

**Education and Humans Services Board Notes**  
**January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2026**  
**Presented by the Ed and HS Team**

**Parents as Teachers Program (PAT)**

The PAT program is dedicated to supporting parents as they navigate the challenges of pregnancy and parenthood. Core program components include home visits, supportive telephone assistance, parent education groups, family events, case management, screenings, and nurse and doula support.

**Events:**

In December PAT hosted its annual holiday event. More than 100 family members enrolled in the program attended. Families enjoyed food and beverages, interacted with other families and PAT staff, and participated in activities such as dancing, arts and crafts, and a photo booth.

Also in December, several of our families received Christmas toys thanks to the generous donations from the Stamford–Norwalk Junior League and The Toy Chest. The Stamford–Norwalk Junior League has been supporting our program through toy donations for over a decade, and we are grateful for their continued generosity and commitment to the families we serve. The Toy Chest event, organized by Family Centers, was well received, and appreciated not only by participating families but also by agency staff.

**Program Updates:**

Since joining the program in November, the new full-time bilingual doula has smoothly integrated into our team. She is currently serving six prenatal clients and is preparing to enroll four additional families in the coming weeks. To date, she has supported two families during labor and delivery, with both mothers and babies experiencing healthy, full-term births and normal birth weights—early outcomes that reflect positive maternal and infant health indicators.

**Parents as Co-Educators (Co-Ed)**

Co-Ed provides home visiting services to families with children three to five years old, enrolled in the Children’s Learning Centers of Fairfield County, utilizing the Parents as Teachers curriculum. Outreach Workers connect clients to internal and external resources and promote parent/school engagement.

**Events:**

In December, Co-Ed hosted a holiday event where families engaged in parent-child activities, games, dancing, and raffles. Co-Ed will also be hosting a Parent Organizing event in January. Families will meet with a member of United Parents and Students to learn skills on becoming advocates for their neighborhood, community, and schools, and how to create positive social change.

**Client Story:**

Sarah is a single mother of two children, ages 4 and 12. Her oldest child has been diagnosed with Kabuki syndrome, a rare genetic condition that affects multiple systems in the body. Sarah's Outreach Worker has offered guidance to her about how to advocate for her child's needs. The OW actively participates in PPT meetings to ensure the child receives appropriate educational support. Through collaboration with Stamford Public Schools special education services, the OW secured a safety harness for the child to securely travel on the school bus. Understanding the importance of mobility and independence, the OW also connected the family to a medical supply agency, which generously donated a wheelchair, making a meaningful difference in the child's daily life.

At the same time, the OW continues to support the healthy development of Sarah's 4-year-old by ensuring speech therapy services at Apples Preschool and privately in the community. The family receives ongoing assistance with basic needs such as clothing and supermarket gift cards, helping to reduce everyday stress that allows Sarah to focus on her children's well-being. Additional resources were coordinated through B1C ESL classes, Clothes to Kids, and Person to Person. The OW remains committed to this family, continuing to provide educational activities for the parent and her children, and offers steady encouragement as they work toward developmental growth and academic success.

**Family First in Education (FF)**

Family First in Education utilizes a two-generational approach focused on parent engagement and structured after school programming. By understanding both parent and student needs, the program holistically impacts overall family wellness, academic growth in reading/math and social/emotional development.

**Program Updates:**

FF currently has two staffing vacancies on the clinical team. January will be a busy month. We will facilitate a "Prepare for Summer" workshop focused on reviewing important deadlines, registration requirements, and available summer enrichment opportunities. On January 31st, we will host families for our Winter Wellness Event, where families will participate in a family scavenger hunt and complete wellness-focused activities such as making stress balls, taking part in a boxing class demonstration, creating a family collage, and more.

**Collaborations:**

For the spring semester, FF will partner with Manhattanville University's Clark Scholar's program to bring literacy support volunteers to each of our sites.

### **The Early Childhood Education Program (ECE)**

The Early Care and Education (ECE) program, NAEYC-accredited+ (the National Association for the Education of Young Children), serves up to 210 children six weeks through five years old, five days a week, year-round. There are four sites with 18 classrooms. This high-quality program instructs children and assesses their development to improve child outcomes. ECE supports family engagement through committee involvement and workshops throughout the year.

