

**HARTFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**Betances Early Reading Lab Magnet School**



DRAFT

42 Charter Oak Avenue  
Hartford, Connecticut 06112

**INTERDISTRICT MAGNET SCHOOL  
OPERATIONS PLAN  
May 2014**

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## SCHOOL VISION AND DESIGN

### 1. Mission and Vision Statements

- a. **Describe the mission of the school. Define the core purpose and key values of the school, and explain how the theme will promote and reinforce the mission. The mission should be consistent with high academic standards, and promote racial, ethnic and economic diversity.**

The mission of Betances Early Reading Lab Magnet School is to offer a high-quality early education in grades PreK through 3, which integrates research-based practices in literacy, early childhood development, and the STEM disciplines in order to prepare young children for the rigor and advanced academics of a highly successful educational program. Betances Early Reading Lab Magnet will operate as a laboratory school setting in which educators are able to collaborate with colleagues across the district, as well as university partners, to build capacity and expertise in early literacy instruction. As an inter-district magnet school, Betances ERL serves students and families from all racial, ethnic and economic backgrounds and is deeply committed to developing all students as independent and confident readers, writers and communicators. Betances ERL (Grades PreK-3) will serve as the feeder school for Betances STEM Magnet school (Grade 4-8)

- b. **Present the vision of the school. The vision should align with the mission and articulate goals for students, parents, teachers and the community.**

Through a unique laboratory school model, teachers, students, and university partners will collaborate to develop and support the training and advancement of leaders in the field of early literacy education. The school will function as a laboratory setting to build capacity and maintain a pipeline of highly-trained early childhood educators throughout the city and the state. Classrooms are equipped with state-of-the art video equipment for the sole purpose of recording exemplary lessons which can be shared and critiqued by seasoned and beginning teachers, alike. A highly trained literacy coach will provide seamless and immediate support to teachers through purposeful and strategic professional development. Collegial planning time, data meetings, professional learning communities and lesson study will all provide the framework for teachers and coaches to observe, critique, reflect and refine practices on a regular basis. As exemplary models of instruction are implemented and recorded, they will be archived in a digital database for use by schools across the district. The partnerships with universities will be mutually beneficial as pre-service teachers are exposed to innovative best practices in early childhood education, literacy and the STEM disciplines, thus supplying a pipeline of highly trained practitioners who can deliver innovative literacy instruction in schools throughout the district.

Betances ERL (Grades PreK-3) will serve as a feeder school for the newly designed Betances STEM Magnet School (Grades 4-8), providing students and their families with a cohesive continuum of learning in a high-quality, rigorous upper-elementary and middle school setting. To that end, all stakeholders at Betances ERL will contribute to the shared vision of creating an

environment which embodies the integration of literacy achievement across content areas such as science, technology, engineering and mathematics:

- Students will build literacy skills in order to read and write about the world around them. All students will approach literacy acquisition through the lenses of authors, scientists, mathematicians and engineers. As students increase vocabulary and build background knowledge, they will better comprehend both literature and informational text.
- Parents will support early childhood development and literacy initiatives through participation in trainings offered by the school and university partners, as well as district parent engagement opportunities. The use of common language and vocabulary, as well as consistent expectations around reading for purpose and pleasure, will be part of the compact that ties school learning to home learning.
- Teachers will participate in rigorous training in the area of early literacy education as well as the integration of inquiry-based instruction and literacy acquisition in the content (STEM) areas. Teachers will utilize state of the art technology to access learning beyond the classroom and to develop a collection of exemplary models of literacy instruction embedded within content-based curriculum.
- Community partners, including local universities, The Hartford Public Library, Hartford Performs, and the Connecticut Science Center will support and enhance teaching and learning within and outside of classroom walls to showcase the expertise of teachers and to build capacity across the district.

## **Educational Philosophy**

**The educational philosophy should: (1) specify the school’s core educational values; (2) be founded on effective, research-based educational practices and high standards for student learning; and (3) be reflected in the school’s curriculum and pedagogical approach to create a comprehensive and rigorous educational program that offers a special and high quality curriculum for all students.**

The educational philosophy of Betances Early Reading Lab Magnet School centers on reform efforts which aim to close the achievement gap and provide innovative educational programming to children from all backgrounds. At Betances ERL, students’ questions and wonderings will drive instruction and will frame the ways in which literacy is integrated with content areas at each grade level. Learning outcomes for students will be designed around individual goal-setting and plans for success, with alignment to both the CDSE preschool standards and Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The curriculum at Betances ERL will be grounded in the latest early literacy research, as well as research in the integration of literacy and STEM education, such as that of the National Science Foundation (NSF) which cites, “to build a new generation of innovators, we have to recognize the critical connections between STEM, literacy and early learning.”

