

**STRATEGIC SCHOOL PROFILE 2008-09**

Elementary School K-3 Edition

**Gales Ferry School  
Ledyard School District**

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Location: 1858 Route 12  
 Gales Ferry,  
 Connecticut

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This profile was produced by the Connecticut State Department of Education in accordance with CT General Statutes 10-220(c) using data and narratives provided by the school district or testing services. Profiles and additional education data, including longitudinal data, are available on the internet at [www.sde.ct.gov](http://www.sde.ct.gov).

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**TYPE OF SCHOOL**

School Type: Traditional/Regular Education

School Grade Range: K- 2

**STUDENT ENROLLMENT**

Enrollment on October 1, 2008: 208

5-Year Enrollment Change: -26.2%

**INDICATORS OF EDUCATIONAL NEED**

| Need Indicator   | Number in School | Percent in School | Elementary Schools |            |
|--|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------|
|  |                  |                   | % in District      | % in State |
| Students Eligible for Free/Reduced-Price Meals   | 16               | 7.7               | 6.6                | 34.2       |
| K-12 Students Who Are Not Fluent in English  | 6                | 2.9               | 1.5                | 7.0        |
| Students with Disabilities   | 20               | 9.6               | 10.9               | 10.9       |
| Students Identified as Gifted and/or Talented  | 0                | 0.0               | 0.0                | 2.3        |
| Kindergarten Students who Attended Preschool, Nursery School or Headstart                | 60               | 82.2              | 77.0               | 79.7       |
| Students in Grades Above School's Entry Grade Who Attended Same School the Previous Year | 120              | 88.9              | 88.6               | 84.8       |

**PROGRAM AND INSTRUCTION**

| Instructional Time   | School | State Elementary Schools |
|----------------------|--------|--------------------------|
| Total Days per Year  | 183    | 181                      |
| Total Hours per Year | 961    | 988                      |

State law requires that at least 180 days of school be offered to students in kindergarten through Grade 12, 900 hours of instruction to Grades 1-12 and full-day kindergarten, and 450 hours to half-day kindergarten students.

**Type of Kindergarten:** This school offers half-day kindergarten.

| Average Class Size | School | District | State |
|--------------------|--------|----------|-------|
| Kindergarten       | 18.3   | 17.4     | 18.3  |
| Grade 2            | 16.5   | 17.6     | 19.3  |

| Required Hours of Instruction Per Year in Selected Subject Areas |        |       |
|--|--------|-------|
| Grade 2  | School | State |
| Art <sup>1</sup>   | 27     | 29    |
| Computer Education <sup>1</sup>                                  | 27     | 14    |
| English Language Arts <sup>1</sup>                               | 581    | 496   |
| Health <sup>1</sup>  | 9      | 19    |
| Library Media Skills <sup>1</sup>                                | 21     | 18    |
| Mathematics <sup>1</sup>   | 180    | 198   |
| Music  | 27     | 30    |
| Physical Education   | 27     | 36    |
| Science <sup>1</sup>   | 35     | 70    |
| Social Studies <sup>1</sup>                                      | 27     | 68    |
| World Languages  | 0      | 6     |

**World Language**

Formal instruction (at least 1 hour per week) in a world language is not offered in this school.

**Lunch**

An average of 30 minutes is provided for lunch during full school days.

<sup>1</sup>Interdisciplinary approach

| Special Programs   | School | Elementary Schools |       |
|--|--------|--------------------|-------|
|  |        | District           | State |
| % of K-12 Students in Bilingual Education Program or Receiving English as a Second Language Services                 | 2.9    | 1.5                | 7.0   |
| % of Identified Gifted and/or Talented Students Who Received Services  | N/A    | N/A                | N/A   |
| % of Special Education Students Attending This School Who Spent Over 79% of Their Time with Their Non-Disabled Peers | 60.0   | 69.2               | 80.3  |

**LIBRARY AND COMPUTERS**

Free on-line access to periodicals, newspapers, and other resources is available to all Connecticut schools through the Connecticut Digital Library at [www.iconn.org](http://www.iconn.org).

| Instructional Computers and Library Materials  | School | Elementary Schools |       |
|--|--------|--------------------|-------|
|  |        | District           | State |
| # of Students Per Computer                     | 2.4    | 3.2                | 3.3   |
| % of Computers with Internet Access            | 100.0  | 100.0              | 99.0  |
| % of Computers that are High or Moderate Power | 1.2    | 60.6               | 94.6  |
| # of Print Volumes Per Student*                | 49.3   | 40.2               | 28.2  |
| # of Print Periodical Subscriptions            | 0      | 14                 | 13    |

\*Because a certain number of volumes are needed for a library of adequate breadth and depth, a small school may need a higher number of volumes per student.