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#### **Program update:**

Our three preschool sites held Scholastic Book Fairs to promote literacy at home. Teaching staff held their first family conferences of the school year using the data from the first round of Teaching Strategies Gold checkpoints. The children learned about *Holidays, Clothing, and Paper*. Our program celebrated our *Jingle Mingle* and the parents completed either a snowman handprint or a pinecone tree craft with their children. Greenwich Health Department's nurse Lori Liss came for *Passport to Good Health*, during which she completed hearing screenings on children in the preschool classrooms; no children were referred for further follow-up. All regular activities continued including site visits with our Mental Health Consultant, staff coaching, *Music with Mr. Nick*, and *Music and Movement*. We have available spaces for children in our preschool classrooms.

December Overall Enrollment: 179/207

#### Warburg Infant & Toddler Center:

December Enrollment: 53/53; Attendance: 80%

Program Update: Ten children received support services: eight students received Birth-to-Three services, one student received in-home New York's Early Intervention services, and one student received private services.

#### Gateway Preschool:

December Enrollment: 55/56; Attendance: 83%

Meal Counts: Breakfast: 657; Lunch: 764; Snack: 593; Total Meals: 2,014

Program Update: Seven preschool children attended GPS in the mornings to receive IEP services, two students received their IEP services on site, and two toddlers received Birth to Three services. GPS observed one student who was referred by the parents.

#### Grauer Preschool:

December Enrollment: 41/55; Attendance: 81%

Meal Counts: Breakfast: 388; Lunch: 487; Snack: 438; Total Meals: 1,313

Program Update: For the *Clothing* unit the Polar Bears children engaged in a sorting activity in which they sorted clothing items based on which part of the body they are worn. Five children received services in the mornings from GPS.

#### Armstrong Court Preschool:

December Enrollment: 30/43; Attendance: 75%

Meal Counts: Breakfast: 149; Lunch:324; Snack:304; Total Meals: 777

Program Update: The Greenwich Garden Club volunteers read a book to each class and planted daffodil bulbs in planters. The Explorers practiced their fine motor skills weaving on a cardboard loom. Four children received services in the mornings from GPS. Two students are in the process of evaluation with GPS.