**a. Explain how the philosophy will serve the diverse student needs.**

Students at Betances ERL will be immersed in language-rich and print-rich environments which support both first and second language development. Through collaboration with the Family Resource Center, *Mi Casa*, families will have access to parent programs which support the early childhood development and literacy goals of both home and school. Because early childhood education centers on the idea that children enter school at various points on the learning continuum, Betances ERL serves to meet the needs of all learners through implementation of research-based best instructional practices coupled with assessment practices which keep teachers informed about student progress and needs.

Diverse student needs will also be met through the integration of STEM and the Arts. All teachers will be trained in inquiry-based instruction as a practice for engaging learners of all abilities in student-driven and hands-on learning. Vocabulary development and oral language skills will be taught and reinforced in all instructional settings, including music, physical education and art. The existence of a full-time music teacher further supports students growing their talents beyond the traditional areas of reading, writing and mathematics. Much research has been done to support the integration of STEM and the Arts in early childhood education. Betances ERL will capitalize on the innate capacity of young children to express themselves through music, art, engineering and technology as a means for strengthening their communication skills and self-confidence as lifelong learners.

**b. Explain how the philosophy will promote students' academic achievement.**

The philosophy of Betances ERL is to develop lifelong readers and writers who apply their literacy skills across all genre and content areas. The foundational skills and strategies learned during the early years at Betances ERL will ensure all students meet or exceed Hartford Public School's *Third Grade Promise*. The goals of this initiative, as well as the individual needs of every student, drive the curriculum implementation and the delivery of instruction at each grade level. With a sharp focus on literacy achievement for all, Betances ERL will develop students who see themselves as accomplished readers and writers, listeners and communicators, mathematicians, scientists and engineers.

**Academic Program Curriculum:** must align with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English language arts and mathematics, and the Connecticut State Frameworks for all other areas of study.

- a. Describe how the curriculum is aligned to the CCSS for English language arts and mathematics. In addition, please provide evidence of research on the curriculum, including citations, that supports the likelihood of high student achievement.

The Betances ERL PreK student goals are based on the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards (CT ELDS). In order to be kindergarten-ready, students will know and be able to do the following, as outlined by CT Language and Literacy Early Learning and Development Standards:

- **Understand** language – receptive

- **Use** language - expressive
- **Interact socially** using language
- **Have knowledge and appreciation** of books
- **Have knowledge** of print and its uses
- **Demonstrate** phonological awareness
- **Convey meaning** through drawing, letters and words

Betances ERL will also align with CT ELDS for Mathematics, which state that PreK students will:

- **Understand** counting and cardinality
- **Understand and describe** relationships to solve problems
- **Understand** attributes
- **Understand** spatial relationships

All students at Betances ERL will explore rich curricular content through literature and informational text. Reading and writing, listening and speaking skills, as outlined in the CCSS for English and Language Arts, will be integrated with content areas to advance critical thinking, scientific inquiry and problem solving. Oral and written responses will be grounded in evidence from the text and students will build knowledge through heavy exposure to content-rich nonfiction and informational texts.

As identified by the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts, students will do the following by the end of third grade:

- **Master** foundational reading skills (phonemic awareness, phonics, concepts about print, word recognition and fluency)
- **Read** widely and deeply from a broad range of high-quality, increasingly challenging literary and informational texts
- **Gain** knowledge about varied text structures
- **Draw** inferences and conclusions from text
- **Support** conclusions and arguments with evidence from the text
- **Write** for varied purposes (inform, entertain, argue) and across content areas
- **Participate** in a variety of rich, structured conversations, as part of a whole class, small group, and with a partner
- **Master** the conventions of Standard English grammar, usage and mechanics and learn other ways to convey meaning effectively
- **Determine or clarify** the meaning of grade-appropriate words encountered through listening, reading or media use
- **Use words** and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts

As part of the integration of early literacy and STEM, students at Betances ERL will make every day connections between reading, writing, mathematics and science. Starting in PreK, students will engage with hands-on activities to foster inquiry and build number sense and

problem solving skills. Academic vocabulary in mathematics, as well as in science, will be the foundation for student-centered, inquiry-based learning. Through a Math Workshop model, teachers will scaffold instruction for students at all levels and will meet students where they are in the learning continuum for math, as outlined by the CCSS: “Mathematically proficient students start by explaining to themselves the meaning of a problem and looking for entry points to its solution”

As identified by the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics, all students will do the following by the end of third grade:

- **Represent and solve problems** involving basic operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division)
- **Use place value** understanding and properties of operations
- **Solve problems** involving measurement and estimation.
- **Represent and interpret** data.

