

**BRANFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION
TEACHING & LEARNING COMMITTEE MEETING**

WEDNESDAY
6:00 PM
October 11, 2023

Walsh Intermediate School Cafeteria
185 East Main Street, Branford CT

[Chair: Ellen Michaels; Cristina Cantu, Meaghan DeLucia & John Prins]

To access and listen to this meeting please go to www.branfordschools.org

Branford Public Schools Mission and Vision Statement

Nurturing students and citizens who develop a deep commitment to learning today and leading tomorrow is the central goal of Branford Public Schools.

A G E N D A

- I. Call to Order
- II. Public Comment
- III. Approval of Minutes
- IV. Presentation
 - A. Strategic School Profile State & District Assessment Data
- V. Discussion/Action Item
 - A. Arts Education Resolution
- VI. Adjourn

TO PARTICIPATE IN PUBLIC COMMENTS REMOTELY PLEASE CALL:

1 (646) 558-8656
Meeting ID: 815 6405 4671
Passcode: 812124

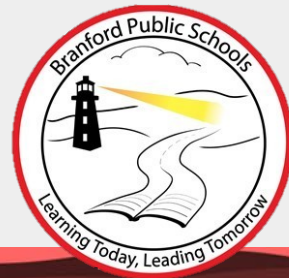
*When participating by telephone please mute your phone when joining the meeting and unmute your phone when you are ready to speak. This can be done by pressing *6 on your phone's keypad.*

Rules Governing Public Comments:

- Three minutes will be allotted to each speaker. The Board may modify this limitation at the beginning of a meeting if the number of persons wishing to speak makes it advisable to do so. (Board Bylaw 9325)
- Conduct intended primarily to disrupt the Board of Education meeting shall not be permitted. Any speaker who engages in such conduct will be warned and allowed to correct such conduct. If the speaker continues to engage in the disruptive conduct such will be grounds for termination of the speaker's privilege to participate in public comment and may be deemed grounds for removal from the meeting site.
- All speakers must identify themselves by name and address.

Branford Board of Education Teaching and Learning Committee

October 11, 2023



Agenda

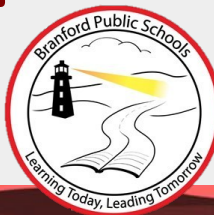
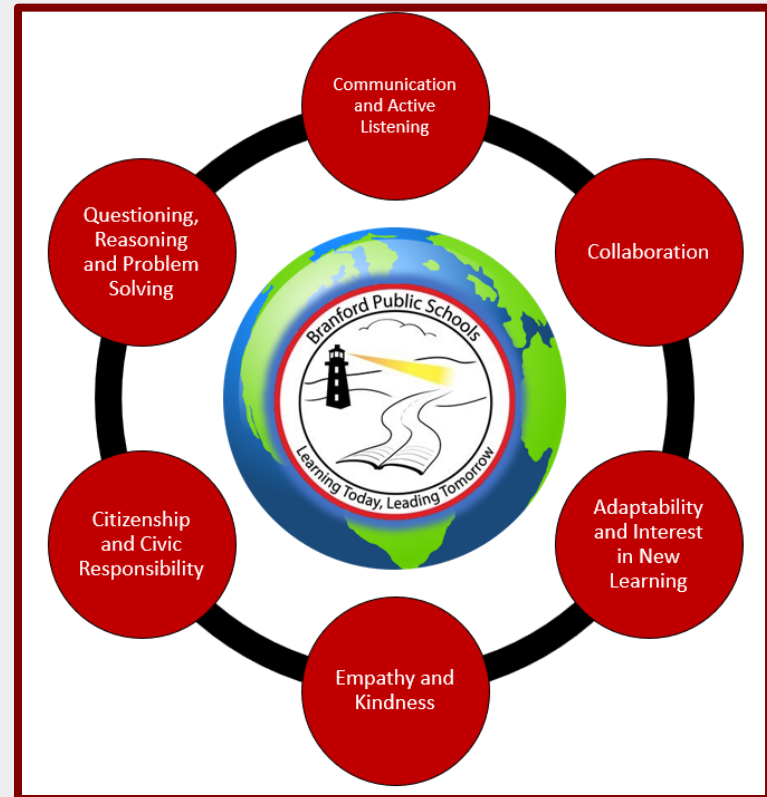
- **Review of Strategic Coherence Plan**
- **Climate: Survey Highlights**
- **Smarter Balanced Assessments Results**
- **SAT Results**
- **Future Topic for Teaching and Learning**



