

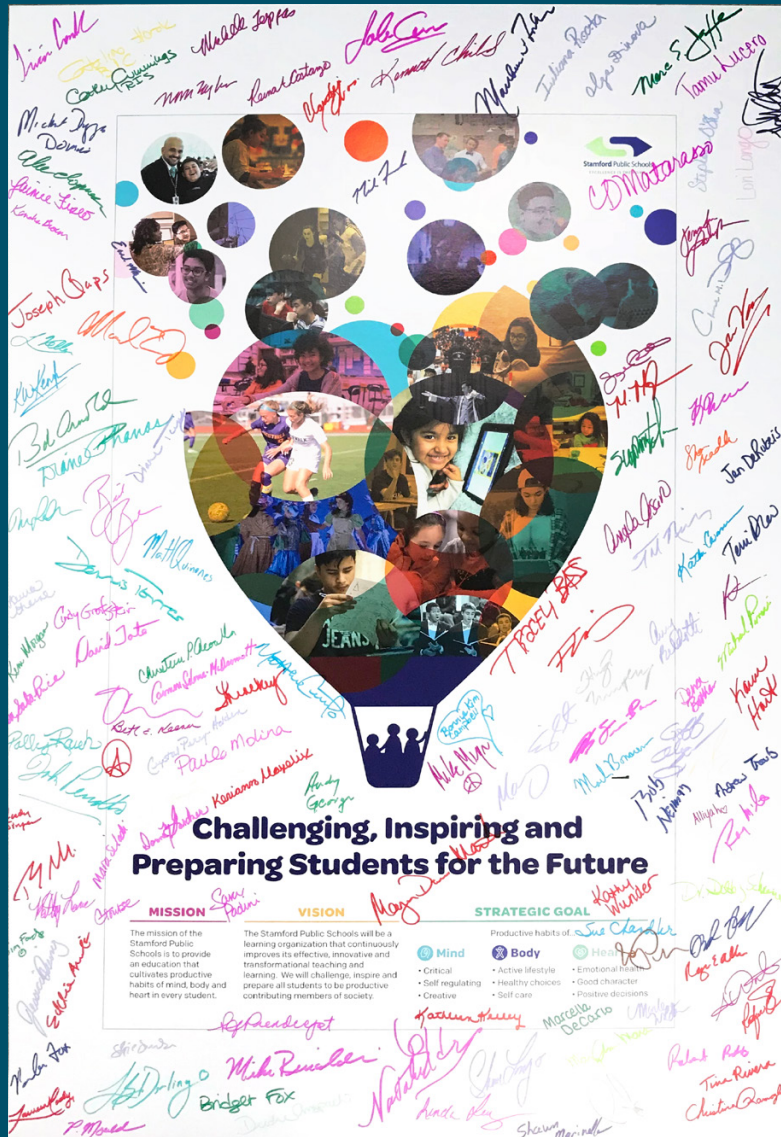
STAMFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

# ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

THE 2017-2018 SCHOOL YEAR

*Cultivating Productive Habits of Mind, Body and Heart in Stamford Students*





On May 1, 2018, educators, community leaders, parents and students joined SPS superintendent, Stamford mayor and Board of Education president to launch the 2017–2022 Strategic Plan. In a show of unity and support, all 125 attendees signed a poster featuring the district mission, vision and strategic goals.

## A NOTE FROM THE NEW SUPERINTENDENT

**O**n behalf of the Stamford Public Schools (SPS), I am pleased to share our 2017–2018 Report to the Community. As the newly appointed superintendent and former deputy superintendent, I am proud of the incredible leadership and teamwork that I have witnessed over the past year and prior. And I look forward to continuing those successes in the years ahead.

In 2017, SPS launched our 2017–2022 Strategic Plan, which we developed with the input of students, parents, teachers, support staff, administrators and community members. This report illustrates the positive results of working together for the good of our students. Through the year, we challenged our staff to innovate and effect change by expanding professional development, data-driven decision-making and collaborative teaching practice. Our students inspired us with their drive to learn, think creatively and become the best versions of themselves. Throughout the 2017–2018 school year, SPS has prepared our students by offering a full range of academic and co-curricular opportunities—intentionally designed to meet the needs of all learners—as well as encouraging critical and creative thinking, self-regulation, healthy life choices and social emotional growth.

Within these pages, we recognize student and staff achievements, as well as building-level successes that are having positive impact. However, there is so much more being accomplished that cannot be summed up effectively in a few charts or an averaged data point. We need to keep reminding ourselves and others that there is nothing average about Stamford students. Our students and families come to our classrooms with their own unique experiences, skills and needs. Our staff meets each student at his or her own starting point and helps them to move forward toward their own goals. This personalized approach enables SPS to support the varied student populations within our community.

Looking forward, we will continue to recognize effective strategies, develop new initiatives and replicate the most effective programs. As we continue to deliver on our 2017–2022 Strategic Plan, we are expanding our measure of success beyond test scores, incorporating competencies and dispositions including resilience, cultural awareness and collaboration. We know it is our responsibility as the leaders of the district to deliver the opportunities our students deserve, while making continuous progress toward achieving our vision.

The world is rapidly changing and so is SPS. We are embracing innovation and change as we seek to continue the transformation and growth of our schools. We know that with a concentrated effort and a collaborative community spirit, we will challenge, inspire and prepare every Stamford student for success in life. I welcome your continued support of schools and encourage you to share your positive experiences with others.

Sincerely,



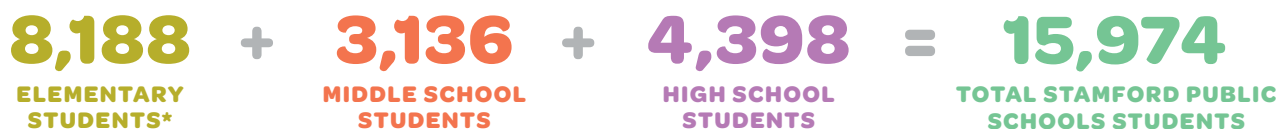
**Dr. Tamu Lucero**  
Superintendent, Stamford Public Schools





## AT A GLANCE STAMFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SPS comprises nearly 16,000 students, over 1,500 professionals and 21 schools, including seven magnet schools and three International Baccalaureate (IB) sites. SPS is proud that our district is as rich in diversity as it is in talent. We have students from many cultural backgrounds and geographic locations—as demonstrated by the 75 different languages spoken in the homes of our families. SPS offers our students a learning experience rich in cultural diversity and reflective of the global society in which they will work and live.



252 students in Alternative and Out-of-District Programs

\*Including PreK and Early Childhood Services

## 75 LANGUAGES SPOKEN IN STUDENTS' HOMES

<b>9,492</b> STUDENTS SPEAK <b>ENGLISH ONLY</b>	<b>4,820</b> STUDENTS SPEAK <b>SPANISH</b>	<b>355</b> STUDENTS SPEAK <b>HAITIAN-CREOLE</b>	<b>223</b> STUDENTS SPEAK <b>BENGALI</b>	<b>180</b> STUDENTS SPEAK <b>POLISH</b>
<b>136</b> STUDENTS SPEAK <b>UKRAINIAN</b>	<b>98</b> STUDENTS SPEAK <b>RUSSIAN</b>	<b>98</b> STUDENTS SPEAK <b>PORTUGUESE</b>	<b>95</b> STUDENTS SPEAK <b>HINDI</b>	<b>79</b> STUDENTS SPEAK <b>ARABIC</b>

### Additional Languages:

Afrikaans, Albanian, Amharic, Bulgarian, Burmese, Cantonese, Creole-Cape Verdean, Czech, Danish, Dari, Dutch, Estonian, Fante, Farsi, Finnish, French, Georgian, German, Greek, Gujarati,

Hebrew, Hungarian, Ilongot, Italian, Japanese, Kannada, Konkani, Korean, Kurdish, Latvian, Lithuanian, Luganda, Maay, Macedonian, Malay, Malayalam, Mandarin, Marathi, Montenegrin, Nepali, Norwegian,

Oriya, Patois, Patwa, Persian, Pilipino, Punjabi, Rumanian, Serbo-Croatian, Singhalese, Slovak, Swahili, Tagalog, Tamil, Telugu, Thai, Tibetan, Tigrinya, Tulu, Turkish, Twi/Fante, Urdu, Vietnamese, Wolof