- b. Describe how the school’s unique content focus (theme) advances the rigor of the academic program at each grade level.

Betances ERL’s unique focus on early literacy integration across all content areas is based on the belief that young children are capable and highly competent learners. High expectations and rigor across all academics are infused through inquiry-based learning experiences. Through both a Reader’s/Writer’s Workshop model and a Math Workshop model, students are empowered to be active participants and to drive their own learning. Starting in PreK, students view themselves as authors, orators, innovators, mathematicians, scientists and engineers. The requisite skill sets are developed in work stations through purposefully differentiated learning experiences. Small group guided reading instruction is embedded within a 2-hour literacy block in which all students have choice and all students are challenged to read and write at their own instructional level. Math stations are utilized to develop and practice strategies after students participate in mini-lessons targeted to their needs. Math workshop culminates in a Math Congress, where students have ample opportunities to share their mathematical thinking through oral, written and pictorial representations. Every day teachers at Betances ERL are building bridges, finding commonalities and capitalizing on young children’s capacity for curiosity and wonder. The lines between reading, writing, mathematics and science are blurred for reasons best explained by the National Campaign for Grade Level Reading: “promoting literacy and STEM education in the early years and early grades creates an opportunity for collaboration to improve educational outcomes for our nation’s children... the research on cognition, pedagogy and brain function shows that students gain more knowledge and skills in literacy and STEM subjects when they are taught in tandem.”

The Campaign also promotes the documentation of “bright spot” examples of K-3 curriculum, teacher preparation programs and professional development opportunities that support integration of literacy and STEM education. As a Lab School, Betances ERL Magnet seeks to be the “bright spot” for students throughout Hartford and the state, as well as teachers throughout the district, by video recording and archiving best practices in teaching in learning for use by all

stakeholders. The videos serve as exemplary models of the methodology and outcomes of research-based instruction and aid in building capacity among and beyond the teachers at Betances ERL.

- c. Describe strategies to infuse multicultural education and culturally competent pedagogy throughout the curriculum

As the first phase in the literacy gradual release model, the structured read aloud extends students’ thinking and their ability to talk about text far beyond immediate recall of facts and details. Betances Early Reading Lab has provided leadership district-wide in the development and implementation of the K-3 structured read aloud, aligned with the CCSS, and presented as an institute at the International Reading Association Conference, 2012. Through this instructional model, each grade level is assigned a variety of rich, multicultural texts for building background knowledge and comprehension skills. Through the structured read aloud, teachers model inquiry, thinking within, beyond and about text, and the use of reading strategies (*The Continuum of Literacy Learning*, Pinnell and Fountas; *The Comprehension Tool Kit*, Harvey & Goudvis). Simultaneously, students are immersed in historically, racially and ethnically diverse literature which challenges them to ask questions, hypothesize, empathize and draw conclusions about people and groups beyond their own culture.

**Instruction**

- a. Describe the instructional method(s) or techniques that educators will use, including any specific requirements for implementing a particular pedagogical approach (i.e., co-teaching or aides, technology, physical space).
- b. Describe how the school’s proposed instructional methods support high standards of achievement and are accessible and appropriate for all students at all levels, including English language learners, special education students, students who enter below grade level, and students who enter above grade level.

<b>a. Instructional Method</b>	<b>b. High Standards of Achievement / Accessibility for All</b>
<b>Reader’s/Writer’s Workshop – Columbia Teachers College Model</b>	Through Tier I instruction, all students will participate in a 90-120 minute literacy block daily. Reading and writing will be integrated and students will learn they are reciprocal processes – by strengthening writing skills, students become stronger readers, and by reading every day from a variety of genre and high-interest mentor texts, students build their repertoire of writing skills. Teachers will be trained in techniques including: assessment of student needs and implementation of mini-lessons to address needs, small group guided reading, teacher and peer conferencing. Curriculum will stem from Expeditionary Learning modules which facilitate close reading skills, comprehension of complex text, and 21 <sup>st</sup> Century research skills with a focus always on students as readers, writers, thinkers and communicators.

