

New Haven School Change

SHAPING THE FUTURE



New Haven School Change
NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Something big is happening in New Haven Public Schools



Kristian Avery, above, is a student at Hill Central School who loves slam poetry and wants to be a pilot someday. He also wants to be the first in his immediate family to go to college. "Writing is my key to freedom," he said.

Solanly Canas, right, was valedictorian at High School in the Community in 2013. "I struggled in school when I got to the U.S. because I did not speak English, but those hard moments made me stronger and taught me to work harder for my goals and my life dream of going to college. All the hard moments that I had to face helped me become the person that I am now," she said.



New Haven schools are seeing real and dramatic improvement in academic achievement, graduation rates and learning climate. Literacy, math and science skills are strengthening. Arts, music and athletics programs are vibrant. Students who once never considered college as an attainable goal are dreaming bigger thanks to the New Haven Promise college scholarship program. Community and parent engagement around schools is growing.

This is New Haven School Change and it's making a difference in the lives of 22,000 school children.

School Change is an exciting school reform initiative that has gained national recognition for its innovative, collaborative and persistent approach to improving schools. The city of New Haven and its teachers, administrators, parents and community members have stepped up to the plate with the shared goal of making New Haven one of the best school districts in the country. Since 2009, we've made significant progress – but we know we have a long way to go.

School improvement has been building in New Haven for decades, bolstered by a School Construction Program that rebuilt nearly every school in the district, advances in curriculum, expansion of preschool opportunities and development of the largest Inter-district Magnet School Program in the state of Connecticut.

Under the leadership of Mayor John DeStefano Jr. and former Superintendent of Schools Dr. Reginald Mayo, the district launched New Haven School Change in 2009 and set out to achieve three goals: Eliminate the achievement gap with the state; improve four-year graduation rates and cut the dropout rate in half; and make sure every student can go to college and be successful. Superintendent of Schools Garth Harries, who was the architect of School Change as an Assistant Superintendent and who succeeded Dr. Mayo after his retirement in 2013, is continuing the momentum and calling for parents, educators and the community to work together to deepen and extend school reform efforts.

The overall goal of School Change is simple – to give our students the best education possible so they can pursue their dreams and achieve success in college, career and life. We believe every student deserves a great school, great teachers, a great education and a bright future. New Haven School Change is taking us there.



**Mayor
John DeStefano Jr.**



**Superintendent of Schools
Garth Harries**



**Former Superintendent
of Schools
Dr. Reginald Mayo**



New Haven School Change

New Haven School Change has been years in the making, but the comprehensive transformation currently underway began in October 2009 with the ratification of a landmark teachers' contract that set a new course for education in New Haven. Educators here helped design a blueprint for School Change that includes a rigorous teacher evaluation and development system praised by U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and a turnaround approach that lets schools embrace improvement plans that address their unique needs and student population.

New Haven School Change recognizes that improving schools is a complex task and cannot rely on a "one size fits all" plan. Our work is designed to be comprehensive, collaborative and persistent, with a sharp focus on preparing all students for success in college, career and life. We measure progress with three goals:

- **Eliminate the achievement gap by raising test scores to at least the state average.**
- **Improve the four-year graduation rate and cut the dropout rate in half.**
- **Make sure every student is academically prepared and financially able to go to college.**

How do we achieve success?

STUDENTS – All Kids Rise

New Haven School Change means providing both academic learning and personal development that empowers students to achieve success in college, career and life.

ACADEMIC LEARNING New Haven is focused on implementing a rigorous, standards-based curriculum that aims to prepare every student for success in the classroom and beyond. We are ahead of the curve in transitioning to the clearer, higher standards of Common Core. More rigorous STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) graduation requirements are preparing our graduates for the jobs of the future.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT New Haven recognizes the importance of making sure students have strong character, social ability and self-awareness in order to be successful in school and in life. School Change means supporting students' personal development, including social, emotional and behavioral needs. We use a multi-tiered approach that involves teachers, specialist staff and community partners.