## 21 STAMFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

# 13

### ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Including: 5 Magnet Programs, 2 IB Programs

# 5

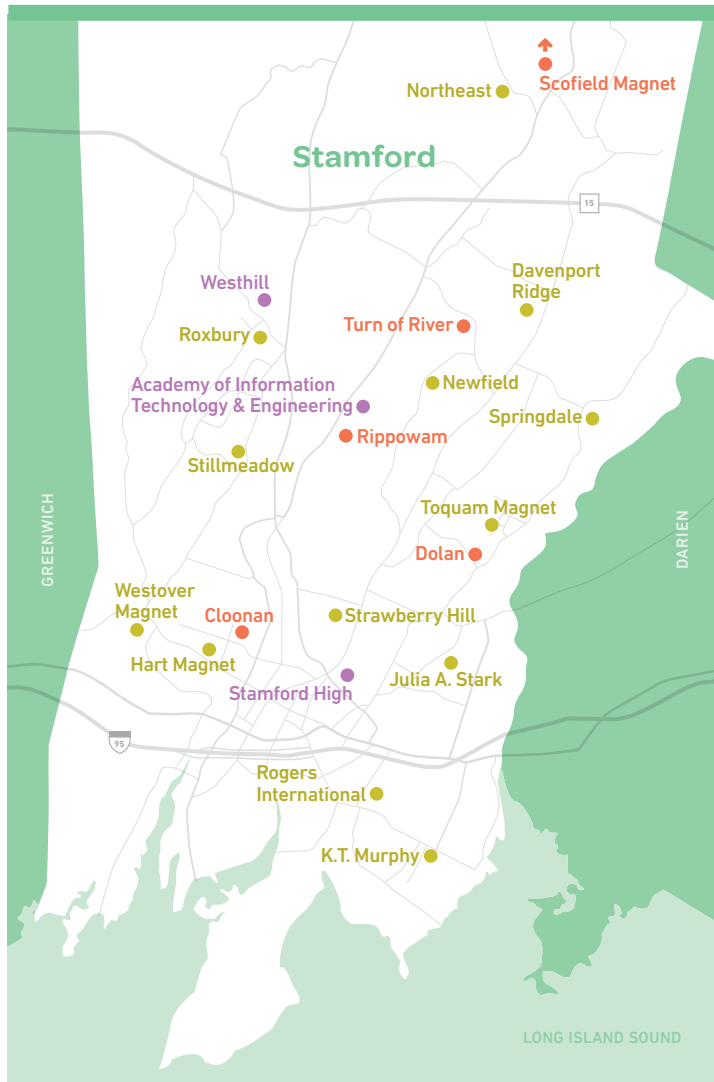
### MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Including: Magnet Program, IB Program

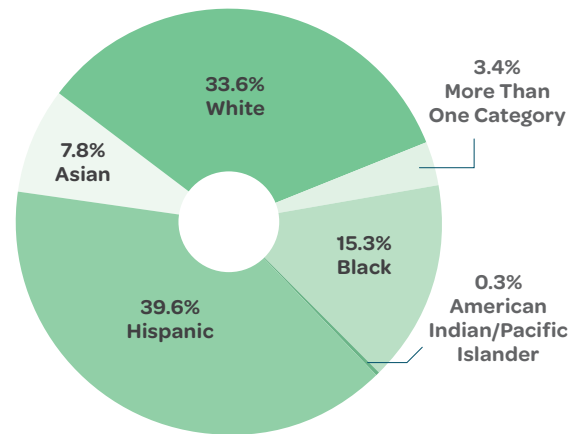
# 3

### HIGH SCHOOLS

Including: Magnet Program, IB Program, Early College Studies Program, Agriscience Program, Finance Academy Program



## STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS



“The abundance of opportunities, both in school and out, ensures that every single student can find a place to belong. I am proud to call SPS my home.”

Audrey Molina, WHS '19

# Camille S. Spaulding

**7TH GRADE SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHER, CLOONAN MIDDLE SCHOOL**

- Connecticut Teacher of the Year Semifinalist
- 11 Years in SPS
- Bowie State University, Bachelor of Science
- George Mason University, Master of Education

**What motivates you?** First and foremost, I am grateful each day to have a profession where I have been able to continue to grow and learn as an educator; gratitude has always been my first motivator. Additionally, what motivates me each day is the belief that every child only needs one person in their life to believe in them and to serve as their personal advocate in order for them to achieve a level of success and to find their place in this world. I know this as one of the eternal truths, having experienced it in my own life, both on the giving and the receiving end. This is

why I get up each morning ready to start a brand-new day with my students.

**How do you develop habits of mind, body and heart in your students?** I try to reach beyond my classroom into the community for tangible resources and community partners to enhance my teaching and ultimately my students' learning. Some examples are the Boys' Mentoring Program and our GLAM Program (Girls Learning about Medicine). Each of these programs not only targets our students' academic needs, but truly helps to cultivate healthy minds, bodies and hearts.



2018-2019 Stamford Teacher of the Year



## OUR STAFF

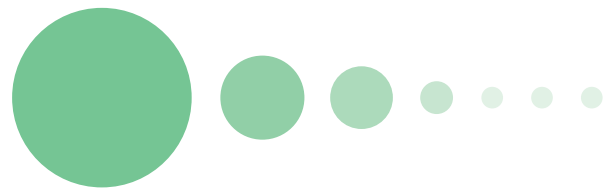
We actively recruit top-quality candidates from diverse backgrounds to ensure that we realize our vision of becoming a learning organization that challenges, inspires and prepares all students for the future.



$$\begin{array}{ccccccc}
 1,512 & + & 66 & + & 407 & + & 267 & = & 2,252 \\
 \text{TEACHERS} & & \text{ADMINISTRATORS/} & & \text{PARA-} & & \text{SUPPORT} & & \text{TOTAL FULL-} \\
 & & \text{DISCRETIONARY} & & \text{PROFESSIONALS} & & \text{STAFF*} & & \text{TIME STAFF}
 \end{array}$$



## STAFF DEMOGRAPHICS



68.9% White  
15.1% Black  
8.4% Hispanic  
2.3% Asian  
<1% Hawaiian/Pacific Islander  
<1% American Indian/Alaskan  
<1% Two or more races

**10:1**  
STUDENT/CERTIFIED  
STAFF RATIO

**95%**  
of teachers, instructors and  
counselors have a master's  
degree or higher

**98%**  
average daily teacher  
attendance, above CT  
State Dept. of Education  
(CSDE) target of 95%

**12.6**  
teachers' average number  
of years' experience in SPS

“Learning alongside peers from different backgrounds prepares us to thrive in a world of diverse perspectives, ideas and work styles.”

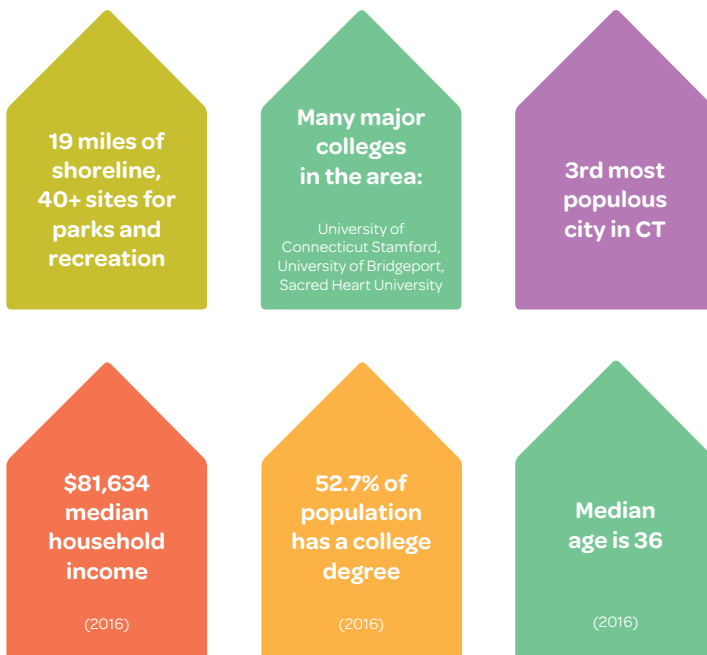
Kathleen Joseph Kelley, Davenport Ridge Elementary School



## DISTRICT OVERVIEW



## STAMFORD IS INCREASINGLY ATTRACTING NEW RESIDENTS AND FAMILIES



Source: City of Stamford Office of Economic Development website

### NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN COMPARABLE DISTRICTS:

Stamford.....	15,974
Norwalk .....	11,549
Danbury.....	11,531
Meriden.....	7,933
East Hartford.....	6,869

### SPS IS DEVELOPING GLOBAL CITIZENS

SPS is proud that our district is as rich in diversity as it is in talent. We have students from many cultural backgrounds and geographic locations. Starting in kindergarten, we teach empathy, inclusion and acceptance. SPS students are members of a global community.