<p><b>Writing Units of Study</b> – Lucy Calkins, Columbia Teachers College</p>	<p>Explicit writing skills will be taught in meaningful context and through authentic writing experiences. Daily opportunities to write and explore different genre of writing will encourage even the youngest learners to see themselves as authors of stories and informational text. This instructional approach is accessible to all learners and aligns with CCSS. All teachers will be trained in the methodology so that Tier II and Tier III instructional support can match classroom instruction and build upon or reinforce skills and strategies taught to the whole class.</p>
<p><b>Math Workshop / Math Inquiry – Kathy Fosnot Model</b></p>	<p>All teachers will be trained in Kathy Fosnot’s Math Inquiry model and the Contexts for Learning Mathematics series, a research-based practice which is aligned with the CCSS. Students will participate in daily Math Workshops (60 or more minutes per day) which integrate literacy and science while fostering mathematical investigations to deepen student understandings of math strategies, models and standards.</p>
<p><b>Gradual Release of Responsibility Framework</b></p>	<p>Teaching reading comprehension strategies through a gradual release of student responsibility (explicit description of the strategy, student modeling, collaborative use, guided practice with multiple checks for understanding and independent use). <i>Improving Reading Comprehension in Kindergarten Through Third Grade, What Works</i> Clearing House, IES, 2010 Fisher, Frey &amp; Nelson, 2012</p>
<p><b>Metacognitive Teaching</b></p>	<p>Metacognition is “the conscious knowledge of what one is expected to do and strategies for doing it-knowing about knowledge,” (Handbook of Language and Literacy, Westby, C. p. 398). Students are taught to communicate their thinking about text and language beginning in PreK.. Second language learners and strategic students, as well as proficient and high performing students, can build oral language skills and vocabulary through this methodology.</p>
<p><b>Standards-Based Independent Learning Stations / Computer Assisted Learning</b></p>	<p>Using Debbie Diller’s model <i>Launching Literacy Stations: Mini Lessons for Managing and Sustaining Independent Work, K-3</i> (2006) and the Guided Reading model developed by Fontas and Pinnel (1996), all students will participate in differentiated literacy stations for independent practice of skills and strategies. Additionally, Writer’s Notebooks, leveled, high-interest classroom libraries, Reader’s Theater scripts, science observation stations, and math stations will infuse literacy skills at all students’ independent levels.</p> <p>The following computer-assisted learning programs will be used during independent station work and for tiered intervention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waterford Early Reading Program</li> <li>• Waterford Math and Science Program</li> <li>• Successmaker</li> <li>• Scholastic iRead</li> </ul> <p>Access to digital books/media through computers, iPads and e-Readers: MyOn Digital Library</p>

	Bookflix BrainPop
<b>Inquiry &amp; Experiential Learning – STEM, CT Science Center Exploratorium Model</b>	Through a partnership with The Connecticut Science Center, all teachers will be trained in inquiry-based instruction and all students will engage in experiential learning through hands-on, real-world opportunities to ask questions, conduct investigations, analyze data, draw conclusions and communicate findings. Students at all grade levels will make monthly visits to the Science Center, and outreach personnel will come into classrooms to provide further enrichment opportunities.
<b>Cognitive Rigor Matrix /Depth of Knowledge to support higher level-question techniques and cognitive rigor</b>	Teachers will align the student learning objectives with the CCSS and the depth of knowledge level using the Cognitive Rigor Matrix. This matrix integrates two models as a strategy for analyzing instruction, for influencing teacher lesson planning and for designing assessment items and tasks. (Hess, Carlock, Jones, & Walkup, 2009)

A variety of formative, summative and benchmark assessments are used at all grade levels to determine student growth and needs in all core academic areas. **Student progress will be consistently monitored through common formative assessments given in the classroom and reported to parents through monthly progress reports and Parent Portal. Student achievement will also be assessed formally through benchmark assessments, universal screenings, district-based assessments and the SBAC assessment (given in the Spring to all 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students). All student progress will be reported to families using the new district Standards-Based Report Card at parent/teacher conferences (3 times per year). Parent trainings will occur in the Fall to inform parents about the new report cards and to assist them in understanding where their child falls on the continuum of learning as it aligns to the national standards.**

Below is a list of standardized and non-standardized assessments used to inform instruction at Betances ERL:

#### PreK and K

- Oral Language Assessment  
The *Narrative Language Measure for Preschool (NLM)* will be used to measure the response of students to the narrative language component of the oral language curriculum. Narrative retells are believed to incorporate listening comprehension, cognition, memory, and expressive language skills. Repeated measurement of language progress is the primary purpose of the *NLM*.
- Vocabulary Assessments  
The Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) measures receptive language and the Expressive One Word Picture Vocabulary Test (EVT) measures expressive language.
- Universal Screenings  
Letter naming, phonological awareness, sight word recognition, early math concepts

### PreK ONLY

*The Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning (DIAL), the Preschool Phonological Awareness Skills Test (PAST), The Get Ready To Read Screening* for summative assessment and Narrative Language Measures for Preschool (NLM).