PRE-K-COLLEGE TRAJECTORY New Haven is committed to the goal of ensuring that every graduate has the academic ability and the financial resources to attend and succeed in college. New Haven Promise is a scholarship and support program that promotes college education as an aspiration for all New Haven public school students, from pre-K through high school graduation and beyond. The future Gateway Technical Institute focuses on career pathways and offers students a chance to earn industry-recognized certificates by taking classes in public safety, business, culinary arts and, down the road, pre-engineering and computer design.



What does New Haven School Change look like?

- Students are engaged in rigorous academic learning and personal development that starts in the classroom and extends to the rest of their lives.
 - Schools act as the centers for learning, where educators take collective responsibility for students and work together to help them set goals for the future and achieve great things.
 - School and district leaders must take bold steps to improve schools, adapting to change and constantly exploring innovative paths to the future.

NEW HAVEN SCHOOL CHANGE CAN BE BROKEN DOWN INTO FOUR MAIN AREAS:

STUDENTS – To help students rise up and pursue their dreams, the district will provide high-quality academic learning and supports for personal growth and character development.

TALENT – Teachers and principals are managed as professionals to encourage collaboration, empowerment and responsibility for student outcomes. This will enable the district to attract, develop and retain the highest caliber staff.

PORTFOLIO OF SCHOOLS – Each school has an improvement plan tailored to its own needs and student population, with extra attention for low-performing schools to intensify and speed up improvement.

WRAPAROUND: PARENTS & COMMUNITY – New Haven seeks to cultivate strong parent and community partnerships to make sure students are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy and prepared to learn. This is all part of a shared investment in our children and their futures.



"My mother always told me that we stand on the shoulders of giants – that we benefit from the hard work of our grandmothers and of their grandmothers. I can sometimes feel this energy when I am teaching. It encourages me and inspires me to remind my students that they, too, are the benefactors of countless kings and queens of courage. I teach in honor of those who have sacrificed and in order that my students might continue the legacy that has been left to them."

– Mnikesa Whitaker, Fair Haven School teacher



"I live for the magical moments of teaching, when the students are holistically engaged in the process of learning with each other and I have become obsolete."

– Gloria Rodriguez, Wilbur Cross High School history teacher

TALENT – Stronger Educators, Stronger Schools

One of the reasons New Haven School Change stands out among reform initiatives is our commitment to professionalized teaching. The complex job of turning around schools and raising academic achievement in high-poverty districts comes down to having strong teachers in the classroom and principals in schools. Educators in New Haven have met that challenge with passion and determination.

- Groundbreaking evaluation system offers professional learning to help all teachers and principals be more effective, identifies and supports teachers who need particular help, and removes teachers who consistently fail to provide quality instruction.
- After second year of evaluations, more than a third of teachers originally at risk for dismissal improved significantly with the help of intensive supports.
- 28 teachers who failed to improve sufficiently separated from the district voluntarily last year, either retiring or resigning. 17 were tenured teachers. Similarly, three principals left the district.
- Innovative Leadership Development Program nurtures, supports and grows aspiring leaders.
- New Principal Bootcamp training brings new principals together with teachers at their new school and helps in the transition process, creating renewed focus on schools with new leaders.

The progressive evaluation system and hard work of New Haven teachers played a large role in the school district's winning a five-year \$53 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education in 2012. The grant will fund the New Haven Professional Educator Program, designed to develop, support and retain great teachers and administrators. In 2013, 51 high-performing teachers serve as teacher facilitators after undergoing special leadership training over the summer.

Portfolio of schools

We believe every student deserves a great school. As part of the school improvement process, New Haven places all of its schools into three tiers based on student achievement and growth and the quality of school learning environment. Annual evaluation of schools allows the district to track progress toward improvement goals and intervene when a school falls behind or heads in the wrong direction.

Schools that are categorized as Tier III and need the most critical help are selected to go through an intensive turnaround process, which sometimes involves bringing in management partners.

In a promising trend, our turnaround schools consistently rank among the top ten most improved schools district-wide.

SAFE, WELCOMING, AND SUPPORTIVE SCHOOLS

As part of School Change, New Haven Public Schools measures school climate through annual surveys taken by parents, students, teachers and staff. Overall, satisfaction with schools is getting better. As with test scores, turnaround schools were among the shining stars of the School Climate Surveys. Surveys also show increased student engagement at many of our schools.