Mission & Global Competencies

Mission

The Branford Public School's community is committed to developing lifelong learners who are capable and confident, who contribute to their community, and who succeed in a changing global society.



Strategic Coherence Plan (SCP)

Strategic Actions

- 1. Ensure equal opportunity for growth and development for all Branford students.**
2. Align the key systems in the District to support the student acquisition of the Global Learning Competencies through the implementation of the Definition of Deep Learning.
3. Improve the process and tools used to communicate and engage critical stakeholders.



Definition of Deep Learning

- Focuses on intrinsic motivation, passion and reason as the drivers of the pursuit of learning.
- Provides ongoing skills development and recognition of progress along the way.
- Includes hands-on learning by doing and practice.
- Requires appropriate resources to facilitate learning.
- Flourishes within a culture of optimism and support.



Climate Survey Highlights



School Climate Survey Results

Stakeholder Group	Areas of Progress		Areas for Continued Growth	
Students (3-5)	Rigorous Expectations	↑ 1 77%	School Belonging	↓ 1 64%
	Teacher/Student Relationships	↓ 1 75%	School Safety	↓ 2 61%
Students (6-12)	Rigorous Expectations	↑ 5 60%	School Engagement	↑ 4 22%
	Teacher/Student Relationships	↑ 3 52%	School Belonging	↓ 2 33%
Teachers	School Leadership	↑ 5 43%	Feedback and Coaching	↑ 8 39%
	School Climate	↑ 4 49%	Evaluation	↑ 5 36%
Staff	School Climate	↓ 2 53%	Feedback and Coaching	↑ 1 38%
	School Leadership	↑ 1 49%		
Families	Family Engagement	↑ 3 18%	School Safety	↓ 2 63%
	School Fit	↑ 1 63%	School Climate	↓ 2 63%



Student Performance Update

Formal assessment results help identify students' strengths and challenges, but they are only one data point. Students are more than their scores and we use multiple measures for evaluating student progress throughout the school year.



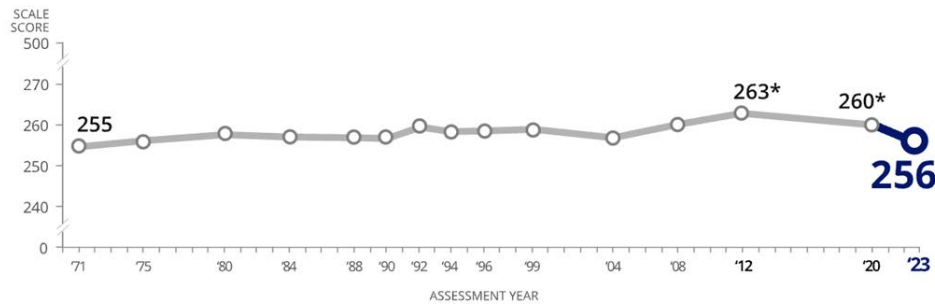
National Context

*Average scores in math and reading for both **fourth- and eighth-grade students declined sharply** since 2019, the last time students were assessed on the Nation's Report Card (also called the National Assessment of Educational Progress or NAEP). **Nationally, students experienced the steepest declines ever in math, especially among 8th-grade students.***