"SPS graduates are everywhere. They are teachers, tradesmen, governors, actors, business owners, Emmy nominees, financial planners and university presidents. Their careers and their paths to success are as varied as they are. We are proud of each and every one."

**Earl Kim, Former Superintendent of Schools**

SPS provides every learner with a relevant and rigorous education in a safe environment. Our students take academically challenging classes and participate in a broad range of co-curricular and extracurricular activities. SPS works with local businesses and community-based organizations to align resources to positively impact students, including addressing social mobility concerns and expanding opportunities for student leadership, as well as increasing every student's sense of civic responsibility.

### SPS TEACHES 21ST-CENTURY SKILLS

**Communications:** Sharing thoughts, ideas, questions and solutions

**Collaboration:** Working together to reach a goal by putting talents, skills and knowledge to work

**Critical Thinking:** Looking at problems in a new way and linking learning across subjects and disciplines

**Creativity:** Trying new approaches to get things done, recognizing innovation and invention





## 2017–2022 STRATEGIC PLAN LAUNCHED

### CHALLENGING, INSPIRING AND PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE FUTURE

SPS launched its 2017–2022 Strategic Plan, which was the culmination of a multi-year planning process that incorporated input from over 300 members of the Stamford community, including students, parents, teachers, administrators, nonprofit organizations and business leaders. The strategic plan builds upon the successes and accomplishments that happen every day in our schools, and provides the strategies and framework to ensure further success.

SPS is transforming into a Learning Organization capable of change and growth in which all students, teachers, parents and community members work collaboratively to ensure that all students are challenged, inspired and prepared to reach their maximum potential. The plan expands beyond academics, with an objective of improving student learning in all dimensions of mind, body and heart.

### MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of SPS is to provide an education that cultivates productive habits of mind, body and heart in every student.

### VISION STATEMENT

SPS will be a learning organization that continuously improves its effective, innovative and transformational teaching and learning. We will challenge, inspire and prepare all students to be productive contributing members of society.

### THEORY OF CHANGE

If we: ❶ Provide every student with a rigorous and challenging education within a safe environment; ❷ Foster a culture that encourages risk taking and creative problem solving; ❸ Partner with our community to maximize opportunities and experiences ►► Then we ensure that every SPS student reaches his or her potential and becomes creators of new knowledge.

To read more, go to [stamfordpublicschools.org](http://stamfordpublicschools.org).

## SPS IS A LEADER IN COLLEGE PREPAREDNESS

SPS high schools offer unparalleled enhanced academic experiences:

- ➔ More AP course options than most districts in a variety of disciplines and focus areas
- ➔ College-level classes through our partnerships with the University of Connecticut, Norwalk Community College and others
- ➔ Community internship programs, corporate mentoring and real-world work experiences

# 1430

top 10% of students scored at or above 1430 on the SAT

# 4

**TOP 4 IN CONNECTICUT**

for number of AP courses offered—28 AP courses with 292 AP scholars

# 49%

nearly half of SPS students complete Algebra I by end of Grade 8

# \$2M+

**SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS**

were awarded to the Class of 2018

# 3rd

highest number of AP tests with score of 3 or more in the state

# 196

SPS students participated in the Senior Internship Experience within 72 worksites



## MEASURING OUR IMPACT

### SPS IS CHANGING THE STORY OF OUR SCHOOLS

SPS is more than just data. We are a learning organization that is committed to continuous improvement in pursuit of excellence. During 2017–2018, we began to identify ways to measure success beyond academic achievement, with a focus on real-life skills, including cultural awareness and a collaborative approach to problem solving.

### SPS IS FOCUSING ON EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES AND RESOURCE ALLOCATION

To optimize resources and better support our schools, SPS reorganized its Central Office. The new structure is focused on:

- Individual School and Administrative Support and Development
- Intervention and Student Support
- Teaching and Learning

### WHAT MAKES AN SPS EDUCATION UNIQUE?

SPS ensures that our graduates become lifelong learners, creators and contributing members of our community.

# 91.3%

#### GRADUATION RATE

up from 88.9% in 2016  
(84% is the national average,  
87.9% is the CT state average)

# 3

#### NATIONAL MERIT SEMIFINALISTS

# 85%

of the Class of 2018 reported  
plans to attend college

# 90

students earned a Seal  
of Biliteracy in 2018



“This is what I hope to see in the future for all Stamford Public Schools: Teachers caring about, not just our knowledge, but also our mindsets, our health, our morals. ... It’s not only a start for the future of our schools but a start for my future, for my peers’ futures ... I suddenly have a feeling that my future looks brighter.”

Westhill High School Sophomore Alliyah Quinonez

### NEW INITIATIVES

#### ✦ International Baccalaureate World School

**May 2018:** Stamford High School achieved International Baccalaureate World School status and was approved to offer the Diploma Program, one of only nine high schools in Connecticut.

#### ✦ Early College Studies Program

**June 2018:** Stamford High School adopted the Early College Studies (ECS) Program, which gives students the opportunity to graduate high school and earn an associate degree in a technology-based field in four to six years.

#### ✦ Seal of Biliteracy

**June 2018:** Stamford adopted the Seal of Biliteracy to recognize students who attained proficiency in English and another language at the time of graduation. The seal was signed into law by the governor in 2016 and recognizes the value of being bilingual and biliterate in our global society.

# Susan Dougherty

**SPECIAL EDUCATION AND SCIENCE TEACHER, STAMFORD HIGH SCHOOL**

➔ 2018–2019 Teacher of the Year First Finalist

➔ Iona College, Bachelor of Arts

➔ City College, City University of New York, Master of Science

➔ 8 Years in SPS

## **What makes SPS your district of choice?**

I love working in Stamford because I am given the flexibility to conceive, create, design, initiate and implement innovative programs that benefit all students in heart, mind and body. I am able to use my work with NASA and bring it into the classroom in a way that enables all students to reach for the stars. Stamford Public Schools has confidence in my ability to challenge all students, and I appreciate the opportunity.

## **What is your greatest accomplishment?**

My greatest accomplishments were implementing the GLOBE program and the Student Spaceflight Experiment Program

(SSEP) from the ground up. GLOBE resulted in our students winning NASA, NOAA and the National Science Foundation's highest honors at the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic Science Research Symposium. SSEP resulted in students sending an experiment to the International Space Station. It's a teacher's dream to see their students on stage receiving medals from the world's greatest scientists because of hard work. It was the journey of imagining the idea, constructing a program, writing the grant to make it happen and recruiting eager colleagues to help that made this accomplishment so special.