**SCHOOL STAFF**

| <b>Full-Time Equivalent Count of School Staff</b>                               |       |
|---|-------|
| General Education: Teachers and Instructors                                     | 12.80 |
| Paraprofessional Instructional Assistants                                       | 4.30  |
| Special Education: Teachers and Instructors                                     | 2.00  |
| Paraprofessional Instructional Assistants                                       | 8.12  |
| Library/Media Specialists and/or Assistants                                     | 0.74  |
| Administrators, Coordinators, and Department Chairs                             | 1.00  |
| Instructional Specialists Who Support Teachers (e.g., subject area specialists) | 1.15  |
| Counselors, Social Workers, and School Psychologists                            | 0.80  |
| School Nurses   | 1.00  |
| Other Staff Providing Non-Instructional Services and Support                    | 6.82  |

In the full-time equivalent count, staff members working part-time in the school are counted as a fraction of full-time. For example, a teacher who works half-time in a school contributes 0.50 to the school's staff count.

| <b>Teachers and Instructors</b>   | <b>School</b> | <b>Elementary Schools</b> |              |
|---|---------------|---------------------------|--------------|
|   |               | <b>District</b>           | <b>State</b> |
| Average Number of Years of Experience in Education                            | 17.3          | 15.8                      | 13.3         |
| % with Master's Degree or Above   | 88.9          | 89.1                      | 78.1         |
| Attendance, 2007-08: Average # of Days Absent Due to Illness or Personal Time | 10.4          | 12.0                      | 8.6          |
| % Assigned to Same School the Previous Year                                   | 94.4          | 89.3                      | 83.3         |

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**HOME AND SCHOOL COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT**


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**Teacher E-Mail Addresses:** All teachers at this school have been issued e-mail addresses.

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The following narrative about how this school promotes and supports parental involvement was submitted by this school.

At Gales Ferry School a monthly newsletter noting upcoming events and activities is published by the school administration. From time to time articles detailing instructional initiatives are also included. These newsletters are distributed to families and posted on the school's website. Teachers regularly share information about their instruction via classroom newsletters. We encourage parents to share their email addresses with us. We have found this to be an effective way to reach parents/guardians during the school day and after school. Teachers also share their school email addresses with families. This has improved our home-school communication greatly. Each fall a Parent Information Night is held. During that presentation teachers share their instructional objectives and their classroom expectations. While formal parent teacher conferences are held each December, teachers schedule additional conferences throughout the year when needs arise. Written progress reports may also be sent home to families.

Incoming kindergarten students and their families are invited each spring to visit our school and learn about our kindergarten program. Prior to the beginning of the school year teachers invite their students in to see their new classrooms.

Parents and community volunteers contribute many hours to our school programs. Our dedicated Parent Teacher Organization has been instrumental in providing enriching experiences for our students through cultural programs, field trips and hands-on science programs. Our PTO hosted two large and effective book fairs.

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## SCHOOL DIVERSITY

| Student Race/Ethnicity |        |         |
|------------------------|--------|---------|
| Race/Ethnicity         | Number | Percent |
| American Indian        | 2      | 1.0     |
| Asian American         | 11     | 5.3     |
| Black                  | 14     | 6.7     |
| Hispanic               | 11     | 5.3     |
| White                  | 170    | 81.7    |
| Total Minority         | 38     | 18.3    |

**Percent of Minority Professional Staff:** 0.0%

**Non-English Home Language:** 2.9% of this school's students (excluding prekindergarten students) come from homes where English is not the primary language. The number of non-English home languages is 4.

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### EFFORTS TO REDUCE RACIAL, ETHNIC, AND ECONOMIC ISOLATION

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Below is the description submitted by this school of how it provides educational opportunities for its students to interact with students and teachers from diverse racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds.

Gales Ferry School's administration and faculty provide many opportunities to students as we work to reduce racial, ethnic and economic isolation.

Most of our classroom teachers have been trained in Responsive Classroom and implement components of this program in their classrooms. Morning meetings provide time for students to communicate and share with one another and with their teachers. Teachers and students have ongoing discussions about appreciating diversity and building a community of learners.

Multicultural literature is shared with students throughout the year. Teachers also welcome opportunities for students and parents to share information about their cultural backgrounds with their classes. Since we have many military families, our students may have lived in different parts of the United States or in different countries. We enjoy hearing about their experiences in these other locations.