NAEP Trends

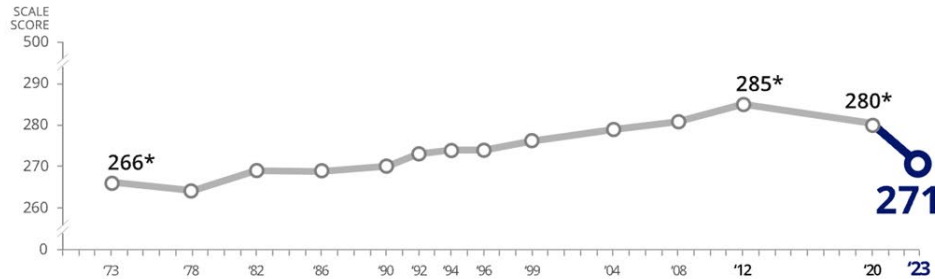
READING



Score change between 2020 and 2023



MATHEMATICS



Score change between 2020 and 2023



Trend in NAEP long-term trend reading and mathematics average scores for 13-year-old students

* Significantly different ($p < .05$) from 2023.



SBA, NGSS, & SAT OVERVIEW



SBA ELA Performance

GRADE	17-18	18-19	21-22	22-23	Growth 22 to 23	Rough Cohort Growth	Pre-Covid Mean 18 & 19	Post-Covid Mean 22 & 23	Diff.
3	54	55	56	51	-5		54	53	-1
4	59	56	56	59	3	3	57	57	0
5	58	56	59	67	7	11	57	63	6
6	57	67	51	50	-1	-9	62	51	-11
7	58	64	51	58	7	7	61	54	-7
8	43	59	44	42	-3	-9	51	43	-8



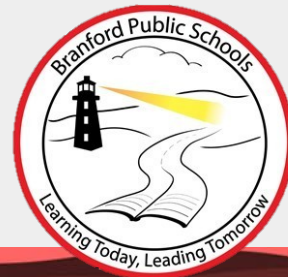
Ongoing Work & Next Steps

Elementary

- Pilot of Into Reading
- Instruction aligned to Science of Reading
- Coaching around teaching foundational reading strategies
- Specialized learning for special education and Interventionists

Intermediate

- Coaching around best practices with reading strategies
- Aligned word study scope and sequence with elementary
- Schoolwide goal around non-fiction reading and discourse
- Specialized learning for special education teachers



SBA Math Performance

GRADE	17-18	18-19	21-22	22-23	Growth 22 to 23	Rough Cohort Growth	Pre-Covid Mean 18 & 19	Post-Covid Mean 22 & 23	Diff.
3	65	65	58	60	2		65	59	-6
4	65	65	53	58	6	0	65	55	-10
5	55	59	55	60	5	8	57	58	1
6	56	51	36	47	11	-9	53	42	-12
7	51	53	41	46	5	10	52	43	-9
8	37	46	41	33	-8	-8	42	37	-5



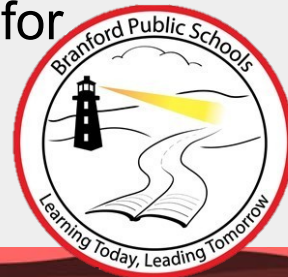
Ongoing Work & Next Steps

Elementary

- Continuation of math running records to track fact fluency growth
- Training on foundational math concepts that impact later understanding
- Additional formative assessments
- Specialized learning for Interventionists

Intermediate

- Task design that promotes success and achievement for all learners
- Integration of common formative assessments throughout grade-level courses
- Continuing to implement effective math practices
- Specialized learning for Interventionists



NGSS Science Performance

GRADE	18-19	21-22	22-23	Growth 22-23
5	57.5	52.9	57.5	4.6
8	70.8	45	50.5	5.5
11	50.2	41.9	44.3	2.4



School Day SAT

Measure	2017-18	2018-19	2021-22	2022-23	Growth 22-23
ELA	61.8	71.6	53	59.7	6.7
MATH	39.6	46.3	25.2	36.4	11.2



Ongoing Work & Next Steps

Science & High School

- Discipline-specific inquiry design
- Collaborative assessment of student learning and use of data to guide decision making
- Implementation of professional learning in practice through learning labs, learning walks, and impact cycles
- Cross-disciplinary school-wide goal around inquiry and discourse
- Increased complexity of texts and tasks
- Focus on using academic and content vocabulary



Future Agenda Item



aimswebTM
PLUS



What is
aimswebPlus?



