



New England School Development Council

28 Lord Road, Marlborough, MA 01752 ➤ Tel: 508-481-9444 ➤ www.nesdec.org

Springfield School District, VT

Present State of the District Profile

Introduction

As a part of the Strategic Planning Process, NESDEC has been asked by the Springfield School District to develop a profile of the “Present State of the District.” This profile includes pertinent demographic and enrollment data, as well as information regarding existing programs, standardized test results, curriculum initiatives and district goals which would be used to inform the Strategic Planning decision-making process.

In preparing the demographic component of Springfield District Profile, NESDEC reviewed:

- Population and housing data provided by the U.S. Census Bureau and HUD
- Birth data provided by the Vermont Health Surveillance Division
- Existing home sales statistics and other related information made available by local realtors
- Information on Springfield residential housing provided by the Springfield Planning Department and local realtors

In developing the educational and enrollment projection components of the District Profile, NESDEC:

- Received information from the superintendent and administrators regarding pertinent district instructional issues and district goals
- Reviewed and analyzed recent district test data
- Examined information related to current curriculum initiatives
- Analyzed district enrollment data supplied by the district and the State of Vermont

Based on the information gained from data analysis and interviews, NESDEC developed the following district profile:

PROFILE OF THE PRESENT STATE OF THE DISTRICT

The Springfield School District is located in Windsor County in Southeastern Vermont approximately 39 miles northeast of Brattleboro and 48 miles northwest of Concord, New Hampshire. Springfield has relatively easy access to Interstate 91. The town is governed by a Select Board and a Town Manager. Springfield was chartered in 1761.

DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

Population Trends

The Outlook for Population Growth

National Factors Affecting the Size and Nature of Population Growth

- On the national level, the “Baby Boomer” generation has begun turning 65 years of age at the rate of 10,000 per day, and this is projected to continue for the next 13 years!
- The millennial generation, born between 1982 and 2004, has married later and had fewer births than any of the past three generations. Many millennials have high college debt, and as a result they have been slow to purchase single family homes.

Data Related to the Population of Springfield

General Population

- In 2010, the U.S. Census Bureau reported that Springfield had a total population of 9,373. According to the Census Bureau’s 2016 Estimate Report, the Springfield population totaled 9,169.
- The 2016 U.S. Census Bureau estimate indicated that the Springfield ages 65 and over population totaled approximately 1,945 (21.2% of the total population), while the under-age 18 estimate equaled 1,805 persons (approximately 19.7% of the total population).
- The estimated median age in Springfield in 2016 was 46.4 years.

Factors Affecting the Springfield District's Population Growth

- Births – According to data provided by the Vermont Health Surveillance Division, between 2002 and 2008, district births averaged 113 per year, while the average district birth rate during the period from 2009-2016 was 92 per year.
- Residential Construction
 - Realtors indicate that in recent years there has been significantly lower new home construction, as compared to the housing boom years.
 - According to HUD, during the housing boom between 2001 and 2007, Springfield averaged 13 single family housing permits per year. Between 2008 and 2017, the Springfield single family permits average declined to 5 permits per year.
 - The Planning Office has reported that:
 - There are no sub-divisions approved or in the approval pipeline
 - 1 mixed-use complex with 18 one-bedroom and 3 two-bedroom apartments is moving forward (Main Street)
- Existing Home Sales
 - Local realtors indicate that:
 - Existing home sales volume is 75% higher than in 2013-14
 - Days on the market have diminished
 - Homes priced at \$130,000 or below are selling very rapidly; however, these “starter homes” are in short supply
 - Homes priced at \$200,000 to \$300,000 are also selling, but not as quickly
 - Millennials are struggling to meet home costs, especially since “starter homes” are in such short supply
 - Some boomers are downsizing and selling three- and four-bedroom homes, but this is not a major factor

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT – SPRINGFIELD, VT

General Description

- According to the Vermont database, the Springfield School District had an October 1, 2017 K-12 student enrollment of 1,174 students.
 - The Springfield School District has an elected five-member School Board
School Board Goals include:
 1. Represent Stakeholders (The Community)
 - a. Focus on educational investment
 - b. Are the students achieving the educational results the community expects?
 2. Educational Mission/Vision-Student Achievement
 - a. Increase test scores from previous year by 10%, continuous improvement by this percentage for 3 years. By year 3, test scores to meet state average.
 - b. If goal is not obtained, determine root cause and address.
 - c. Each student demonstrates academic growth regardless of scores.
 - d. Increase student/teacher involvement in extracurricular activities from math club to sports teams.
 - e. Review test score data over the last five years. Determine if we are improving, declining or stagnant.
 3. Community Relationships
 - a. Improve parent and community communications
 - b. Utilize technology, we live in the digital age
 - c. Change the community stigma of Springfield Schools
 - d. Right or wrong, the community is focused on school ratings and test scores
 - e. Communicate the success of the school district
 - f. School Board/Select Board Liaison continuation

- g. Administrator and teacher presentations at board meetings
- h. Parents of students assigned to those teachers/administrators may be encouraged to come to board meetings.
 - i. Gives community a chance to hear what is happening in the school system.
 - ii. It will allow non-parents to know about the good things happening in the school system.
- i. Update school website
 - i. Goal to be completed by start of 2018-2019 school year
 - ii. Once implemented, website to be updated weekly
- 4. Fiscal Responsibility
 - a. Transparent and student-centered budget
 - b. Prioritize funding to allow for student achievement (Goal #1)
- 5. School Safety
 - a. Continue to ensure that our students and staff have training and know current safety procedures to keep them safe.
- 6. Central Office Transition
 - a. Seamless transition of positions where staff is retiring.
 - b. Restructure of central office organizational chart.
 - c. Review job descriptions and contracts for central office staff.