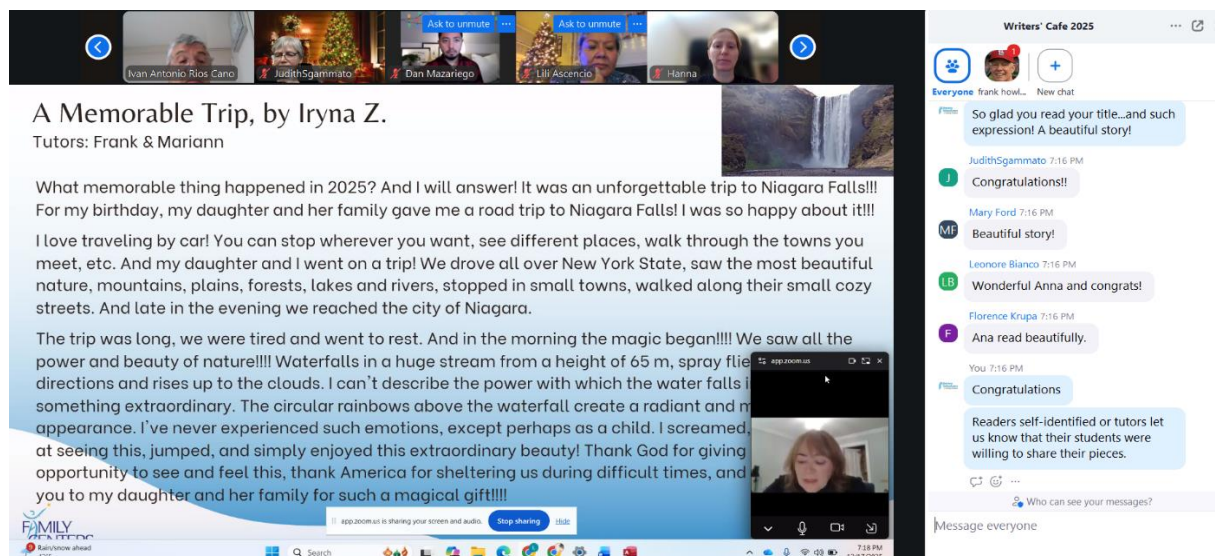
#### **Literacy Volunteers (LV)**

Literacy Volunteers at Family Centers (LVFC) uses the services of trained volunteers to provide free, quality English language education to adults, equipping them with the skills needed to achieve personal and occupational goals. LVFC is committed to educating families, developing a more skilled workforce, and providing educational opportunities to the county's most vulnerable populations, those living in or at elevated risk for poverty with low literacy. LVFC delivers weekly classes at four locations throughout Greenwich and Stamford and through online platforms for synchronous, remote learning.

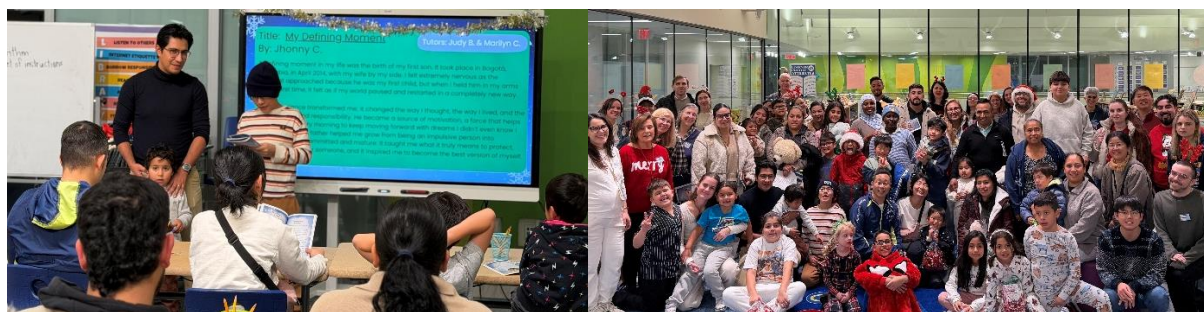
#### **Events:**

This year the LV annual Writers' Café celebration was attended online by almost 90 students and tutors as students shared their personal narrative writing composed during English classes. There was great pride as students read their work aloud and honored the growth of all in their English language proficiency and progress on their journey to success in the US.





At our Family Literacy program at New Lebanon Elementary School in Greenwich, families recognized the season as a community with an emphasis on literacy during our LV Winter Celebration where students shared their journal writing focused on the theme “A Season of Light, Moments that Matter” and selected books to read and share with their children during the school holiday.



Literacy Volunteers also worked with the Family Centers RITE Program who presented a session for students preparing to enter the workforce focused on Interview Tips. The valuable information presented will serve as a critical component to fuel readiness as individuals pursue employment that will strengthen prospects in the new year.

### Client story:

Last January, we welcomed a new LVFC student into our CDA pilot cohort halfway through the year. She was employed as a preschool assistant at CLC and was looking to progress in her career into a lead classroom role. As a mother caring for two preschool-age sons, both with intensive needs including autism and health challenges, it required great resilience to remain committed to advancing her career and English skills. She attended class diligently, sought extra tutoring, and collaborated with coworkers to improve classroom techniques. Her dedication paid off. She successfully completed her CDA certification in less than a year and was promoted to the role of Lead Teacher in her workplace. Her journey shows the power of

perseverance!

### **Charter Oak Communities (COC)**

Through a unique partnership with Charter Oak Communities (COC), Family Centers can offer resident services throughout all twenty-one of COC properties provided by a team of nine Resident Service Coordinators (RSCs). We offer community-building along with personalized support intended to foster resident leadership and community cohesion while promoting independence and quality of life.