Pearson



Discussion



10.11.2023

Memo

To:
Branford Board of Education
Teaching & Learning
Committee

From:
Allison K. Moran,
Assistant Superintendent of
Schools

Re:
Student Performance Update

CC:
Christopher Tranberg, Ph.D.,
Superintendent of Schools

BPS Principals

Lauren Skultety,
Coordinator of Elementary
Curriculum

Kathleen Wagner,
Coordinator of Secondary
Curriculum

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) recently released statewide scores for the Smarter Balanced (SBAC) English Language Arts and Math Assessments. Similarly, the College Board released SAT. All tests were administered in the spring of 2023 including the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) assessment, which is administered to students in grades five, eight, and eleven.

Smarter Balanced Tests

The Smarter Balanced Assessments are designed to measure the Connecticut Core Standards, focusing on critical thinking and problem solving—the real-world skills students need to be successful in college and careers. Overall scores in English Language Arts and Mathematics are reported in four performance levels.

Scores in levels 3 and 4 indicate an at or above goal measure and represent challenging, yet reasonable, performance levels. Statewide results show that 48.5 percent of students in grades 3–8 are meeting or exceeding the achievement level (at/above goal) in English Language Arts (ELA), and 42.5 percent of students are meeting or exceeding the achievement level (at/above goal) in mathematics.

Branford results show that 54.2% of students in grades three through eight are at/above goal in English Language Arts. The percentage of students meeting or exceeding the goal ranges from 41.8 percent in grade eight and 66.7 percent in grade five. In mathematics, 50.2 percent of students in grades three through eight are at/above goal. The percentage of students meeting or exceeding the goal in mathematics ranges from 32.6 percent in grade eight and 60 percent

in grade five. When comparing rough cohorts, Branford recognizes growth from grades three

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to four, four to five, and six to seven. Results show a decline in performance from grades five to six and seven to eight.

Branford's decline in performance in grade eight is consistent with national trends. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) administered the NAEP long-term trend (LTT) reading and mathematics assessments to 13-year-old students from October to December of the 2022–23 school year. The average scores for 13-year-olds declined 4 points in reading and 9 points in mathematics compared to the previous assessment administered during the 2019–20 school year. Compared to a decade ago, the average scores declined 7 points in reading and 14 points in mathematics.

Science NGSS

The NGSS assessment underwent changes at the state level again this past year and so the results cannot be cleanly compared to prior testing years. Notably, the NGSS assessments became adaptive in spring 2023 (i.e., difficulty level of items assigned to the student during the test is adjusted based on the student's performance on initial items).

Students are administered the NGSS test in compliance with federal and state law in grades 5, 8, and 11. At the state level, 48.5 percent of students are meeting or exceeding the goal. In Branford, 50.4 percent of students are meeting or exceeding the goal. The percentage of Branford students meeting or exceeding the goal in science ranges from 44.3 percent in grade eleven to 57.5 percent in grade five.

SAT

The CSDE has adopted the SAT as the statewide accountability measure for juniors. The SAT is comprised of two subtests: Evidenced-Based Reading and Writing and Math. SAT results are reported by testing day of the junior class as well as by the graduating class. At the state level, 52.4 percent of students met or exceeded the goal in ELA and 34.1 percent in mathematics. Branford students demonstrated growth in both Mathematics and ELA as compared to the past two years. 59.7 percent of students met or exceeded the goal in ELA and 36.4 percent of students met or exceeded the goal in Mathematics. This is an increase of 6.7 percent and 11.2 percent, respectively.

Climate and Culture

The 2023 climate and culture survey was administered to students, families, teachers, and staff. Results have been analyzed and areas of progress and areas for continued growth have been identified. The questions asked in each area that has been highlighted are included in [Appendix A](#).

It is noteworthy that, in many cases, a majority of the responses fell into a neutral category. Such responses do not count toward a favorable outcome, but they also do not indicate a negative response. More anecdotal evidence and analysis would be helpful in identifying the root cause of such neutral responses.