### Grades K-3

- DRA2 measures reading accuracy, fluency and comprehension
- NWEA MAP testing (Grades 1-3) in Reading, Language Usage and Mathematics
- SBAC Field Testing – Grade 3 ONLY

### Formative Assessments

- Progress monitoring assessments are given to measure a specific focus of instruction for students who need individualized instruction or support in any developmental area.
- Student work (e.g., writing, oral retells etc.) and skills performance during small group instruction will be used to make instructional decisions throughout the year for literacy and math, as well as the content areas.
- Teacher-created assessments and unit summative assessments in all content areas will be used to inform instruction and to communicate with families about student academic progress.

## **STRENGTH OF THE ORGANIZATION**

### **School Governance and Management**

The Hartford Public Schools will serve as the managing LEA for Betances ERL Magnet School. In general, the policies, regulations and employee contracts approved by the Hartford Board of Trustees will be applicable to the school.

The Hartford Public Schools will establish a Magnet Governance Oversight Committee that oversees policy for all Hartford Host Magnet Schools. The committee will meet quarterly and representation on this committee will include:

- Superintendent (or designee)
- Director of Hartford Regional School Choice Office
- Two Members of HPS Senior Cabinet
- HPS Director of Family Services
- HPS Director of Community Relations
- HPS Director of Special Education
- Member of the SDE Sheff Office
- Two Suburban Superintendents (or designees)
- Two Hartford Host Magnet School Principals

The establishment of the School Governance Council will follow the guidelines set forth by the State of Connecticut. The committee will meet monthly to discuss the following:

- Approval of budget
- Longitudinal planning and programmatic roll-out
- Selection of principal (when warranted)
- Implementation of extra-curricular activities
- Analysis of student achievement
- Development of the school compact
- Development and monitoring of the school accountability plan

Membership on the School Governance Council will include:

- Principal (non-voting member)
- 2 community representatives
- 7 parent representatives
- 5 teacher representatives

### **Evidence of Support and Approval**

The primary supports for the education reform effort and the Betances Early Reading Magnet School come from the Hartford Board of Education and the State Department of Education. The Hartford BOE assists the school with all matters involving personnel, finances, curriculum, professional development and contractual matters.

### **Partnerships (district, community, business/industry, or higher education)**

<b>Partner</b>	<b>Description</b>
The Connecticut Science Center	Provides opportunities for experiential learning, curriculum development, professional development for teachers.
University of Saint Joseph* West Hartford, CT	*University partnerships are currently in the planning stages. The universities listed have responded with interest to queries about future, on-going partnerships with Betances ERL. Possible partnership focus areas include: training of pre-service teachers in a laboratory setting, student teachers and interns placed at Betances ERL for field experience, training for and with Betances ERL teachers in early literacy and STEM curriculum development and implementation
University of Connecticut*	
University of Hartford*	

Eastern Connecticut State University – Early Childhood Center*	
Hartford Performs!	The organization partners with several schools in Hartford and aims “to ensure that all Hartford Public School students have access to quality arts education delivered through in-school teaching staff in partnership with the City’s vibrant arts community.”
Hartford Public Library	Within walking distance to Betances ERL, the Hartford Public Library partnership fosters choice and independence in reading while providing broad access to books for all students and families. In conjunction with the public library, teachers and literacy facilitators at Betances ERL will develop innovative family literacy programs.
Power Lunch (Travelers Insurance Company) - Read to a Child Program	Travelers’ employees visit Betances ERL weekly to read with and mentor students during lunch.
Book Voyagers Program	Community leaders provide books and materials for literature circles to read together and discuss Literacy circles provided by community leaders around a theme e.g. mysteries.

**III. STUDENT COMPOSITION, SERVICES and POLICIES**

**School Demographics**

Betances Early Reading Lab serves a diverse population of families from both Hartford and surrounding suburban towns. The ultimate goal of Betances ERL is to have 50% of its total enrollment come from suburban towns and 50% come from Hartford. Currently the enrollment in grade 3 includes more Hartford families and the enrollment in PreK includes more suburban. Going forward, the enrollment in PreK will represent the 50/50 goal so as to ensure the entire school population is balanced and representative of Hartford and suburban families.