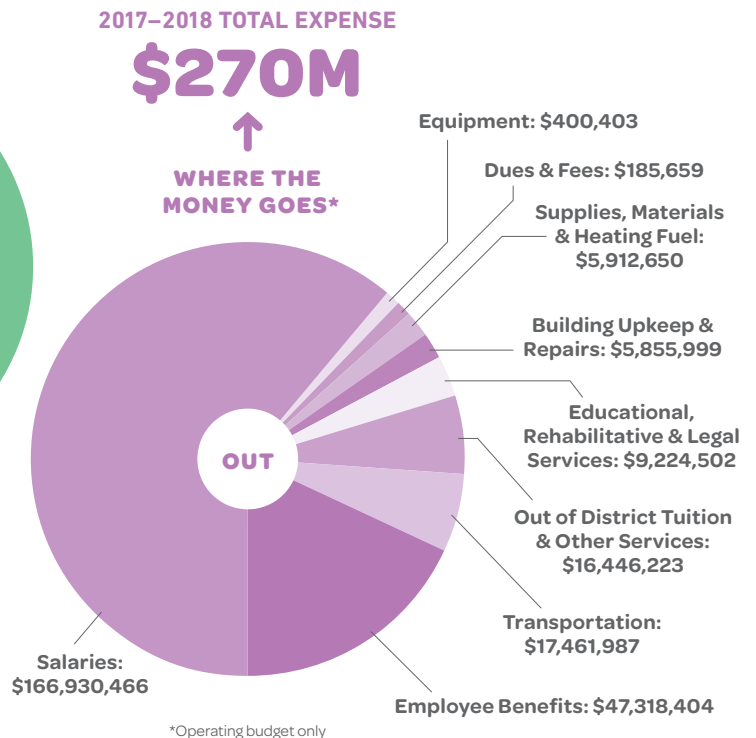
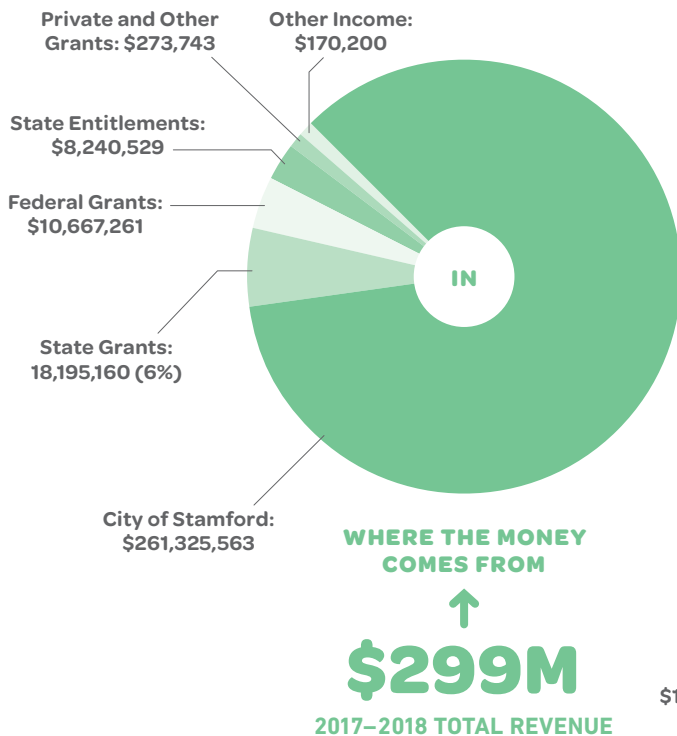
"I wake up certain that I can make a big difference to someone each day ... I say to myself, 'Nothing but happy memories' because that's what I wish for my students."

Read more about the NASA program on page 18.



## HOW STAMFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS OPERATES

SPS offers families a true community experience in which we can work, learn, live and play. SPS takes great pride in being an integral part of this special town. Our district is comprised of 21 schools where students are afforded a multitude of opportunities unique to Stamford. SPS supports magnet programs, International Baccalaureate sites, an Early College Experience program, JROTC, Agriscience, Finance Academy, mentoring, tutoring, active learning and more. SPS may be a large system, but we teach like a small school.







## GRANTS

**Awarded \$32,091,240 in state, federal and private funding for the 2017–2018 school year.**

- ✦ \$1,287,500 in **Federal Upward Bound Grant** funding at SHS was renewed for five years for support to students in preparation for college entrance.
- ✦ \$404,000 in **Low-Performing Schools Bond Funding grants** for WHS Media Center and Rippowam School classroom flexible seating.
- ✦ \$15,000 from **Mary Fitch Trust Foundation** for professional development for the AVID program to support college readiness for historically underserved students.
- ✦ \$2,000,000 for upgrades to school buildings through the **General Improvements to Alliance Districts' School Buildings Grant**. In collaboration with the City Engineering Department and the BOE Facilities Department, all 21 schools benefited from grant funds.
- ✦ 6,000 students from all schools benefited from before- and after-school academic and enrichment programs through the state-funded **Extended School Hours Grant**.
- ✦ 500+ mentors/volunteers from **Stamford Public Education Foundation**, serving three high schools, six middle schools and five elementary schools.
- ✦ \$259,000 in **State Afterschool grant** funding was awarded to Turn of River Middle, Stamford High and Westhill High schools for afterschool programming.

"I am grateful for my position in Stamford Public Schools and for all it has given me professionally and personally. Working with such a culturally diverse population of students and their families is what has allowed me to become a better educator."

**Camille Spaulding, SPS 2018–2019 Teacher of the Year and Cloonan Middle School teacher**



## UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ➔ **September 2017:** The SPS Adult and Continuing Education classes moved to a centrally located home at Old Town Hall on 175 Atlantic St. SPS will continue to explore opportunities to utilize this new space for additional adult learning and innovative enrichment programs.
- ➔ **February 2018:** Groundbreaking of new building for Strawberry Hill, an extension of Rogers International School. Students will move into the new facilities in fall 2019.

## TRANSPORTATION

# 12K

**STUDENTS ELIGIBLE  
FOR BUS SERVICE**

# 99.4%

**ON-TIME RATE  
ACHIEVED**

## FACILITIES

# 24

**FACILITY/OFFICE  
LOCATIONS**

# 3M+

**SQ. FT.**  
of buildings across  
300 acres of property

## PREPARING TO BE A LEARNING ORGANIZATION

- ➔ **Personal Mastery:** Continual learning, clarifying and deepening personal vision
- ➔ **Mental Models:** Awareness of personal sets of assumptions, views and prejudices
- ➔ **Shared Vision:** Common aspiration, purpose and commitment to create/accomplish something
- ➔ **Team Learning:** Suspending assumptions and entering into genuine thinking together
- ➔ **Systems Thinking:** Connecting the first four disciplines to see the patterns and the "whole picture"

# Audrey Molina

**WESTHILL HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 2019**

## **VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY CLASS OF 2023**

- ➔ Vanderbilt's Peabody College Dean's Scholar
- ➔ National Honor Society
- ➔ President's Volunteer Service Award
- ➔ Poetry Out Loud Connecticut State Champion

**How has SPS prepared you for your future?** SPS has fundamentally shaped my worldview and expanded my idea of what is possible. The opportunities provided allowed me to gain a variety of experiences and understand diverse perspectives. Probably the most important thing I've learned is that there is always more to learn. No matter how many tests I took or accomplishments I achieved, my teachers and advisors always encouraged me to reach higher. I was consistently encouraged to not only improve my own life but also to help improve the lives of those around me

as well. My experiences here have made me want to become an educator so I can pass on these invaluable lessons.

**What would you say to someone considering enrolling in SPS?** Public school often gets a bad rap ... but in my experience, SPS is willing to fight for its students' interests to create the best possible environment for intellectual and personal growth. The abundance of opportunities, both in school and out, ensures that every single student can find a place where they feel they belong. I am proud to call SPS my home.

Stamford Magazine's  
"Ten Teens to Watch"

United Way of Western  
Connecticut Service  
Certificate Holder

Stamford Literary  
Competition First  
Prize, Fiction

Brown University Junior  
Book Award for Writing





# HIGH ACHIEVEMENTS OF OUR STAFF AND STUDENTS

SPS is committed to equity and excellence. Our five-year high school graduation rate consistently exceeds the Connecticut average. As of 2018, Stamford ranks fourth in the state for the number of AP courses offered, and we are third in the state for percent of qualifying AP Exam scores (scores of 3 or higher). SPS is known for continuously closing the gap between under-resourced and economically advantaged learners. We take great pride in the achievements of our staff and students. At SPS, we believe that together we can do great things.

## \$43,330

The Council on International Educational Exchange awarded **13 AITE students Global Navigator Scholarships** totaling some \$43,330 to study abroad

## 2018 National Merit Scholarship Program

**1** National Merit Scholar,  
**3** National Merit Semifinalists and  
**11** Commended Students

Rippowam Middle School Eighth Grader Javan Green, WHS Freshman Tyree Harris and AITE Freshman Zachary Frattaroli competed in the **African American History Challenge** at the National Conference of 100 Black Men of America

## GOOD NEWS FOR 2017–2018

✧ College For Every Student named Cloonan Middle School a *School of Distinction* for the eighth consecutive year.

## #1 IN CT

**2018 National History Day State Champion** AITE Senior Donia Elmansy

Altice named AITE Sophomore Larry Bello-Castillo **First Runner-Up** in the **USA Hispanic Heritage Month Essay Contest**

✧ The New England League of Middle Schools renewed Scofield Magnet Middle School's designation as an NELMS Spotlight School. Scofield is one of only 34 Spotlight Schools throughout New England.