A SCHOOL SUCCESS STORY

First-grade students at Brennan-Rogers School are using technology like computers and iPads to research and write reports on how oil spills are impacting endangered species around the globe. The students are part of a New Haven Public Schools success story that proves low-performing schools can turn around and head in a positive direction with the right plan, the right leader and teachers, and the right supports. When Brennan-Rogers School was tapped for turnaround in 2010 after ranking as one of the lowest achieving schools in the city, the principal vowed to catch up with top schools in New Haven and she vowed not to shy away from the reality that poverty exists at her school and must be addressed.

In that first year, students spent more hours in the classroom, learned a new code of character, and got to know new teachers. Thirteen of the 34 original teachers reapplied to stay on with Brennan-Rogers during turnaround and the principal had to page through 200 resumes to assemble the perfect team. After year one of transformation, Brennan-Rogers posted the most dramatic improvement in school culture and the highest rate of parental participation on school climate surveys in the district. When Connecticut Mastery Test results came out a year later, Brennan-Rogers shined. The school posted 11 percent gains in proficiency across all subjects, with the biggest jump being in reading.



Parent University New Haven offers a wide variety of workshops in four strands: early childhood, K-12, college prep, and family and community. They include planning and saving for college, supporting teenagers, raising children in an urban setting, understanding special education, stress management, reading with your child and fun ways to teach science and math. Workshop attendance in 2012-2013 was over 650 parents at two citywide sessions and four neighborhood ones. PUNH is now expanding to schools and neighborhoods with workshops tailored to the specific needs of parents.

For more information about Parent University New Haven, visit the website, www.punh.org, or call us at 203-497-7055 (English) or 203-497-7056 (Spanish).

WRAPAROUND – Parents and Community

Schools cannot do it alone. In order to achieve maximum success, schools need to engage a set of partnerships among the school, parents and community resources. These partnerships develop a unified focus on academics, services, supports and opportunities that lead to improved student learning, stronger families and healthier communities. School Change has brought together a wide range of funders, businesses, universities and non-profit organizations to accomplish its goals.

New Haven Promise is an example of the important role that partnerships play in strengthening communities. Promise scholarships are funded by Yale University, with administration of the program funded by The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven. The lead funders for the support programs are Yale-New Haven Hospital and Wells Fargo.

Promise has also spearheaded a key partnership with the nonprofit organization College Summit, whose mission is to increase the college enrollment rates of youth from low-income communities. College Summit currently works with students in nine city high schools to support them through the college application process. Their team also developed the Pathways to Promise toolkit for K-8 teachers to help build a college-going culture in New Haven schools from a young age.

BOOST! NEW HAVEN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Boost! is a unique three-way partnership among the city, school district and United Way of Greater New Haven. It offers a community schools framework to help ensure that children receive high-quality supports and services to promote their physical, social and emotional development, families are engaged in their children's education at home and at school, and public and private resources for wraparound services are used efficiently and effectively. Boost! funders include First Niagara Bank, United Way, New Haven Public Schools and other organizations, so that resources are leveraged. Boost! uses its analytical framework for all schools to deploy internal and external resources and services more effectively.

PHYSICAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Students' physical health is necessary for learning. Last year Boost! students participated in more than 75 physical health and wellness activities and programs.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Boost! works with community partners to enrich students' school day experiences, and after-school programs including: arts, journalism, sports, tutoring, mentoring, gender specific clubs, Model U.N., environmental education, interest-based projects and more.

PARENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

School Change has reinvigorated the district's emphasis on partnering with parents and the community.

KINDERGARTEN CANVASS

For two years in a row, New Haven Public Schools – in conjunction with the city, United Way of Greater New Haven, Boost!, and many others - has sent teams with over 200 volunteers to the homes of incoming kindergarteners and their families. Canvassers provide important information about school and answer questions.

PARENT UNIVERSITY

In November 2012, the district launched Parent University New Haven (PUNH) to empower parents as teachers, advocates, leaders and learners. PUNH is made possible through partnerships with many organizations (see box on previous page).

