

EFFORTS TO REDUCE RACIAL, ETHNIC, AND ECONOMIC ISOLATION

The Batcheller School community values the reputation that the administration, teachers, and parents have for reaching out to the community to reduce racial, ethnic, and economic isolation. Some of the highlights of the 2005 to 2006 school year include:

A full-time paraprofessional supports students who are identified as *English Language Learners* (ELL). The paraprofessional is fluent in Spanish and English. The paraprofessional is also responsible for maintaining effective and consistent communication between school and our Spanish-speaking families.

Our social studies and language arts curricula provide multiple opportunities for students to learn about and appreciate other cultures. These units of study are often integrated with our art and music program, allowing for students to express themselves in these areas. Teachers organized a *Celebration of Learning Night* at the end of the year, to share with families the accomplishments and efforts of their students. Various cultures were celebrated as families viewed work in children's classrooms. One highlight of this night was the celebration of a new mural that was created in the cafeteria by upper grade students. The mural was titled: "Around the World with Batchy the Owl." It depicts the landmarks, mythical animals, and other cultural symbols of countries around the world.

Many families in our community participate in programs sponsored by the Batcheller Family Resource Center. This program offers individualized assistance to many of our socio-economically disadvantaged families. Playgroups are provided for infants and toddlers to ensure that developmentally appropriate activities are taking place in the homes and daycares of our school community. In addition, adult education is provided for those individuals who are seeking to improve their parenting skills and understanding of child development, and for those wishing to improve their English language skills as they seek employment. The center also serves as a referral to additional resources it cannot provide itself.

One of our school goals this year was to enhance our school climate at Batcheller School, especially in the area of respect for all students. A committee met monthly and selected a curriculum that will provide grade level instruction designed to build student appreciation of differences and respect for all. The committee participated in a workshop designed to make our school more "Welcoming" to all members of the community, and planned a "First Day of School," event that will bring more families together to begin the school year. In addition we continued our partnership with the Susan B. Anthony project which provides grade level presentations on topics including conflict resolution.

EVIDENCE OF SUSTAINED IMPROVEMENTS IN STUDENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Student performance is indicated by yearly results of state and district assessments. The CMT was given in the spring this year, and as of this writing, the results are pending. District assessment indicates improved performance in reading. Highlights of DRP results show that 61% of second graders met goal and 68% of our third graders met goal. On the district math assessment, many grade levels showed high levels of performance. The first grade results showed 88% of the students scoring proficient or better, second grade had 89% scoring proficient or better, third grade showed 86% scoring proficient or better, fourth grade showed 71% scoring proficient or better, while fifth grade showed 67% scoring at the proficient level or better.

Batcheller School continues to work on improving instruction and corresponding student learning. Our School Improvement Plan, along with district-wide curriculum planning drive changes aimed at improving performance. This year, based on past student performance and identified areas of need, a new mathematics curriculum was implemented. The curriculum aligns with the Connecticut Mathematics Curriculum Framework and skill areas tested on the Connecticut Mastery Test. Entitled, *Trailblazers*, the program emphasizes critical thinking, problem solving, and communicating and reasoning with mathematics. Time was devoted during district professional development days to train and support staff in the new curriculum.

Our guided reading program continues to develop students who can read fluently for meaning. Students are assessed in the fall and given small group instruction and support, along with whole group lessons that build reading comprehension. Mid-year assessments indicate progress or identify students who are making limited progress—who then may be given more focused support by one of our two reading support teachers.

In all three subject areas this year, based on analyzed needs, students were given a focused preparation program in the month of January and February to ready them for the Fourth Generation CMT.

SUPPLEMENTAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

Batcheller School features a wide range of programs designed to enhance student growth and development.

Our art program features three clubs, Gardens and Grounds, Artemis, and Art Studio Helpers. In Gardens and Grounds, students maintain a variety of plants, flowers, and gardens surrounding the school. In Artemis, students select art work to be displayed monthly around the school. Art Studio Helpers pairs older students and younger students during art classes. Mural Makers constructed a large mural in the gym that emphasized world cultures.

Students in grades 4 and 5 participated in Gymnastics Club, and performed during student assemblies. In addition, students learned good character through the NED Assembly, in which a yo-yo expert taught tricks. Jump roping for the American Heart Association raised money, as did collecting “Pennies for Patients,” which benefited the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. In addition, the school supported our physical education teacher, who volunteered for the Red Cross and traveled south to help victims of Hurricane Katrina. Finally students participated in this year’s ACES program (All Students Exercising Simultaneously).

Students participated in instrument lessons, band, and chorus, performing at different times during the year. Our fifth graders participated in the DARE program, and graduated in the spring.

Batcheller Prizes were distributed in the spring for achievement in different academic subjects, in accordance with a program set up by our namesake, William Batcheller.