- a. Describe how the theme and educational program provided by the proposed school will address the needs of diverse students and students with diverse leaning needs.

The Early Reading Laboratory theme draws a diverse population of families looking for expert literacy and early childhood development instruction. Forty seats are available each year for incoming 3-year-olds in a full-day PreK educational setting. Neighborhood families and families registering siblings in the lottery receive preferential entrance into the magnet school. In this manner, we help families keep children together in the same school while bringing together children from diverse backgrounds and experiences. The common vision of early literacy achievement for all and the focus on individual needs are core elements of the magnet program.

- b. Provide the grade span, student ages, and number of students per grade that the school will serve. Also identify the opening grade levels, and provide a chart of the growth/enrollment plan for each year thereafter (with enrollment disaggregated by grade and resident and non-resident town), until the school is fully enrolled.

School Year	PK3		PK4		K		1		2		3		TOTAL
	Hart	Suburb											
2013-2014	1	24	9	14	21	24	56	4	58	10	59	9	259
2014-2015	20	20	10	26	10	33	20	44	55	14	53	16	320
2015-2016													

- c. Provide a strategy to ensure student diversity in classrooms and course offerings in each grade.

To achieve the diversity goals of the magnet school, Betances ERL will conduct aggressive recruitment campaigns in participating suburban towns, as well as throughout Hartford. Towns with low magnet participation rates will be targeted in an effort to maintain compliance with the stipulations for reduced isolation per the Sheff agreement.

The instructional methods outlined in this plan are particularly appropriate for student a population with a wide range of ethnicities, learning styles and needs. Strategies embedded in instructional practices and methodology, such as differentiated instruction, individualized goal setting and progress monitoring, small group instruction, culturally sensitive pedagogy, hands-on inquiry-based instruction and the integration of STEM disciplines with literacy instruction, are beneficial for at-risk students, second language learners, special education students and high achievers.

### Special Education and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

This section of the application should describe how the school will meet the needs of special education students and those students qualified under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

- a. Describe the proposed school’s strategies to promote inclusion and success for all students. Specify how the school will meet the needs of students with disabilities who require a range of special education supports and related services (pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504).

In collaboration with Hartford Public Schools, Betances ERL will provide a continuum of services and a range of placements to best meet student needs. Whenever possible, and in

accordance with the law, students will always receive instruction in the least restrictive environment.

The process of identifying and tracking student needs will occur through the Student Assistance Team (SAT), the RtI model of tiered intervention, and the PPT process. All students will access Tier I instruction in the mainstream classroom. Students in need of additional support will be identified and progress monitored through SAT and the team of teachers, administrators and parents will make decisions in the best interest of the child. Progress and response to intervention will be monitored in 4, 6 or 8 week increments and action plans will be assessed and amended on an as needed basis. Data showing student response (or lack of) to the tiered intervention model will be documented, analyzed for trends and utilized to make decisions about future for students.

Per SAT action plans, Section 504 plans and IEP's students at Betances ERL will receive the mandated hours of support they are entitled to. A full team of professionals, including a speech-language pathologist, physical therapist, occupational therapist, school social worker, school psychologist and special education certified teachers will conduct full evaluations when it is determined through the RtI process that a child may need more intensive intervention and support. For students from suburban towns, Betances ERL will work collaboratively with the nexus district in any evaluation or implementation of an IEP or 504 plan.

Teachers and support personnel trained to work with young children and their families will provide outreach services and supports to families of students with disabilities. By bringing children in at age 3 and fostering and monitoring development through the formative years, Betances ERL staff are able to closely monitor developmental milestones, response to intervention and implementation of services. The observations and data are shared with parents on a regular basis, both informally and at formal conferences and PPT meetings. Parents of all students are welcome in the classrooms and the school at all times. By developing relationships and trust with families early in a child's school career, school personnel are better able to partner with families to plan for and positively impact a child's success in school.

### **English Language Learners (ELL)**

An early childhood environment, such as Betances ERL Magnet School, maximizes naturally occurring opportunities for oral language development through play and structured experiential learning. All staff will receive embedded professional development to implement the best practices for ELL students. Families will be supported to understand the role of first language development in supporting second language development. A full time ELL certified teacher is on staff to provide direct small group instruction and to monitor the progress of students identified as ELL, as well as to support staff in the implementation of best practices.