### **Events:**

December truly sparkled across our communities, serving as a season of fun, light, and togetherness. At a time marked by financial uncertainty, our properties focused on lifting spirits and spreading holiday cheer. Residents at all locations enjoyed festive, catered holiday meals, lively games, and exciting prize giveaways. These celebrations created joyful moments, strengthened community bonds, and filled our sites with laughter, warmth, and holiday spirit.



### **Pathways to Employment Growth (PEG)**

PEG assists participants interested in entering or up-skilling in the healthcare field to obtain certification or licensure via Continuing Education programs with CSCU and other accredited institutions, as well as career readiness and employment assistance.

**Program Update:**

Seven of the 24 clients enrolled in the Fall Semester completed their individual training. Four of those clients have already obtained their associated licensure, with another two heading into their accreditation testing (the final one completed a course that did not require licensure or certification level testing). 14 clients have passed their first semester and are continuing their coursework this spring (these are the longer courses, such as: Dental Assistant, Medical Billing & Coding, Ophthalmic Assistant, Administrative Medical Assistant, and Medical Assistant). The three remaining students did not pass certain requirements in their classes and are unable to continue.

The program distributed \$6,000 in stipends. \$3,000 in stipends were distributed to clients successfully completing their coursework and another \$3,000 to clients who had obtained employment and successfully completed 90 days of employment. A reward well earned by our clients who are always striving to give their best in these competitive markets

**Family Self Sufficiency (FSS)**

FSS provides residents of Charter Oak Communities individualized support including vocational counseling, goal planning, educational assistance, financial literacy, and family referrals aimed at helping participants become economically independent.

**Client Highlight:**

A single mom of a 9-year-old child in the program recently lost her job, apartment, and her housing voucher all within the same week. The FSS coordinator advocated for the client with housing, and she was able to keep her voucher but she was extremely worried about securing an apartment and looking for work with the holidays approaching. With her coordinator's assistance, she was able to secure a 2-bedroom apartment and began a contract work assignment. The coordinator provided holiday gifts from donors to help her give her son a happy Christmas despite the many obstacles they had these last few months. The client is extremely appreciative of Family Centers' support and is on her way to stabilizing and building a better life herself and her son.

**Reaching Independence Through Employment (RITE)**

RITE helps individuals and families attain a greater sense of self-sufficiency through career counseling, goal planning, job-skills training, and guidance throughout the job search process. RITE career counselors provide free vocational support focusing on resume' writing, refining job search skills, and job retention support.

**Client Highlight:**

A client had joined the RITE program a little over a year ago with a 20-year gap in her work history due to raising her children. The client's spouse had been laid off and she needed to return to work. The coordinator assisted client with creating a resume that highlighted her volunteer experience combined with her previous work history. The coordinator assisted

client with completing online applications, preparing for interviews, and networking. The client was able to obtain some temporary assignments and part time work to continue building her experience and network. In December, the client finally received and accepted an offer for a full-time position with benefits. Through determination, hard work, and assistance from the RITE program, she was able to reach a goal she wasn't sure was possible and for the first time in decades will be a full-time employee and breadwinner for her family.

### **RITE Start**

RITE Start provides career readiness for students attending the alternative high school programs at the Greenwich and Stamford public schools (Windrose and Anchor). Students participate in hands-on learning activities to identify, practice, and improve career competencies needed for today's market. Interested students are eligible to participate in short term work experiences to further practice skills, gain real life experience, and receive stipends for their efforts.

### **Program Update:**

Five students completed work experiences and received stipends in the amount of \$2,250 for their hard work. Three students in Stamford gained experience at UCONN's Career Center, a cell phone repair business, and a nonprofit music program. Two students in Greenwich worked in an elementary school and high-end salon. Each of these students were able to practice soft skills, gained valuable experience in their interest areas, and updated their resumes.



### **Here to Help (H2H)**

The Here to Help program is a service provided by Family Centers dedicated to supporting students and their families as they navigate Stamford Public Schools and the greater community with a focus on students who are chronically absent and disengaged. Services are tailored to each student's unique needs, focusing on improving communication with schools, connection to community resources, and providing individualized support to re-engage students in school.

