

**Education and Humans Services Board Notes**  
**September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2026**  
**Presented by the Ed and HS Team**

**Parents as Teachers Program (OEC 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, case management, screenings, nurse, and doula support.

**Program Updates:**

The PAT program received two national recognitions from Parents as Teachers National Center this year. The program was awarded the **Losos Prize for Innovation**, one of only two Losos awards presented nationally each year. The award recognizes the program's Perinatal Continuum of Care Model, which addresses gaps in support for families during pregnancy and the postpartum period. The model integrates bilingual doula support, a bilingual nurse embedded at Stamford Hospital, and enhanced data collection and coordination to strengthen the transition between hospital, community, and home-based services. Since implementing the model, prenatal enrollment in the program has doubled.

In addition, **Jesica Alarcon, a bilingual parent educator and doula with Family Centers, was recognized as a Parent Educator of the Year** by Parents as Teachers National Center. Jesica was recognized for her culturally responsive work with families experiencing intimate partner violence or depression, including her efforts to connect families with appropriate mental health and safety resources. Her work reflects the program's commitment to culturally responsive, family-centered support and meaningful connections to community resources.

In October, the PAT team will travel to Portland, Oregon, to attend the **2026 Parents as Teachers International Conference**. The conference brings together more than 2,500 professionals and leaders in early childhood development and family support for four days of professional development, training, and networking. The Losos Prize and Parent Educator of the Year Award will be presented during the conference

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

Co-Ed provides home visiting services to families with children three to five years old, utilizing the Parents as Teachers (PAT) curriculum. Outreach Workers connect clients to internal and external resources and promote parent/school engagement.

**Events:**

In September, Co-Ed hosted a program event at SPS Welcome Center located in Cloonan Middle School. Parents met key staff of the Welcome Center and learned about the services offered at the Welcome Center. Parents had an opportunity to ask questions and raise concerns. The goal of this event was to help parents and students feel supported and connected to the district.

**Client Story:**

Elena is a single parent of three children. Her five-year-old son is Co-Ed's target child and enrolled in the program when he was three-years-old. During this time, Elena has participated in the PAT curriculum, and she has received support from her Outreach Worker with her son's developmental and educational needs. Supports have included guidance with the special education process and requests for additional IEP service hours and days. Her son has also been receiving services at The SEED Center to assist with social and life skills. Additionally, Elena has been connected to food pantries, energy assistance, and other community resources. Moving forward, Elena will continue to benefit from the services offered through the Co-Ed program and maintain connections to valuable community resources.

**Early Childhood Education (ECE) – Sites as needed**

The Early Care and Education (ECE) program, NAEYC-Accredited Plus (the National Association for the Education of Young Children), serves up to 202 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 involvement through committee involvement and workshops throughout the year.

**Program update:**

In July we opened a new toddler room at First Steps Preschool at Armstrong Court. In August we wrapped up the 2025-26 school year, held our annual staff professional development week to cover required trainings, and we began our new school year. All classes have begun the year with the *All About Me* and *The First Six Weeks* themes, helping the children to adjust to their new environments and settle into their routines.

End of August Overall Enrollment: 166/202

**Warburg Infant & Toddler Center**

August Enrollment: 48/53; Attendance: 81%

**Program Update:** Five students received Birth-to-Three services.

**Gateway Preschool:**

August Enrollment: 42/56; Attendance: 87%

**Program Update:** Three preschool children received services in the mornings from GPS. Two toddlers received Birth to Three services.

**Grauer Preschool:**

August Enrollment: 44/55; Attendance: 85%

**Program Update:** Five children received services in the mornings from GPS.

**First Steps Preschool**

August Enrollment: 32/38; Attendance: 95%

**Program Update:** Four children received services in the mornings from 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:**

Literacy Volunteers facilitated a Summer Book Club for students who read a graphic novel, *Relish, My Life in the Kitchen*, by Lucy Kinsley. This group continued to practice their English proficiency and enjoy their LVFC community experience throughout the summer.



#### **Program Updates:**

LVFC has enrolled 20 students in this year's Child Development Associate credential program to continue to improve the English language skills and workforce readiness of students in Fairfield County. This rigorous program prepares individuals to take on roles in Early Childhood Education, an industry where there is great need for qualified employees.

Our Family Literacy program is expanding this year to support the English language proficiency of members of the Japanese School of NY in Greenwich community. Classes will focus on all elements of language instruction and include civics content to build understanding and awareness of American history, culture, and community integration.

#### **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.

#### **Program updates:**

During the summer, we saw strong resident engagement, community connection, and direct support across our properties. RSCs connected residents to key interagency resources, including Literacy Volunteers, FSS, and Friendly Connections. Through the Friendly Connections program alone, 18 senior residents received 56 friendly visits, either in person or by phone, providing meaningful check-ins, resource connections, and social support.

Across all sites, RSCs continued to address critical resident needs, including rent and utility assistance, eviction prevention, housing stability, food access, rent rebates, immigration support, financial literacy, and back-to-school resources. Several families received rental assistance, while others were supported with utility restoration and payment arrangements. Residents also benefited from referrals to food pantries, clothing and school supply programs, and other community resources.

Community building remained a priority, with residents participating in summer barbecues, music and karaoke, Bingo, fitness and walking groups, arts and crafts, movie nights, game nights, and intergenerational activities. Partnerships with community organizations, healthcare providers, local businesses, and volunteers further expanded opportunities and resources available to residents.