SHS was one of only 30 programs, out of 11,000 applications, selected to participate in **Mission 12 to the International Space Station (ISS)**

WHS Senior Naomi Solares and Junior Catherine Caragine qualified to compete at the **National FFA Convention**

WHS Senior Yaneira Torres and Junior Alyssa Goldberg, along with the WHS Mayor's Youth Leadership Council Advisor Justin LaBaire and Co-Advisor Ashley Torres, presented at the **22nd Annual Conference on Advancing School Mental Health** in Washington, D.C.

**2018 CT Regional Scholastic Art and Writing Competition** recognized 12 SPS students





## ACHIEVEMENTS

Cloonan Middle School Eighth Grader Anupriya Lulla qualified for the **Connecticut State Spelling Bee**

Nine SPS students earned Connecticut Association of Boards of Education **Student Leadership Awards**

### MORE GOOD NEWS FOR 2017–2018

- ✦ Springdale and Toquam designated as Schools of Distinction for achieving high growth in ELA for high-needs students
- ✦ Roxbury, Rippowam and WHS moved out of Focus School status
- ✦ Top 10% of students scored at or above 1430 on the SAT

## #1 IN CT

2018 CT **Poetry Out Loud State Champion**  
WHS Junior Audrey Molina

Toquam Elementary School Fifth Grader Brian Chen was runner-up in the Scholastic-organized and Pfizer-sponsored **"If Kids Could Cure"** contest

## 4 TEAMS 27 STUDENTS

advance to the **Odyssey of the Mind World Finals**—the most of any district in the state

## 11 STUDENTS

qualified for the CT **Debate Association CDA State Finals**

WHS's student-run publication named **"Most Outstanding High School Newspaper"** for the 2017–2018 school year by the American Scholastic Press Association

## 10

students accepted into **Ivy League colleges**

SHS Senior Cindy Luo earned second place in the Fourth District's **2018 Congressional Art Competition**

SHS Junior Katy Aillery and WHS Sophomore Ava Spinelli Mastrone qualified for the **CT Music Educators Association All-State Competition**

**The Peter Bloomer Citizenship Award Winner:**  
Cloonan Middle School Eighth Grader Olivia Conte

AITE ranked 12 and WHS ranked 63, out of 196 schools, on the Niche **"2018 Best Public High Schools in Connecticut"** list

Four SPS students were chosen to participate in the **Fairfield County String Festival**

### EXCELLENT STAFF

Each year SPS recognizes outstanding teachers in the district through its **Teacher of the Year and Spotlight Awards Program**. The Teacher of the Year and Spotlight Awards Program committee members evaluated all submissions based on the following criteria: Outstanding Teaching, Exceptional Student Support, Exemplary Community Involvement and Positive Influence on School Culture.

From among the submissions, the committee chose 20 individuals to be honored with a Spotlight Award, as well as the more exclusive group to be considered for Teacher of the Year. Teacher of the Year nominees completed three essays and were interviewed by the committee. Finalists then submitted a videotaped lesson. After reviewing the videos, the committee made its final selections:

- ✦ **2018–2019 Teacher of the Year Cloonan Seventh Grade Teacher Camille Spaulding**
- ✦ **First Finalist SHS Special Education Teacher Susan Dougherty**
- ✦ **Finalists: Brie O'Bryan, APPLES Preschool; Danielle Jeffries, WHS and Tiffany Clark, SHS**
- ✦ **Semifinalists: Paul LaQuesse, AITE and Ronet Noe, Newfield Elementary**

Nine Stamford educators earned **Fund For Teachers Fellowships** to improve their classroom practice

AITE Math Teacher Marina Giuliano named **Presidential Awards of Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching State Finalist**

Senior Social Worker and Clinical Supervisor Emily Segal named CT Association of School-Based Health Centers **Provider of the Year**



# Jonathan Fontneau

## CITY OF STAMFORD CHIEF OF POLICE STAMFORD HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNUS

- Southern Connecticut State University, Bachelor of Social Work
- JFK School of Government at Harvard University, Public Leadership Credential
- Police Officer of the Year
- Distinguished Chief Award by Police Commissioners Association of Connecticut

### **What would you say to someone considering enrolling in SPS?**

The education I received from SPS was second to none. The schools and teachers prepared me for scholastic and social success in my academic years, as well as in my adult life. Stamford is a rich, diverse city with many cultures. The city of Stamford as a whole has many cultural experiences that I have had the privilege of attending while working as a police officer. Learning about traditions and beliefs has enriched and influenced my life in countless ways and has enhanced my career.

**Who influenced you most?** My most positive educational influence was my father, Fred Fontneau, who was an elementary school teacher and principal in SPS. He held education and learning in the highest regard. He was an avid reader and lifelong learner and encouraged everyone to do so. He enthusiastically embraced the children and grade level that he was associated with. His kind and helpful nature resonated with me as a police officer, living the motto, "Always treat others the way you want to be treated."



Lifelong Stamford Resident

# Sid Watson

**ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL, RIPPOWAM MIDDLE SCHOOL**

- Norfolk State University,  
Bachelor of Science
- Regent University,  
Master of Education
- Walden University,  
Education Specialist
- 8 Years in SPS

**What makes SPS your district of choice?** For me, the core of teaching and learning has always been about the development of the whole child. As an educator, I firmly believe that teaching the whole child goes beyond the delivery of content; it's about developing the whole child and building positive relationships. The SPS mission and vision truly speaks to the importance of providing all students with a holistic education through habits of mind, body and heart, which is why SPS is my district of choice.

**What would you say to someone considering enrolling in SPS?** Having served in the district as both a teacher and administrator, Stamford is a district that continues to grow and reflect on ways to better serve all students. SPS knows the importance of exploring and implementing research-based practices to help teachers better serve our students for 21st-century learning.

**What gets you up in the morning?** Gratitude. I am grateful to serve in a profession that provides me with countless opportunities to impact the lives of so many students.

"What I know for sure:  
this work brings me pure  
joy, and there is nothing  
I'd rather be doing."





## CULTIVATING PRODUCTIVE HABITS OF MIND

SPS works to ensure that all students acquire and effectively apply critical, creative and self-regulated thinking to every aspect of their education. Our Curriculum and Instruction encourages flexible learning environments, student-centered and inquiry-based instruction that can accommodate individual learning differences.

SPS may be a large system, but we teach like a small school. Our teachers and administrators value one-on-one relationships and work collaboratively with each other, parents and students to help one another improve.

Across the district, SPS utilizes a variety of teaching practices and programs to help each student reach their full potential, whether they require extra support or a new challenge. K-12 instruction features:

- Small Group Instruction
- Learning Centers

→ Scientific Research-Based Intervention

→ Tiered Framework of Supports and Enrichment

There is nothing average about SPS students. SPS students come to the classroom with a broad spectrum of experiences, from private and public preschools to diversity in culture and language. Our administrators take great care to create classroom cohorts of students who are balanced by gender, ethnicity, learning styles, needs and all

available data, resulting in a creative and dynamic learning environment.

### ENRICHING THE SCHOOL DAY

Students are offered learning opportunities and experiences in a wide array of interests and areas of focus. In addition to district-wide opportunities, individual buildings offer enrichment programs based on resources and student interest, as well as faculty strengths and creativity. Enrichment programs encourage deeper thinking, active learning and student engagement.

### A TYPICAL ELEMENTARY CLASSROOM LESSON

**S**PS has a workshop model in place for elementary Math and Literacy. Students begin the lesson with whole group instruction. During this 10-minute introduction, the teacher reviews the objective for the day and teaches the skill of focus. Based on data or teacher notes, students then move into small groups. Typically one group works with the teacher, one group works with a paraprofessional (in K) and the other group works independently or with buddy reading. One of these two stations could also be a technology station where students are working on iPads or Chromebook. At the end of the workshop time, the students and teacher come back together to review the learning of the day in order for the students to master the objective and for the teacher to gather an overall assessment of what the class understood.







### TECHNOLOGY ENHANCES THE SPS EXPERIENCE

Smart boards, laptops and handheld devices are integrated into the majority of our classrooms (where appropriate), and the individual school administrators are encouraged to investigate new opportunities that would better serve the needs of their unique school population. The majority of our middle schools utilize the Google suite of intelligent apps. The tools encourage collaboration, creativity and innovation among the student population. Many schools are also piloting technology-based solutions, including teacher communication apps, email solutions and digital collaboration tools.