All families at Betances ERL are invited to attend parent/teacher conferences 3 times per school year. At these times, as well as at any other scheduled meetings with parents, teachers share report cards and evidence of student achievement in all areas. The ELL teacher also provides frequent progress reports and formal report cards for families. Progress reports will be generated through Hartford

Public Schools’ PowerSchool database and sent home on a monthly basis. Parents have on-line access to Parent Portal, the student reporting database, enabling families to monitor student progress as often as they wish. Training in the use of Parent Portal is provided through the PTO and Family Resource Center at the school.

**Admissions Policy and Criteria**

Betances ERL will recruit students from schools in the district and from targeted suburban school districts. All students will enter through a lottery. Preference in the lottery will be granted to students in the Betances ERL Magnet School neighborhood, children of staff members and those students with siblings in the school. Students who matriculate through the Grade 3 will receive preference for a pathway seat at Betances STEM Magnet School.

The following table depicts the preferences for the lottery selection:

<b>Hartford</b>	<b>Suburban</b>
Staff – Child of existing school staff member	Staff – Child of existing school staff member
Sibling – Brother or sister of student attending school at the time of application	Sibling - Brother or sister of student attending school at the time of application
Neighborhood – Applicant lives less than one-half mile from the school	Random Selection
Zone – Applicant lives in Zone	
Random Selection	

There will not be any specialized requirements for acceptance, except for attendance at an Open House, completion of the application, the expressed desire to attend the school, and willingness to support and uphold the school’s core beliefs, rules and regulations.

The eventual goal of the school is to have 50% of the students come from Hartford and 50% of the students come from the suburban towns. This will ensure Betances ERL meets the reduced isolation goals for diversity among the student body.

Annual recruitment efforts will include the following:

- HPS Postcards

- HPS Brochure
- HPS Website
- Community Newspaper Advertisements
- HPS Recruitment Fairs
- HPS Television Commercial
- HPS Radio Advertisement
- *CT Parent Magazine* Advertisement
- Brochures to pediatricians, public libraries, and child care centers in the Greater Hartford area
- Public engagement through Woman’s League, town business councils, etc.

The process and timetable for application and recruitment are set each year by the Hartford Board of Education, Joint Magnet Office, Regional School Choice Office, and the State of Connecticut.

The following depicts the application process for new students. This is based on the 2012-2013 process and is subject to change:

**Application Process:**

- The application window is until April 29, 2013 to this school.
- **All Students**, including those living in the district of a magnet school, wishing to apply to one of the magnet schools **must submit an application by May 6, 2013 to be in the lottery.**
- Late applications will be accepted, but placed on the end of the waiting list.
- Students and parents may list up to five choices on the application form, in case their first choice is over-enrolled.
- Students will be assigned to one of their choices by a lottery process.
- Preference will be given when a sibling is currently enrolled in the school to which a student has applied. The brother or sister must reside in the same household. Preference will also be given to Hartford residents that reside in the school neighborhood and zone
- If a family has more than one child applying to the same magnet school each child must apply on their own on a separate application form. No sibling preference will be given unless another sibling already attends that school.
- All parents must confirm their intention to have their child attend the school to which they have been accepted by.
- If a student is not randomly chosen for one of their choices, they will be placed on a waiting list. Students will be called from the waiting list periodically to fill any vacancies that occur.
- The waiting list will be maintained until the start of the second marking period of the school year. After that time the waiting list will be discontinued.
- Once a parent has confirmed or declined their child’s acceptance to a magnet school, the child’s name **will be removed from the waiting lists.**

## **Student Discipline Policies**

At all times the Hartford Public Schools' Policies for a Safe School Climate, in compliance with all CT State Department of Education laws, will be followed. Additionally, all families will sign a home-school compact attesting to their commitment to upholding the rules and policies set forth by the district and school code of conduct.

Betances ERL is a collaborative community of families, educators and children who take care of one another and are sensitive to individual needs and differences. The Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) team, consisting of staff members and student ambassadors, meets monthly to plan and strategize around teaching behavioral expectations. Discipline data is consistently collected and documented in a database for analysis by the team and school administration. The focus at Betances ERL is on safe behavior at all times, respect of oneself, others and the school environment, and recognition and reinforcement of positive behaviors through a school-wide system.

As a PreK - Grade 3 school, the expulsion of students is not applicable. However, should the need arise for such serious disciplinary action, Betances ERL staff would follow all policies and procedures set forth by Hartford Public Schools.

The PBIS team meets monthly to review and analyze data. The team synthesizes the data and reports out to staff at monthly faculty meetings. The team also meets regularly with administration to plan interventions in cases where student behavior is continued concern. Parents and guardians are always part of the process when addressing student behavior.