Overall, the summer demonstrated the RSC team's continued commitment to strengthening resident well-being, promoting stability, connecting residents to resources, and building vibrant communities.

### **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 Updates:**

**For Windrose (Greenwich),** school resumed on Friday, August 28<sup>th</sup> and the program kicked off at the morning introducing the program to new and returning students, explaining components of the program such as assisting with resumes, job applications, and work experiences. Rite Start jumped right in updating resumes and supporting student's job search. The first Career Day is scheduled for Wednesday, November 11<sup>th</sup>.

**For Anchor (Stamford),** the Career Advisor at Anchor has been meeting with students and introducing them to the RITE Start program, providing guidance and support as they begin thinking about their future goals. She has discussed career exploration, helped students identify areas of interest, and talked with them about potential work-experience opportunities. The Career Advisor has also been working one-on-one with students to develop and strengthen their resumes, helping them build the skills and confidence they need as they prepare for future employment opportunities.

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

The H2H 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 Outreach Worker has been accepted into TOW's Transforming Youth Justice Institute and will participate in a year-long program alongside community leaders from across Connecticut to support efforts to improve and reform the juvenile justice system. The H2H Outreach Worker has also assumed the outreach position at Ferguson Library, providing immediate support and resources to the Stamford community. Additionally, H2H has partnered with VITA/Attendance

Works and United Parents and Students to identify and address barriers contributing to chronic absenteeism and student disengagement.

**Client Story:**

The client is a 15-year-old ninth-grade student who was internally referred to H2H due to chronic absenteeism and behavioral concerns. Upon enrollment, the Outreach Worker (OW) established a supportive relationship with the client and her mother, focusing on building trust, rapport, and open communication. Initially, the client struggled to open up and identify the factors contributing to her anxiety and anger outbursts. The OW continued to meet the client where she was while collaborating with her mother to explore alternative educational programs and therapeutic services to best support her needs.

The OW provided psychoeducation on anxiety and medication options while helping reduce the stigma surrounding mental health treatment. Through ongoing support and efforts to connect the client with appropriate resources, she has made significant progress in communicating when she is experiencing distress and has developed healthier ways to express and manage her emotions. The client is now successfully attending an alternative school, has established goals for herself, and has begun taking her prescribed medication willingly. Overall, the client has demonstrated increased self-awareness, improved communication, and a greater willingness to engage in supports that promote her emotional and educational well-being.

**Collaborations:**

- City of Stamford Youth Services Bureau
- Stamford Public Schools
- CT Education Advocacy
- Stamford Prevention Council
- TOW's Transforming Youth Justice Institute
- VITA/Attendance Works
- United Parents and Students
- Ferguson Library

**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(ren) being removed from the home due to instances of child abuse or neglect. Family Centers partners with Family and Children's Agency of Norwalk to provide program services. The Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF) provides program funding and is the sole referral source.

**Program Update:**

Program is fully staffed and at capacity with cases. There is currently a regional waiting list and various staff vacancies across state program providers.

**Client Story/Highlights:**

IFP is currently working with a mother of three children, all under the age of eight, who separated from her husband due to domestic violence. Her 8-year-old daughter began showing signs of emotional distress after witnessing conflict between her parents.

IFP became involved at DCF's recommendation to provide the mother with additional support in strengthening her parenting skills, establishing boundaries, and creating structure for the children. The mother has had trouble managing her emotions when the children do not listen and has, at times, become emotional in front of them.

Since becoming involved, the IFP Worker has worked to engage the mother through parenting education, support, and modeling during home visits. The worker has demonstrated practical strategies for setting appropriate boundaries, creating structure, and responding to challenging behaviors in a calm and consistent manner.

While consistent engagement has been a challenge, as the mother has frequently rescheduled visits and has had difficulty consistently implementing the strategies discussed, the IFP Worker continues to provide encouragement and support. The focus remains on building the mother's confidence and helping her develop positive, consistent parenting practices that will strengthen her relationship with her children and promote a more stable home environment.

**Friendly Connections (FS)**

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:**

Over the summer, Friendly Connections enrolled four new clients including two Greenwich residents and a resident of Norwalk and Westport. Additionally, the program welcomed two new interns who began working with clients at Wormser Congregate and Scofield Manor. Between June and August, Friendly Connections provided 319 Friendly Visits with 39 clients facilitated by the program outreach worker, volunteers, and interns.

The program continues to trial and rethinking how to best meet client needs through group support and increase participation. Friendly Connections hosted a well-attended recreation and socialization group at McKinney Terrace in August. Friendly Connections continues to offer biweekly support groups at Parsonage Cottage and has plans to restart groups at Scofield Manor this fall.

**Highlights:**

Friendly Connections continues to provide strong, responsive support to older adults in our community. FC Outreach Worker presented to two community groups on the program's services over the summer, resulting in at least one referral/new enrollment.

Friendly Connections clients are helping each other. By providing certain clients with vital decluttering and home organization help, Friendly Connections has been able to donate clothing to other outreach clients in need.

**Collaborations:**

- Parsonage Cottage
- McKinney Terrace II
- Charter Oaks Communities
- Scofield Manor
- Wormser Congregate
- Jewish Family Services of Greenwich