- **Mission Statement**

All students will acquire knowledge, skills and positive attitudes to enhance their lives by engaging in learning experiences that are inspiring, relevant and dynamic.

- **District schools include:**

- Elm Hill Primary School – K through Grade 2
- Union Street Elementary School – Grades 3-5

- Riverside Middle School – Grades 6-8
 - Springfield High School – Grades 9-12
- **Enrollment History**
 - Between 2005 and 2017, the K-12 enrollment of the Springfield District declined by 263 students.
 - Of the 2017-18 K-12 total enrollment, 517 students were registered in Grades K-5, while 254 were attending Grades 6-8 and 403 students were enrolled in Grades 9-12.
- **Enrollment Projections**
 - NESDEC projects that K-12 enrollments will decline by 202 students over the course of the next decade.
 - ***NESDEC typically recommends that districts keep a close watch on changes in variables such as annual births, building permits and existing home sales. These factors play a key role in defining the assumptions upon which enrollment projections are based. If any of these assumptions need to be altered in the future, so too will the projections.***
- **Programming Initiatives**
 - Common Instruction: All teachers are trained under the same framework for teaching, which is a co-constructivist model out of the University of Pennsylvania called the Penn Literacy Network. Initially, facilitators from UPenn facilitated the trainings, but we've reached the point where some of our strongest teachers now facilitate this graduate-level course for all new staff. The goal in training all of our teachers under this model is to have a common language district-wide when it comes to engaging students in the classroom. With a common language, teachers can more easily develop lessons collaboratively with their colleagues and use similar approaches and

strategies to engage all learners in the classroom. This common approach also leads to a more consistent, predictable experience for our students as they move through our system.

- Professional Learning Communities (PLCs): All teachers are part of PLCs, grade level for K-5 staff and departmentally for 6-12 staff. In PLCs, teacher leaders facilitate meetings to unpack standards, develop proficiency scales, create lesson plans, assessments, and look at student work collaboratively. The purpose of a PLC is to work together as partners to see where students are excelling and address areas where students are struggling, using the collective wisdom of the group. Similar to the goal of common instruction above, high functioning PLCs use collaboration as a vehicle to increase student learning within an iterative cycle.
- Responsive Classroom – K-5: Responsive Classroom, or RC, is a research-based approach to establishing a strong classroom and school-wide environment for teachers and students. Teachers at the K-5 level implement fun, engaging RC strategies to develop and sustain an engaging, positive classroom climate.
- Proficiency Based Learning (PBL): Vermont has shifted to a PBL system, whereby all graduates must meet proficiencies in order to earn a diploma. We've reached the point where our teacher leaders facilitate professional learning for staff in order to shift classroom and school-wide approaches to how we teach and assess within a proficiency-based system. In this system, students have multiple opportunities to show proficiency and are assessed regularly during the course of the school year. Students can also show that they've met proficiencies in a variety of ways. In other words, a final exam is not the only way by which a student can show his/her learning. This shift will continue to take time as we move away from a traditional approach of grading to this fairly new, proficiency-based approach.

- Instructional Coaches (ICs) K-12: We now have instructional coaches in every building throughout the district. ICs provide 1:1 teacher support, in some cases facilitate PLCs, deliver whole school professional development, coordinate the use of assessments and wear many other hats. Our coaches help teachers implement and reflect upon their classroom practice, with the goal to improve teaching in our district through the lens of collaboration.
- **Test Results (provided by the Springfield District)**
 - **2018 SBAC Scores**
 - Cohort scores went up in 10 of 12 testing areas, remained even in 1 of 12 areas and declined in 1 testing area
 - 3rd and 4th Grade ELA and Math scores were the highest in all four years of SBAC testing
 - At 4th through 8th Grades in both ELA and Math, numerous students increased their scaled scores by over 60 points
 - 2018 was the first time that 9th graders were tested in SBAC
 - Prior to switching the high school test to 9th graders after 2017, 11th graders in ELA were 10% below the state average
- **Capital Improvements**
 - Union Street Elementary School
 - Two neighboring properties removed
 - Riverside Middle School
 - Boys' locker room – rebuilt and renovated
 - Entrance access updated
 - Courtyard area between cafeteria and classrooms developed
 - Repaired concrete supports on “glass bridge”
 - Redesigned storm water drains and repaired storm water system