation, diversity, and the consistent delivery of an exceptional education to all students.

The schools selected as Magnet Schools of Excellence will be competing for the Dr. Ronald P. Simpson Distinguished Merit Award; given annually to the one magnet school in America that most exemplifies the award criteria. Magnet Schools of America presented last year's Dr. Ronald P. Simpson Award to Hartford Magnet Middle School in the city's Learning Corridor.

There are about 6,000 magnet schools in the United States, serving more than 1 million students.

Students and Staff at Two Magnet Schools Honored with Sheff Awards

About a dozen students and a teacher at two area magnet schools – CREC (Capitol Region Education Council) International Magnet School for Global Citizenship in East Hartford and Environmental Sciences Magnet at Mary Hooker (operated by Hartford Public Schools) in Hartford – have been awarded with the Sheff Movement Excellence in Quality Integrated Education Award 2012.

The Excellence in Quality Integrated Education Award is open to all magnet and Open Choice schools and awarded to students and staff by recommendation. The award is given for “exhibiting the spirit of character, collaboration, leadership and appreciation for cultural, ethnic and socio-economic differences inherent in quality school integration goals for magnet and Open Choice schools.”

The award recipients at Environmental Sciences Magnet at Mary Hooker were: Brian Ramkishen (Hartford); Valeria Aragon (Hartford); Ryan Quintero (Hartford); Jirmani Muth (Hartford); Isabella Salazar (New Britain); Nick D’Onofrio (Hebron,);



Sheff award recipients at Environmental Sciences Magnet at Mary Hooker in Hartford, CT: Front Row, L-R: Brian Ramkishen-Hartford; Valeria Aragon – Hartford; Ryan Quintero – Hartford; and Jirmani Muth-Hartford; Back row, L-R: Isabella Salazar – New Britain; Nick D’Onofrio-Hebron; Victor Wilson – Manchester and Brianna Lara – Hartford

Victor Wilson (Manchester) and Brianna Lara (Hartford). The recipients at The International Magnet School for Global Studies were Elicia Estevez (Hartford) and Kasmir Breedlove (Manchester). Also honored was Spanish and English Language Learner Teacher (ELL), Meghan Hennick.

To nominate a student or staff for a Sheff Movement Excellence in Quality Integrated Education Award, email grace.clark@sheffmovement.org.



Sheff award recipients at the (CREC) International Magnet School for Global Studies in East Hartford, CT: Photo- L-R – Grace Clark, Sheff Movement Communications Director; E. Brad Noel, Hartford Board of Education member; Elicia Estevez and Kasmir Breedlove, third-grade recipient and Spanish and English Language Learner Teacher (ELL), Meghan Hennick.

JOIN US! SHEFF MOVEMENT MEETINGS
3rd Saturday of every month:
9:30am-11am
Capital Preparatory Magnet School
1304 Main Street, Hartford, CT

To sign up for our email list and newsletter, email grace.clark@sheffmovement.org