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## STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND BEHAVIOR

**Connecticut Mastery Test, Fourth Generation, % Meeting State Goal.** The Goal level is more demanding than the Proficient level, but not as high as the Advanced level, reported in the No Child Left Behind Report Cards.

| Grade and CMT Subject Area | School | District | State | % of Schools in State with Equal or Lower Percent Meeting Goal |
|----------------------------|--------|----------|-------|--|
| Grade 3 Reading            | N/A    | N/A      | N/A   | N/A  |
| Writing                    | N/A    | N/A      | N/A   | N/A  |
| Mathematics                | N/A    | N/A      | N/A   | N/A  |

These results reflect the performance of students with scoreable tests who were enrolled in the district at the time of testing, regardless of the length of time they were enrolled in the district. Results for fewer than 20 students are not presented.

For more detailed CMT results, go to [www.ctreports.com](http://www.ctreports.com).

To see the NCLB Report Card for this school, go to [www.sde.ct.gov](http://www.sde.ct.gov) and click on "No Child Left Behind."

| Student Attendance     | School | District Elementary Sch. | State Elementary Sch. |
|------------------------|--------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| % Present on October 1 | 97.1   | 97.3                     | 96.2                  |

### Disciplinary Offenses

Disciplinary offenses committed by students include all serious offenses, offenses involving drugs, alcohol, or tobacco, and all incidents resulting in suspension or expulsion. For more information and data on disciplinary offenses, go to [www.sde.ct.gov](http://www.sde.ct.gov), click on "CEDaR" and then on "Student Data."

| Number of Incidents by Disciplinary Offense Category, 2007-08 |                      |                |
|---|----------------------|----------------|
| Offense Category*   | Location of Incident |                |
|   | School               | Other Location |
| Violent Crimes Against Persons                                | N/A                  | N/A            |
| Sexually Related Behavior                                     | N/A                  | N/A            |
| Personally Threatening Behavior                               | N/A                  | N/A            |
| Theft   | N/A                  | N/A            |
| Physical/Verbal Confrontation                                 | N/A                  | N/A            |
| Fighting/Battery  | N/A                  | N/A            |
| Property Damage   | N/A                  | N/A            |
| Weapons   | N/A                  | N/A            |
| Drugs/Alcohol/Tobacco   | N/A                  | N/A            |
| School Policy Violations                                      | N/A                  | N/A            |
| Total   | 0                    | 0              |

\* Counts by category may be suppressed to protect student privacy.

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**SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANS AND ACTIVITIES**

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The following narrative was submitted by this school.

Building school administrators and district administrators visit classrooms on a regular basis. These walkthroughs provide us with opportunities to see student learning in action. Two questions guide our discussions after these walkthroughs- Who is doing the work? How is the material being presented connected to our curricula? Student work is collected and reviewed with teachers at regularly scheduled grade level meetings. Building administrators also examine student work in collaboration with the district language arts consultant, the assistant superintendent and the building language arts consultant.

Our professional development is building based. Teachers participate in professional development workshops during late August and on scheduled early dismissal days. Teachers are also released for other training opportunities throughout the year. During those occasions, substitute teachers are hired to cover classes. Our district consultants (language arts and math/science) provide training after school in one hour blocks. Teacher input is given serious consideration when developing and scheduling these after school sessions.

During the 2009-2010 school year one teacher is looping with her students from first to second grade. One of our two special education teachers is working mainly in one first grade classroom and one second grade classroom for a good part of each instructional day. Our other special education teacher is also spending time in regular classrooms supporting her students.

Our kindergarten and first grade academy programs and our first grade early literacy paraprofessionals provide additional support to our literacy instruction. Ninety percent (90%) of our second graders scored at or above the benchmark on the spring Developmental Reading Assessment while fifty-one percent (51%) scored at or above the benchmark on their spring writing prompt. Our new science curriculum has had a positive impact on our numeracy instruction. Students are seeing patterns in nature and are also becoming quite skilled at taking surveys. Once their surveys are completed, they are making bar graphs to illustrate their findings.

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**SUPPLEMENTAL SCHOOL INFORMATION**

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The space below was optionally used by this school to describe aspects of the school not presented elsewhere in the profile.

We have a strong caring staff of teachers, aides, custodians, secretaries, nurses and administrators. Many of our students are from military families and bring with them a variety of cultures and experiences.

Our Parent Teacher Organization is certainly remarkable! We truly appreciate all of the programs and resources it makes available to our students and staff.

Our school shares a campus with our middle school (grades 7 & 8) and our sister school Juliet W. Long School (grades 3-6). This close proximity affords us with many opportunities for students from both these schools to interact with our students. Middle school students in the Be A Teacher program and high school interns also devote many hours to Gales Ferry School.

We enjoy a strong partnership with our local libraries. In late spring the town's children's librarian helps us kick off the annual summer reading program. Then, she returns in late September to publicly recognize the summer reading program participants. During the year the town librarian and our school librarian work closely with our teachers and order books and other materials that support our curricula.

Our state of the art facility is enjoyed by the community. Various groups use the building after school, in the evening and on the weekends throughout the year.

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