**Program Updates:**

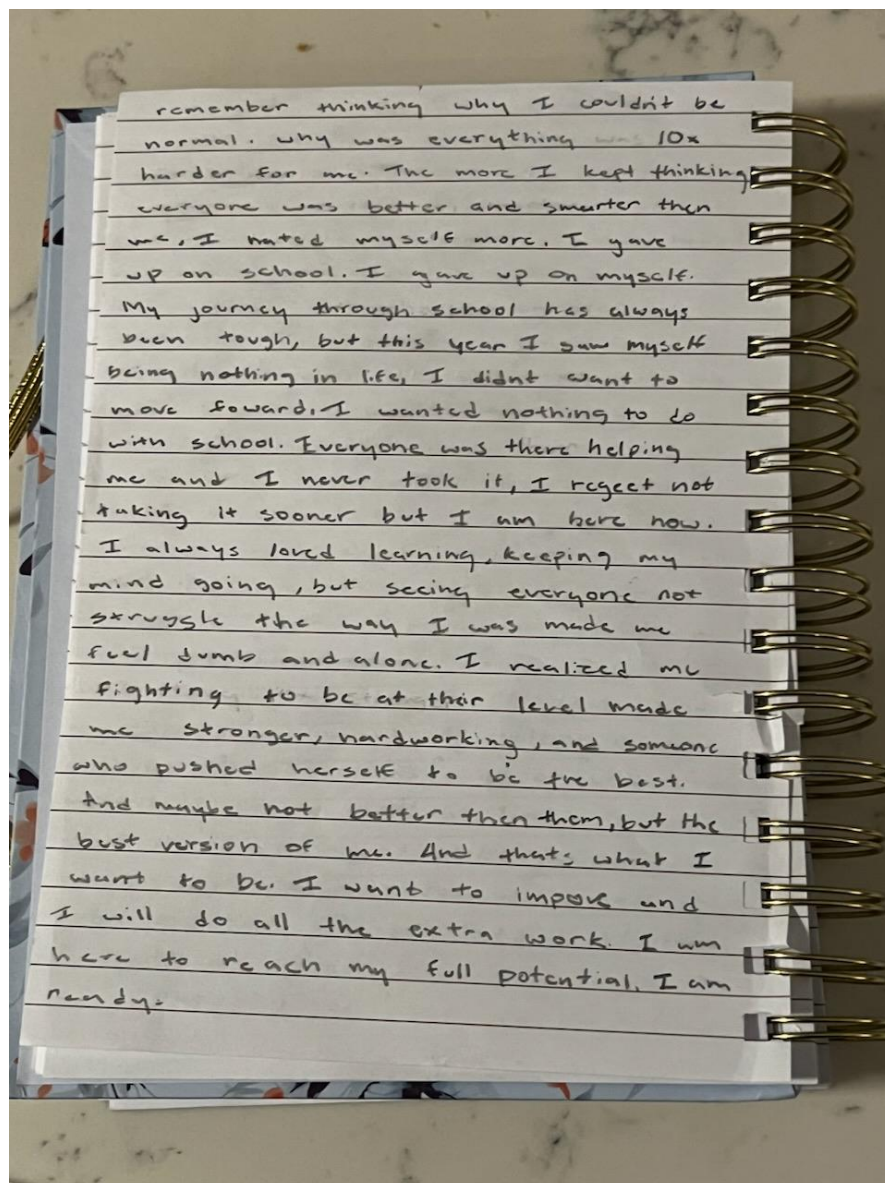
The H2H program began working with the Stamford Youth Services Bureau, Stamford High School, and Westhill High School's counseling departments to conduct home visits to "no show" students. H2H has a full case load of 29 clients, with at least five referrals waiting to be accepted.

**Client Story:**

The client is a 16-year-old junior at Westhill High School who was referred to H2H by her school counselor due to chronic absenteeism and behavioral concerns at home. At enrollment, the outreach worker learned that the client was diagnosed with bipolar disorder and has engaged in outpatient therapy and psychiatric services for the past five years. The client reported discontinuing her prescribed medication due to negative side effects, which coincided with a significant decline in school attendance and periods of not returning home for several days.