### SPS SUPPORTS OUR YOUNGEST LEARNERS

**P**reschool develops children's social, emotional and cognitive skills. Children who have had a high-quality preschool experience in a private or public program tend to outscore their kindergarten classmates who have had little or no such experience. These gains are often maintained throughout their academic careers. The Stamford School Readiness Preschool Program was established to provide three- and four-year-olds of all socioeconomic levels with full-day, school-day or part-day early care and education programs.

*"The better a child is prepared for kindergarten, the less likely they are to fall behind."*

**CLC CEO Marc E. Jaffe,**  
**C2C Co-Chair**

The School Readiness Preschool Program provides a range of comprehensive services for families, including: ► Health services, including vision, hearing and dental screenings and a fully staffed nursing program; ► Special needs services; ► Breakfast, lunch and snacks as part of a complete nutrition education program; ► Parent involvement activities and learning sessions; ► Comprehensive family service referrals; ► Sliding fee scale



## SPS ON A MISSION

### SPS MISSION 12 TO THE INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION

In fall 2017, SHS was one of only 30 schools and science research organizations, out of 11,000 applications nationwide, selected to participate in the National Center for Earth and Space Science Education (NCESE) Mission 12 to the International Space Station.

Dr. Jeff Goldstein, creator of Student Spaceflight Experiments Program (SSEP) and NCESE Center Director, describes the program: "Student teams design a real experiment, propose a real flight opportunity, experience a formal proposal review and go through a NASA flight safety review."

The winning experiment by 13 juniors and seniors tested how yeast breeds in space. In June, the winning project traveled on a SpaceX Dragon rocket to the International Space Station as part of the SSEP sponsored by NASA.

In an associated contest, two SPS students were winners of the SSEP Mission 12 Patch Art Design Contest. The winning designs were worn by Mission 12 astronauts.

→ To learn more about the program, visit [ssep.ncesse.org](http://ssep.ncesse.org).



# Ashton Williams

STAMFORD HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 2019

## UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH CLASS OF 2023

- FCIAC Fall Exemplary Scholar-Athlete, Cross Country
- Herb Kohn Community Service Award and Scholarship
- Vice President SHS Chapter, National Honor Society

**How has SPS prepared you for your future?** Attending Stamford Public Schools has provided me with the tools I need to mature and eventually be prepared for the real world. I have had a great support system of teachers and administrators backing me up throughout my time in SPS, especially in high school. Throughout high school, teachers and administrators have provided me scholarship and volunteering opportunities to make sure I am able to succeed, and I am grateful for that. Participating in cross-country, indoor track and field, and outdoor

track and field has helped boost my confidence and drive. In addition, being named captain in all three of these sports has taught me valuable leadership skills.

**What would you say to someone considering enrolling in SPS?** SPS provides such a diverse and welcoming community, that one would not feel out of place at all. Furthermore, SPS has great teachers who build strong relationships with their students and also ensure that their students will get the best education that they can provide.

Majoring in Physical Therapy

Captain, Cross Country, Indoor Track & Field and Outdoor Track & Field

The National Academy of Future Scientists and Technologists Award of Excellence



# Christopher Martin

**TEAM LEADER, U.S. ARMY  
ACADEMY OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND ENGINEERING ALUMNUS**

- American University, Bachelor of Arts
- Attended SPS PreK-12
- Graduate, U.S. Army Airborne School
- Volunteer, ARI of Connecticut, Pearl Harbor National Memorial and Stamford History Center

**How has SPS prepared you for your future?** Many of the significant decisions that were ultimately best for me were outside of my comfort zone. I had teachers, guidance counselors and mentors who advised me to take paths that I did not necessarily want to take. These classes or extracurricular activities were the most important and relevant to my current life and job.

**Why is it important for SPS to focus on more than just academics?** The baseline for primary and secondary

education should be to teach engagement and critical thinking: the two skills that will be useful throughout a lifetime. Franklin Forum and Debate, two extracurricular activities, are about critical thinking, civil engagement and having a healthy outlet to discuss our issues as a society. I learned a lot about logic and the responsibilities of citizenship from these two programs. I also learned to face the fact that I can be wrong, and there is a healthy and productive way to accept that.



"Teachers who took their work seriously, but never took themselves too seriously, were some of my biggest influences. ... They showed you how to take a job seriously, invest in doing it right, but never put your ego so deep into it that you couldn't accept failure or grow from your mistakes."





## CULTIVATING PRODUCTIVE HABITS OF BODY

SPS encourages all students to lead an active life, make healthy choices and take care of physical and emotional needs. We know that success in academics, athletics and life starts with a healthy body and mind. Guiding our students to develop these healthy habits begins at a young age and will serve them well into their future.

Across the district, Chartwells (our in-school meal provider) offers whole grains, unlimited fresh local produce and no high-fructose corn syrup. In early 2018, Stamford was awarded a \$30,000 grant from AASA, the School Superintendents Association funded by the Walmart Foundation, to increase breakfast participation using alternative breakfast models. Recognizing that not all families have access

*“Start your day off right: get enough sleep, eat food that has some nutritional value and prioritize.”*

**Randi Schock Fodiman,**  
Rippowam Middle School, TEAM Special Education Teacher

to healthy meals on week-ends, SPS works with the nonprofit organization Filling in the Blanks to provide “take-home” meals for students during the school year. Filling in the Blanks also provides meals to students attending summer camp.

### 5

meal components offered daily for breakfast and lunch: Fruit, Vegetable, Protein, Whole Grain, Dairy

### 685

During the school year, our community partner Filling in the Blanks worked with 14 SPS schools, serving some 685 families with 24,660 take-home meals.

### 2,500

Chartwells serves over 2,500 breakfast meals and 7,400 lunches daily through the federally funded School Meals Program.

### 555

Filling in the Blanks provided 3,330 meals for some 555 students attending four summer camps in Stamford.





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**#1**

SHS Sophomore Ben Feldman won the FCIAC, CIAC Class LL and CIAC Open championships in the 100-yard butterfly.

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**56**

SPS boasts 56 athletic teams at the two district high schools combined.

### A HEALTHY SCHOOL SPIRIT

SPS provides health and wellness education services that address physical fitness. In conjunction with community agencies, our schools offer an array of student-driven extracurricular activities that foster productive habits of body, including team sports, individual fitness and after-school clubs. Our high school athletes compete in one of the premier athletic conferences in Connecticut.

“It is essential to maintain a healthy body in order to learn and perform successfully. ... As a student-athlete, remind yourself regularly that being a student comes first.”

Randi Schock Fodiman, Rippowam Middle School, TEAM Special Education Teacher and SHS Head Varsity Coach, Field Hockey

Many of our schools have established creative ways to encourage exercise-friendly traditions, such as the Turtle Trot, Jog-a-thon and Raptor Dash.

### MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Planned, sequential PreK–12 physical education provides psychomotor, cognitive and affective content and learning experiences that promote optimum personal development. Quality curriculum and instruction, provided in a safe, supportive environment, offer meaningful, challenging learning for all students and result in lifetime learning outcomes of skills, literacy and ability to understand concepts and develop plans for lifetime physical activity and wellness.



# Kathleen Joseph Kelley

**ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL, DAVENPORT RIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
RIPPOWAM HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNA**

- ➔ University of Massachusetts, Bachelor of Science
- ➔ Fordham University, Master of Education
- ➔ Fairfield University, Certificate of Advanced Study
- ➔ 30 Years in SPS

## **How is SPS fulfilling its mission?**

Our commitment to ensuring that all students develop productive habits of mind, body and heart speaks to teaching the whole child. SPS has challenged each school to address social emotional learning. Research shows that emotions drive learning, decision-making, creativity, relationships and health ... I am excited to be part of the rollout of the RULER Program, which is an evidence-based approach for integrating social and emotional learning into schools. It is a privilege to work in a district that values social emotional learning.

## **What would you say to someone considering enrolling in SPS?**

I am a product of SPS as are my husband and our two daughters. Learning alongside peers from different backgrounds, cultures and experiences has prepared us to live and work in a world where there are diverse perspectives, ideas and work styles. SPS is committed to "challenging, inspiring and preparing all students" for success beyond the classroom. Our diverse community, along with high expectations, a challenging curriculum and quality instruction, will provide a foundation for success for all.

