

Family School Connection

Bielefield Elementary School

70 Maynard Road, Middletown, CT 06457

To Connecticut Legislators - I'm reaching out to you in response to the Governor's proposed program elimination of the Family School Connection program under the Children's Trust Fund. This proposal would completely eliminate funding for Family Empowerment, Family School Connection, Children's Law Center, and the Kinship Fund. I urge you to consider carefully the significant opportunity you have to ensure continued funding for these important programs, particularly as they serve school-aged children most at risk of failing to achieve their academic goals and grade level expectations.

The FAMILY SCHOOL CONNECTION program has been implemented in Title I schools identified as in need of improvement in some of Connecticut's highest poverty school districts. Bielefield School is now a FOCUS SCHOOL because of the achievement gap between the Hispanic subgroup and overall school's achievement level. This program provides critical support for students and families that would jeopardize the progress made to date if eliminated.

What is the FAMILY SCHOOL CONNECTION program? FAMILY SCHOOL CONNECTION IS:

- A scientific research-based program with ten years of empirical data DEMONSTRATING EFFECTIVENESS, supported by the University of Hartford School of Social Research. In Middletown, 100% of the families have opted into the research program, understanding that data-driven decision making is necessary to achieve student academic success.
- A home visiting program for families whose children are likely to be struggling with issues in school and at home.
- A prevention program for families whose children are frequently absent, truant, have academic or behavioral problems, or come to school unprepared to learn.
- A significant safety net for families with school-aged children that have arrived in the educational system without benefit of earlier prevention strategies. Although the Governor has supported early childhood prevention programs, these programs are **voluntary** and significant numbers of students slip through the cracks and arrive in schools without the benefit of earlier, much-needed support services.
- Making promising gains in attendance, behavior, and student academic achievement!
- Helping to CLOSE THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP!

FAMILY SCHOOL CONNECTION IS NOT:

- A duplication of services! There are no other prevention home visiting programs available to parents of school-aged children in Connecticut!
- An intervention program! The Family School Connection model is a **prevention program** that targets families, **before they are involved with DCF**, who may be at risk for neglect and educational disengagement.

A NEW BI-LINGUAL HOME VISITOR POSITION WAS ADDED WITH ALLIANCE GRANT FUNDS IN 2012, IN ORDER TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF BIELEFIELD'S HISPANIC SUBGROUP. THE COMMISSIONER FULLY SUPPORTED THIS INITIATIVE THROUGHOUT MIDDLETOWN'S ALLIANCE GRANT APPROVAL PROCESS. Please take this important opportunity to restore funding to the FAMILY SCHOOL CONNECTION program for our most at-risk children.

Respectfully Submitted,

Elizabeth K. Nocera

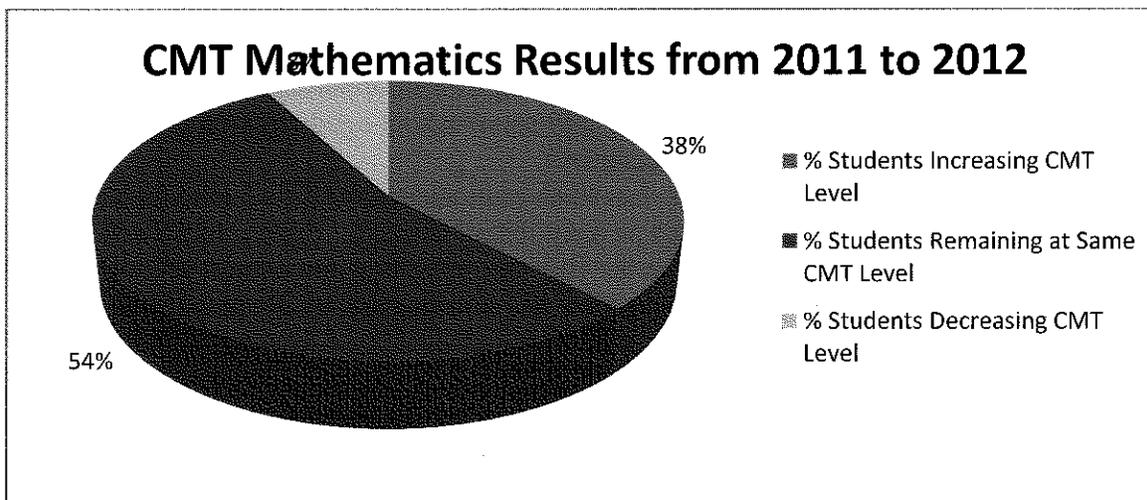
Director of Grant Services, Middletown Public Schools