As the outreach worker developed a therapeutic relationship with the client, it became evident that the client enjoyed attending school, performed well academically, and had a strong interest in writing. The outreach worker encouraged the client to continue writing as a healthy emotional outlet. Although the client initially struggled to maintain consistent communication, the outreach worker continued regular outreach and check-ins.

Prior to the holiday break, the client reconnected with the outreach worker and expressed readiness to return to school. Together, they developed a re-entry plan. The outreach worker then coordinated care with the client, her father, therapist, psychiatrist, and school personnel to advocate for appropriate academic accommodations. During her re-entry meeting, the client shared the journal entry included below. The client was approved for these accommodations and is currently attending school regularly and is set to graduate on time.



### **Intensive Family Preservation (IFP)**

Through counseling and support, the Intensive Family Preservation Program (IFP) helps families resolve conflicts and improve parenting skills when there is an imminent risk of a child being removed from the home due to instances of child abuse or neglect. Family Centers partners with the Family and Children's Agency of Norwalk to provide the program's services. The Intensive Family Preservation is a referral-based initiative funded by the Connecticut Department of Children and Families.

### **Program Update:**

Regionally, our IFP partners are short-staffed; however, Family Center's is fully staffed.

**Client Story/Highlights:**

IFP is working with a family of five, consisting of the client, her husband, and their three young children. The family was initially referred due to significant housing instability and in October, the family was evicted from their home. The IFP worker collaborated with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to secure temporary hotel placement while the family awaited relocation to a new apartment. Following the family's move, the IFP worker observed indicators of potential abuse and completed an assessment to verify concerns and with the support of the supervisor, an additional report was made to DCF careline.

The family remains at risk of further eviction, as the father is currently the sole income provider in the household. The client has declined shelter placement, and currently the family does not qualify for additional housing programs. The family is also experiencing ongoing emotional abuse perpetrated by the client's husband. Both DCF and the IFP worker have been providing education and skill-building to the client to help her understand the impact of the emotional abuse on herself and the children. However, the client reports feeling unable to separate from the father due to financial dependence.

The IFP worker has experienced both progress and challenges while working with this family. Efforts have included attempting to gather additional information, advocating for safety planning, and exploring the possibility of the father's removal from the home when appropriate. The IFP worker continues to provide Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) education, parenting support, and Functional Family Therapy (FFT) with the primary goal of ensuring the safety and well-being of the children through ongoing monitoring, education, and support.

**Collaborations:**

IFP has been working closely with Here 2 Help and Screening Stamford's Youth to support the increased disengagement with school and mental health concerns in adolescents.

**Friendly Connections (FC)**

Friendly Connections supports isolated, lonely, and/or homebound Fairfield County seniors. The program alleviates isolation by utilizing trained volunteers and master's-level interns called "Friendly Visitors." Friendly Visitors provide phone and virtual and home visits, and support clients navigating "end-of-life" issues, including mental health challenges or loss. They provide case management, counseling, social-emotional and crisis support, and connection to community resources.

**Program Updates:**

The program currently has one staff vacancy and is being supported by the Director of Outreach Services along with our clinical interns. We are actively recruiting a new team member to help ensure continued high-quality service delivery.

**Client Story:**

Despite being understaffed, Friendly Connections continues to provide strong, responsive

support to older adults in our community. Recently, two new clients were enrolled who live independently but experience significant social isolation. Taking this into consideration, the clients were encouraged to meet outside of their homes. Although this required significant encouragement, once one client was able to leave the home, she shared, *"This is the happiest I've been in about two months."*

Another client, a resident of Scofield Manor, consistently attends the weekly socialization group but had previously declined individual meetings. During this past week's New Year group, he shared that it was a "new year, new him" and expressed readiness to begin meeting individually, stating that he has personal goals he would like support in achieving.

**Collaborations:**

- Parsonage Cottage
- McKinney Terrace II
- Charter Oaks Communities
- Scofield Manor