PARENT LEADERSHIP

In addition to active parent organizations at the school level, the district created a Citywide Parent Leadership Team (CPLT) for parent leaders from different schools to come together. The CPLT has spearheaded numerous initiatives, including improvements in the school registration process, implementation of Parent University and its workshop offerings, and districtwide recess options. Similarly, the Title I parent group engages parents as leaders at schools throughout the district, including many neighborhood schools.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS

New Haven Public Schools is working with alders, parents, City, providers and our programs for a more coherent and cohesive plan for youth services in and out of our schools. It includes a new "Youth Map," development of a data warehouse, expanded mentoring and after-school programs, and additional assistance for students and families facing stress and trauma in their daily lives.

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Boost! schools	5	11	16
Community partners	59	194	210
Total non-academic programs and services available to Boost! students	215	388	670
Boost! students	2,566	5,618	7,234

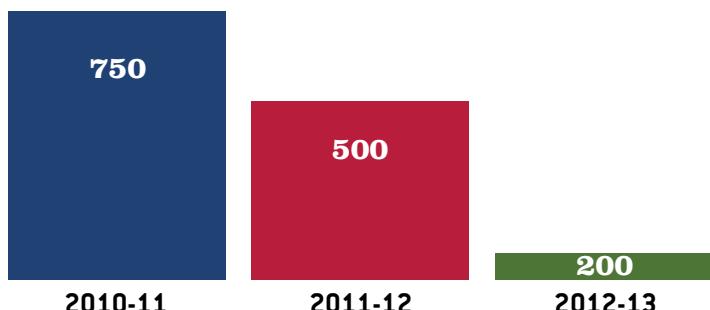
Boost! is now in 16 schools, and its support and services fall within four domains:

SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Behavioral problems improved where there was an additional focus on behavioral needs. At one Boost! school, internal initiatives including implementation of PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention and Support) and external community support were phased in over time. See the chart below.

BARNARD SCHOOL

Total number office referrals by teachers for behavior problems



How are we doing?

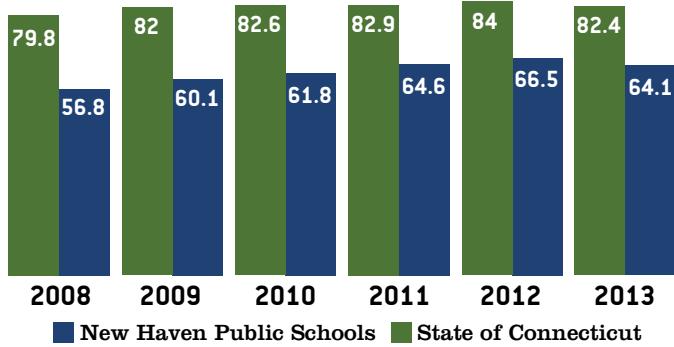
Student achievement is up.
High school graduation rates are up.
Parent and community engagement is up.

CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

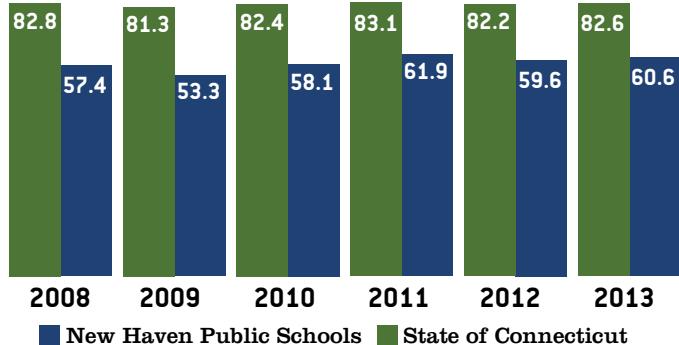
Rigorous academics are key to the success of School Change. The district is committed to strengthening core literacy and math curriculum as well as integrating science, social studies and arts lessons into coursework. The intensified focus on academic learning is paying off.

New Haven is making steady progress toward closing the achievement gap, but we know we still have a long way to go. Student scores on the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) and Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) are improving at nearly twice the rate of the state.