"SPS is a diverse community. Diverse classrooms teach some of the most important 21st-century skills like complex thinking skills, empathy, compassion and resilience."





## CULTIVATING PRODUCTIVE HABITS OF HEART

At SPS, Habits of Heart include emotional health, good character, positive decision-making, and feeling and showing empathy for others. Our goal is for SPS students not only to graduate prepared for college or career, but also to become contributing members of our community.

### SAFETY FORUM

Throughout the year, our district works with the community to address concerns and increase public awareness. In March 2018, then-Superintendent Earl Kim, Mayor David Martin and other city officials hosted a town hall discussion on safety in our school buildings. Prompted by the Parkland High School shooting, more than 200 people attended the midweek forum, raising awareness and addressing safety concerns.

### INSPIRING STUDENTS THROUGH EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

SPS is proud to offer all students a variety of activities to participate in throughout their academic careers. These activities include competitive athletics, academic clubs, performing arts and much more.

Each school offers an array of student-driven extracurricular activities. Our high schools feature competitive debate, band, percussion, dramatic and theater programs, and much more. There are a multitude of clubs offered that vary from school to school within



the district. These clubs can be academic in nature, such as the Spanish Club, or service clubs like the Mayor's Youth Leadership Council (MYLC). There are many options to choose from whether a student is looking for something to help prepare for the future, such as Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) or to incite passion with an organization, such as the Environmental Club.

SPS annually strives to achieve the goal of student participation in at least one co-curricular activity.

**50+**

clubs and activities offered  
in SPS high schools

**29**

CBITS groups in 16 schools

SPS is in its fourth year of implementing evidence-based group therapeutic interventions for students who have experienced traumatic stress, called Cognitive Behavioral Interventions for Trauma in Schools (CBITS) or Bounce Back. The techniques used include psychoeducation, relaxation and social problem solving, and are designed to reduce symptoms of PTSD, depression and behavioral problems. The program also improves functioning, grades and attendance, peer and parent support, and coping skills. In 2017–2018, we trained an additional 30 mental health staff in CBITS.

# TJ Salta

## ACADEMY OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY & ENGINEERING CLASS OF 2019

### QUINNIPIAC UNIVERSITY CLASS OF 2023

- ➔ National Honor Society
- ➔ Hispanic Heritage Foundation Scholarship for Business and Entrepreneurship
- ➔ 2018 Connecticut's Got Talent Finalist

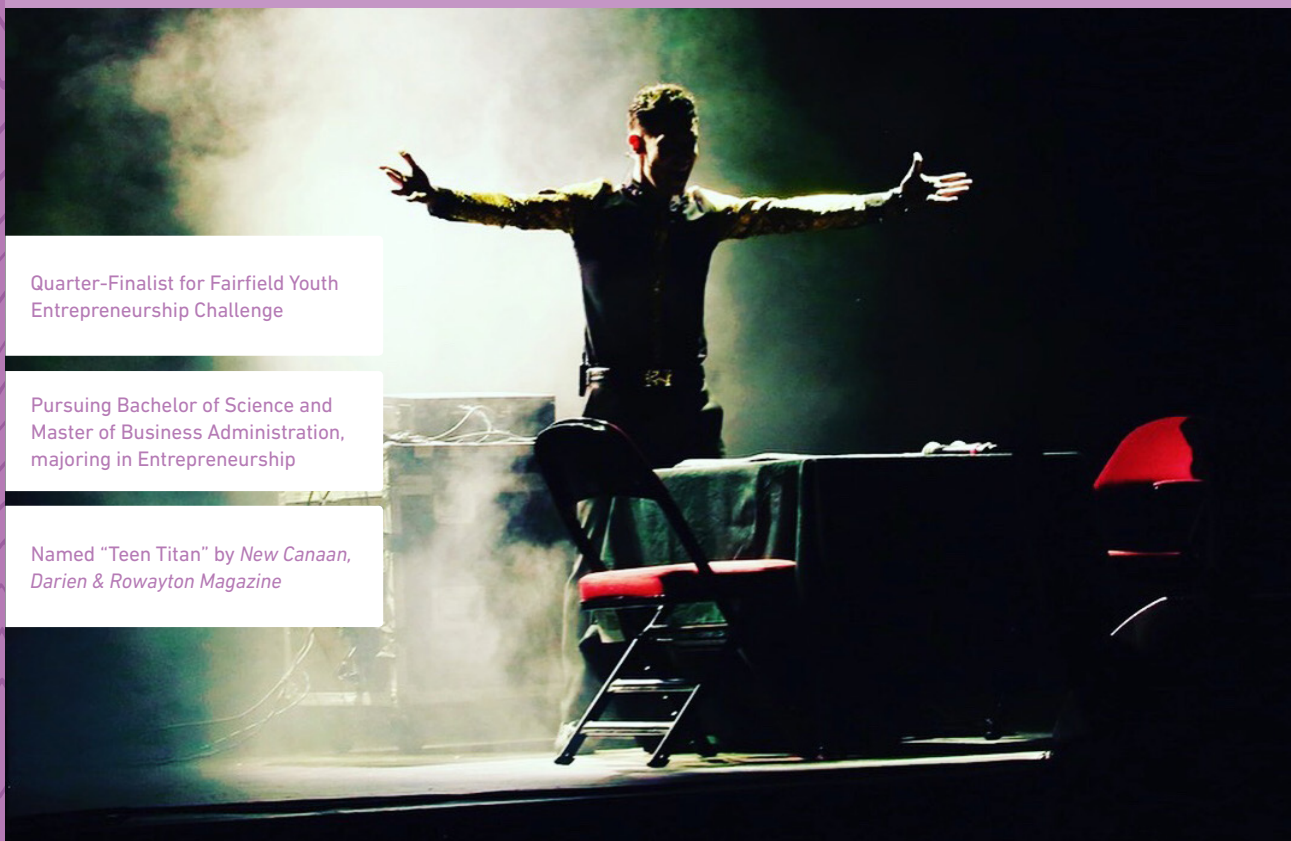
**How has SPS prepared you for your future?** I can say with confidence that the curriculum, staff and student body of SPS prepares students not only by providing them with an education but also by creating long-lasting relationships. The staff members make a noticeable effort to educate the mind as well as inspire students to be the best version of themselves. A prime example of this would be the outpouring of support I have received from my teachers, staff and peers regarding my profession as a magician.

**How has participation in extracurricular activities influenced you?** Through the guidance of Network for Teaching Entrepreneurs (NFTE) and the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), I was able to participate, compete and become a quarter-finalist in the Fairfield Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge at UCONN Stamford. This experience was life changing and enabled me to progress my magic business further.

Quarter-Finalist for Fairfield Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge

Pursuing Bachelor of Science and Master of Business Administration, majoring in Entrepreneurship