Students in grades 3-5 responded favorably to questions about rigorous expectations (77%) and teacher-student relationships (75%). These were also areas of strength for students in grades 6-12 (60% and 52% respectively). Although the responses for older students were less favorable than at the elementary level, they were 5% and 3% more favorable than in the previous year, moving BPS in a positive direction. Students responded somewhat less favorably to questions about school belonging. 64% of students in grades 3-5 responded favorably, which was down 1% from the previous year. Students in grades 6-12 responded less favorably to feelings of belonging; 33% responded favorably (down 2% from last year). Neither group declined at an alarming rate, but we will look to further support a sense of belonging among students. Students in grades 6-12 responded less favorably to questions about school engagement (22%). Although this is a low favorability rating, the responses improved by 4% from the previous year, moving BPS in a positive direction.

Teachers and Staff had high favorable ratings in the areas of school leadership and school climate (43% and 49% respectively). Both areas were also more favorable than the previous year (5% and 4% respectively). Feedback, coaching, and evaluation were areas for continued growth, though they had improved from last year.

Family stakeholders also responded to the climate survey. Strengths and progress was seen in the areas of family engagement (up 3% from last year) and school fit (up 1% from last year). The overall favorability for family engagement was low, 18%, and we will work to find beneficial ways to partner with families. The overall favorability for school fit was high, at 63%. Two areas that declined were in school safety and school climate (down 2% in each area), though both categories were highly favorable overall (63% in each area).

Testing Summary and Strategic Actions

Testing results indicate that the performance of Branford students is on track to return to pre-pandemic levels and has the potential to see continued growth. Ongoing shifts to curriculum and instruction will align with the 2023 Strategic Coherence Plan.

Mission

The Branford Public School's community is committed to developing lifelong learners who are capable and confident, who contribute to their community, and who succeed in a changing global society.

Global Competencies

- Communication and Active Listening
- Collaboration
- Adaptability and Interest in New Learning
- Empathy and Kindness
- Citizenship and Civic Responsibility
- Questioning, Reasoning, and Problem Solving

Strategic Actions

- **Ensure equal opportunity for growth and development for all Branford students.**
- Align the key systems in the District to support the student acquisition of the Global Learning Competencies through the implementation of the Definition of Deep Learning.
- Improve the process and tools used to communicate and engage critical stakeholders.



Definition of Deep Learning

Deep Learning...

- ...focuses on intrinsic motivation, passion and reason as the drivers of the pursuit of learning.
- ...provides ongoing skills development and recognition of progress along the way.
- ...includes hands-on learning by doing and practice.
- ...requires appropriate resources to facilitate learning.
- ...flourishes within a culture of optimism and support.

DRAFT

Title:

Arts Education in K-12 Schools

Issue:

CABE believes that the arts are a fundamental component of a well-rounded education that provide **benefits** fostering creativity, critical thinking, collaboration and problem-solving skills. Research has shown that arts education -

- a. enhances academic achievement across multiple disciplines, including math and science
- b. increases student empathy
- c. reduces absenteeism
- d. minimizes the incidence of exclusionary disciplinary action.

Importantly, arts education contributes to the social and emotional well-being of students, providing them with a means of self-expression and a sense of belonging.

Despite these benefits, arts education is often underfunded and undervalued in our schools.

Resolution:

CABE urges Connecticut policy makers and education leaders to commit to fully funding and supporting arts education in K-12 schools to ensure that all students have access to the above-noted **benefits** by:

1. Recognizing the intrinsic value of arts education to providing a well-rounded education;
2. Acknowledging the vital role of arts education in enhancing academic achievement and contributing to the social and emotional well-being of students;
3. Collaborating with arts educators and administrators to articulate what fully-supported arts education looks like including, but not limited to minimum required staffing at building and District levels;
4. Considering other initiatives that have proven to be effective, e.g., arts integration across disciplines

CABE further urges school boards and their communities to affirmatively advocate for the importance of arts education and to hold our leaders accountable for providing the necessary funding.

Branford Board of Education

Approved for submission to CABE Delegate Assembly on _____ 2023