2012 Program Report Card: Middletown Family School Connection

Is Anyone Better Off?

Connecticut Mastery Test results for **Mathematics** from 2011 to 2012 for FSC students at Bielefield School.

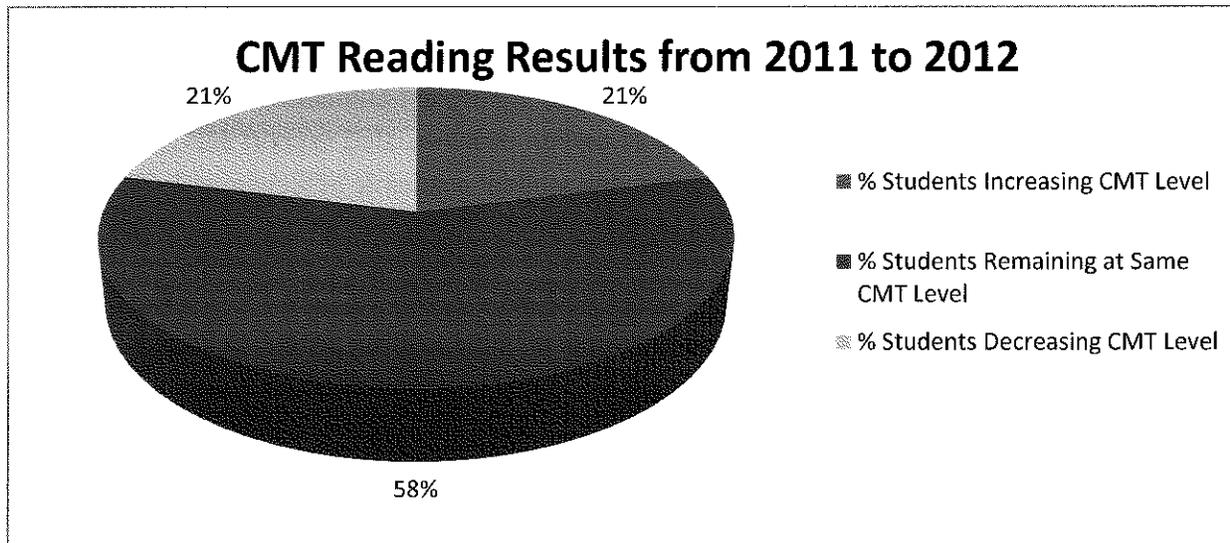
Trend: ▲



Story behind the baseline: Twenty-four (24) target students in the Bielefield Family School Connection program had Connecticut Mastery Test results for at least two test periods. In analyzing the scores from 2011 to 2012, 38% of target children from FSC families showed an increase in their CMT level in mathematics. For the students remaining at the same level in mathematics, 21% were already at the proficient level or above. This is considered a positive trend.

Connecticut Mastery Test results for **Reading** from 2011 to 2012 for FSC students at Bielefield School.

Trend: ◀▶



Story behind the baseline: Twenty-four (24) target students in the Bielefield Family School Connection program had Connecticut Mastery Test results for at least two test periods. In analyzing the scores from 2011 to 2012, 21% of target children from FSC families showed an increase in their CMT level in reading and 21% of target children showed a decrease in their CMT level. For the students remaining at the same level in reading, 29% were already at the proficient level or above. **Overall however, Bielefield School results demonstrate the same limited progress in reading as the FSC subgroup, so this trend is considered neutral.** The School Data Team will continue to use instructional strategies to provide intervention to struggling readers in Grades K-5.