## **Family and Community Engagement Policies**

In accordance with Hartford Public Schools' staff evaluation model, all certified staff members are required to develop parent engagement goals on a yearly basis. These goals are geared toward the specific needs of the school and are aligned with the School Accountability Plan (SAP). As we develop the SAP for the upcoming school year, teachers and support personnel will draft parent engagement goals to address the identified needs. The goals will be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely.

Betances ERL will have an active and robust Parent/Teacher Organization responsible for welcoming new families, encouraging parent support and engagement, and providing support to the school community as a whole. In addition to the PTO, the Family Resource Center will partner with the school to provide parent workshops, home visits, resources and programming.

School, family and student compacts are being rewritten for the 2014-2015 school year and are not yet available. The Betances ERL Family and Student Handbook is also being revised to include the vision, mission, policies and procedures outlined in the Operations Plan.

## **Human Resource Policies**

All policies regarding hiring and dismissal procedures are determined and implemented by Hartford Public Schools' Office of Talent Management.

- a. Describe the targeted staff size and teacher-to-student ratio aligned to the school mission, theme, educational philosophy, students served, and budget.
  - PreK classes for both 3- and 4-year olds will have a ratio of 1:10, with 2.5 adults assigned to each class of 20 students.
  - Grades K-3 will have a ratio of 1:20.

In accordance with Hartford Public Schools' policies, all certified staff will be evaluated based on the Danielson Framework through the on-line Teachscape assessment program. Evaluations of tenured and non-tenured staff vary in number and frequency, but all staff members are required or entitled to:

- Pre-conference meetings prior to announced observations
- Formal observations (45-60 minute lessons) - announced
- Informal observations (at least 20 minutes) – announced or unannounced
- Post-observation conferences
- Reviews of Practice
- Mid-year self-assessments and conferences
- Summative evaluations and conferences

## **SCHOOL VIABILITY**

### **Facilities Plan**

Betances Early Reading Lab Magnet is located at 42 Charter Oak Avenue in Hartford. Betances ERL is an established school in the community and has operated as a pilot magnet at the existing location for the past 2 years. There are no plans to relocate the school.

### **Financial Plan: 5 Year Cost Projection**

For the 2013-2014 school year, the budget will be based on the Hartford Board of Education Student Based Budgeting (SBB) Formula. Additional funds will be available from the State in accordance with the Magnet School Grant. It is expected that the state contribution per suburban student will be \$13,054.

As per previous schools, HPS will file the necessary ED 114 and ED114 narrative for the 2014-2015 year.

## Action Steps and Timelines

Task	Responsibility	Due Date
Hold informational meetings with parents and staff to discuss Magnet School vision and plans going forward for 2014-2015 and beyond.	PTO Principal Superintendent Office of Communications School Governance Council	On-going
Develop Curriculum for Early Literacy program and STEM integration	Principal Leadership Team	On-going
Begin to advance market school and recruit in Sheff towns.	Regional School Choice Office	On-going
Assess enrollment status against Sheff goals	Regional School Choice Office	On-going
Submit revised enrollment management plan based on evaluation of assessment numbers	Regional School Choice Office	On-going
Recruit for opening of New Magnet Status	All	On-going
Hold events with area schools to increase knowledge of the school	All	On-going
Build local / regional / national partnerships for school	Regional School Choice Office	On-going
Evaluation Applications	Regional School Choice Office HPS Choice Office	On-going
Revise enrollment predictions / recruiting strategies based on initial applications	Regional School Choice Office HPS Choice Office	On-going
Evaluate lottery results against Sheff goals	Regional School Choice Office HPS Choice Office	On-going
Hold welcome events for selected lottery families	Principal /Staff	Summer and Fall 2014
Develop and implement concrete strategies for recruiting and enrolling students from the target districts based on results	Principal with assistance from Regional School Choice Office and HPS Communication Office	On-going
Continue good faith effort	All	On-going

to meet and maintain the Sheff goals		
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**Transportation**

The Hartford Board of Education governs the transportation of Hartford students under the Zone 4 contract with DATTCO. All Hartford students who live outside the .5 mile walk zone for the school are provided transportation by the Hartford BOE. Suburban studens are transported through the Regional School Choice Office (RSCO) as part of the Sheff stipulated agreement (2008). CREC is the liason for transportation of suburban students.

Anticipated costs for continued transportation are determined based upon the on-going RFP's with CREC.

**Appendix-**Provide any additional supporting documentation here. Clearly identify the relevant section of the OP, above, that the information bolsters.