Named "Teen Titan" by *New Canaan, Darien & Rowayton Magazine*





# Richard Robinson

**CHIEF JUSTICE, CONNECTICUT SUPREME COURT  
WESTHILL HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNUS**

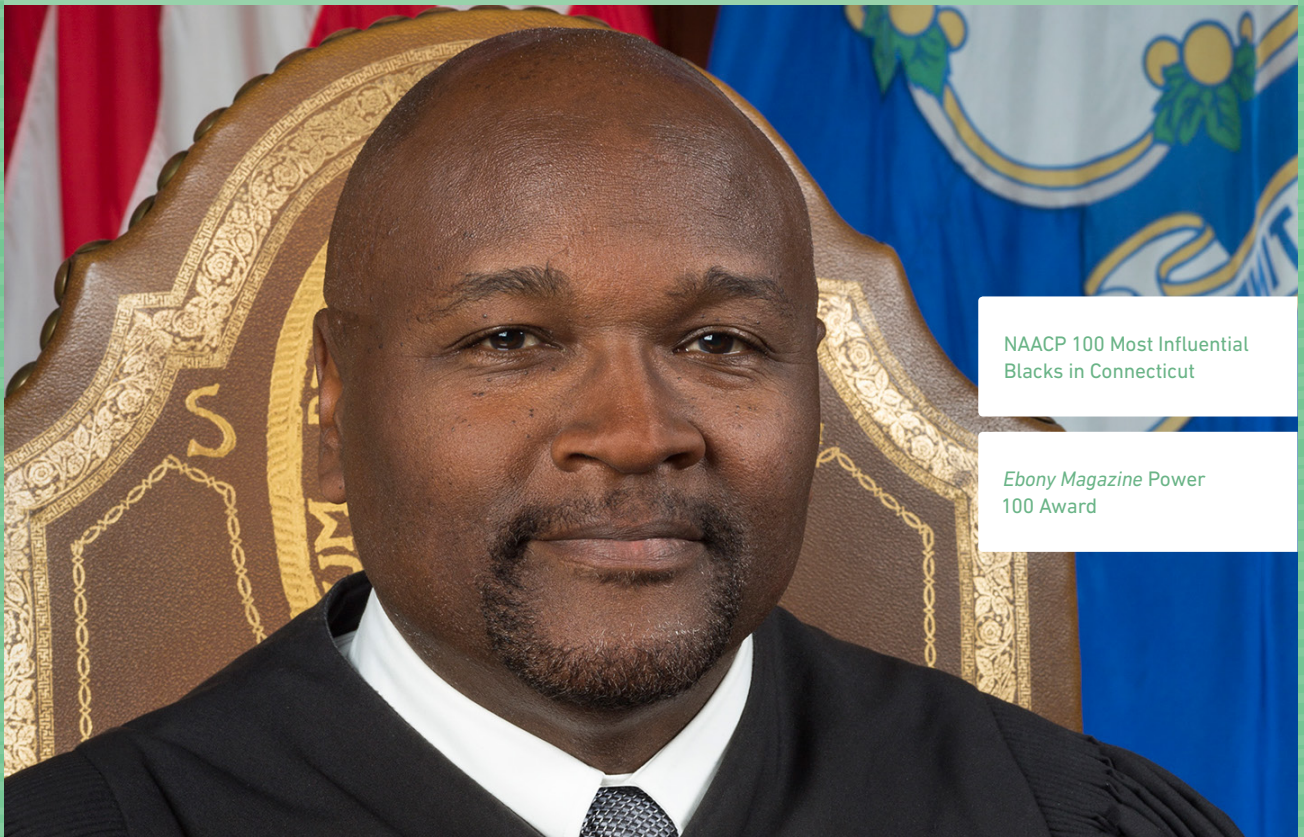
- University of Connecticut, Bachelor of Arts
- West Virginia University School of Law, Juris Doctor
- Member of U.S. District Court of Northern District of West Virginia
- Member of U.S. District Court of Connecticut

**How has SPS influenced you?** One of my earliest mentors was my fourth grade teacher at Stevens School, which is now the Yerwood Community Center. The first teacher I can remember reaching out and really helping me along was my fourth grade teacher at Stevens School, Mrs. Janet Harris. She used to say to me, "You're the cream of the crop." I'll never forget that. It has stuck with me to this day.

**Why Stamford?** Stamford means the world to me. It gave me my start in my professional career. A lot of my mentors are still there. I try to give

back as much as I possibly can. I was born and raised in Stamford, and it will always be in my heart.

**What are some of the awards you have received?** I received the Connecticut Bar Association Henry J. Naruk Judiciary Award for Integrity, the Connecticut Bar Foundation James W. Cooper Fellows, Life Fellow, the Connecticut Bar Association Young Lawyers Section Diversity Award and the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities' Alvin W. Penn Award for Excellence in Leadership.



NAACP 100 Most Influential  
Blacks in Connecticut

*Ebony Magazine* Power  
100 Award





### COLLABORATING WITH THE COMMUNITY: CRADLE TO CAREER

Stamford has a strong tradition of community and collaboration, and SPS is instilling those values in our students. As a school district, we recognize that we cannot do it alone; we need the support and guidance of many in our community. For the past three years, SPS has partnered with community-based organizations, city and state officials and business leaders to create a collective impact effort, Stamford Cradle to Career (C2C), under the leadership of the United Way of Western Connecticut.

C2C and SPS, in collaboration with the community, are working to fill the gap in teaching and learning. We are working to identify and teach those skills that are needed for success in postsecondary education and/or career. We are encouraging proficiency in 21st-century skills and student innovation.

#### THE ESSENCE OF THE SPS VISION

In May 2018, SPS sponsored a Video Challenge Contest, encouraging students, staff members or alumni to create short videos (up to two minutes in length) that demonstrated the essence of the SPS vision. The winning video features an original score and song performed by students and staff of the Strawberry Hill School. In the two-minute piece, the production team illustrated the SPS vision—to challenge, inspire and prepare—all conveyed through the experiences of a second grade student.



See the video at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kiqKjalq54I>

#### 1st Place: "Because We Are"

*Produced by: Seth Goldstein, Sophie Foster,  
Jessica Petruzzelli, Diego Bars and Adele Forman*

*Representing: Strawberry Hill, an extension  
of Rogers International School*



#### MAYOR'S YOUTH LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

The Mayor's Youth Leadership Council (MYLC), with chapters in each of our high schools, is an organization that helps our students practice productive habits of heart. MYLC is one of the largest youth activism organizations in the state and addresses social issues through public awareness activities, volunteerism and social awareness campaigns.

#### ALL-SCHOOL MUSICAL

Each year, students from across the district come together to produce our high-quality All-School Musical. Open to Stamford students/residents in grades 5 through 12, students can participate either as performers, tech crew or part of the orchestra. In 2017, over 100 students from across Stamford participated in the 11th annual All-School Musical, *The Wizard of Oz*.

# WHERE WILL THE STRATEGIC PLAN TAKE US?

**S**tamford Public Schools envisions graduating caring, confident and successful young people: individual students who are not only academically prepared, but who also are attuned to their humanity and empowered to interact with, appreciate and enrich the world around them. We envision classrooms that are student-centered and teacher-driven, where instruction is tailored to meet the learning needs of every student. We envision a community that fosters inquiry, collaborative problem-solving, critical thinking, creativity, risk-taking, reflection and feedback as part of the individual

and organizational learning process.

To achieve our vision we will align goals, objectives and initiatives from Central Office through each school building and into individual classrooms. We will continually monitor and measure outcomes, adapt to the changes

around us and address the shifting needs of the students we serve. We look forward to working with our stakeholders to provide rich learning experiences for all of Stamford's young people and to establishing SPS as a leader among Connecticut's educational systems.

SPS schools pride themselves in each unique community and approach to educating students. Across the district, administrators and staff share best practices and ideas, with the goal to constantly improve the educational experience.

*"As a parent, I observed SPS's willingness to put forth the effort to meet each student where they are on their learning continuum, by providing a plethora of opportunities at each level of learning."*

**Camille Spaulding, parent of Shannon Spaulding, WHS '10**

## THE PROCESS MOVING FORWARD

The 2017–2022 Strategic Plan ensures the successful implementation of our strategic goals. Under each goal there are multiple objectives that provide further focus and define target outcomes. Individual buildings and departments have identified specific initiatives and action steps to progress toward the goal while monitoring progress. District leadership will review goals, objectives, initiatives and action steps on an annual basis, assessing how successful strategies are in pursuit of a specific goal and adjusting as needed to ensure the greatest impact on student outcomes.

Science, Technology,  
Engineering,  
Art and Math

21st-Century Skills

Arts and  
Problem Solving

Student-Centered  
International-  
Mindedness

## SPS SCHOOLS TEACH THROUGH VARIED METHODS AND AREAS OF FOCUS:

Structured  
Inquiry

Cooperation, Assertion,  
Responsibility, Empathy  
and Self-Control

Responsive Classroom

Higher Order  
Thinking





## MIND

Implement curriculum that can accommodate individual learning differences and encourage flexible learning environments, including student-centered and inquiry-based instruction.

Integrate differentiated instruction and support systems for both struggling and accelerated learners, such as expanded enrichment options during and after school.



## BODY

Provide health and wellness education and services that will teach, encourage and support healthy life choices.

Develop and expand programs that address food insecurity, such as a school breakfast program.



## HEART

Support development of Social Emotional Learning: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and responsible decision-making and relationship skills.

Support, monitor and evaluate school climate and students' knowledge of self and relationship to others, such as Responsive Classroom.





**Stamford** Public Schools  
EXCELLENCE IS THE POINT.

**[stamfordpublicschools.org](http://stamfordpublicschools.org)**