CMT ACHIEVEMENT GAP - All subjects proficient



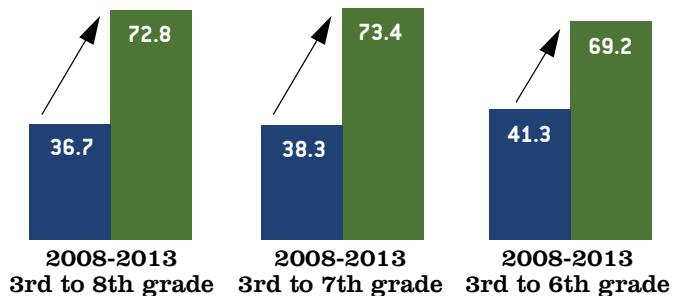
CAPT ACHIEVEMENT GAP - All subjects proficient



New Haven is ahead of the curve in implementing the higher, clearer standards of Common Core. This new set of standards adopted by most of the country will make sure our students are better prepared to succeed in college and in an increasingly competitive job market.

One bright School Change story is that the longer students stay with us, the better they do. For example, the percent of 3rd graders reading at the proficient level in 2008 doubled in five years by the time they were 8th graders. See graph below.

CMT READING: COHORT CHANGE

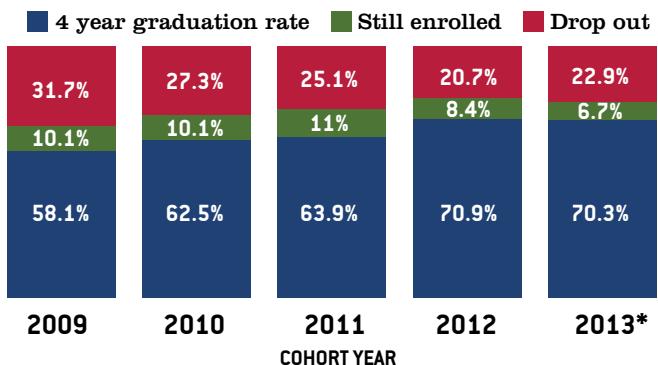


GRADUATING TO A BRIGHTER FUTURE

More New Haven Public School students are graduating high school in four years than ever before. New Haven's graduation rate has been steadily rising and the dropout rate falling in recent years. That trend puts the district on target to reach one of its major School Change goals.

College persistence remains a challenge for New Haven Public Schools, with 64% of the Class of 2011 enrolling in a first year of college and 49% in a second year, up slightly from the year before. However, in a promising trend, 85% of first year New Haven Promise scholars enrolled in a second year of college. We won't rest until every high school graduate has the tools and knowledge to succeed in college and beyond.

HIGH SCHOOL OUTCOMES



*2013 data is updated as of Oct. 1 and is preliminary



NEW HAVEN PROMISE

New Haven Promise is the ultimate game-changer for our students. Both a college scholarship and support program, Promise sends a message to all of our youth that we believe in them and are committed to helping them be successful in school, in college and in life.

Promise scholarships provide up to full tuition to in-state public colleges and universities or up to \$2,500 at private colleges for students who live in New Haven, attend New Haven public schools and have good grades and

good behavior. To qualify for a Promise scholarship, students must: receive a cumulative 3.0 GPA in high school, meet 90% attendance or better in high school, have a positive disciplinary record (no expulsions), complete 40 hours of community service in high school, and maintain 2.0 GPA while in college.

In partnership with College Summit, New Haven Promise also offers support programs for students in pre-K through high school with the goal of creating college-going aspirations in all of our children.

**Promise granted
424 scholarships
in the first three
years. Five of every
six recipients – 354
in all – are enrolled
at a college or
universtiy in the
fall of 2013.**

Driven by a dream of college

"As the eldest child of Bangladeshi immigrants, failure was never an option. Like many others that come to this country, my parents left their families behind and gave up on their own education to ensure that my siblings and I could have a shot at a brighter future. They emphasized the value of receiving an education, and glorified it as a path to escape the difficult low-income lifestyle that most first generation immigrants are accustomed to. Today, I'm driven to work hard because I want to make my parents proud, and ensure that their sacrifice leads to my success."

– Kaneez Fatema Anwar, Hill Regional Career High School graduate and New Haven Promise scholar, attends Fairfield University and majors in Politics and International Studies.

 **New Haven Promise**

MAKING THE PROMISE OF COLLEGE AND CAREER A REALITY





New Haven School Change
NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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