
PARTNERING WITH THE UNITED WAY OF CONNECTICUT

Connecticut State Department of Education

Hartford, Connecticut

The United Way of Connecticut and the Connecticut State Department of Education recently signed an agreement to work together to build linkages between schools, families, and their communities. The purpose of this joint agreement is to:

- Support and extend the standards for partnerships identified in the *Position Statement on School-Family-Community Partnerships* adopted by the State Board of Education on August 7, 1997;
- Increase public and private stakeholders' awareness of the purpose and benefit of school-family-community partnerships; and
- Encourage active partnerships between Connecticut's local affiliates of the United Way, schools, and other community organizations to support students' optimal development and academic success.

To this end, the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the United Way of Connecticut is encouraging the local chapters of the United Way to support their schools. In a recent column of the United Way's newsletter, he implored them to help by:

- Increasing the awareness and participation of businesses in setting local priorities and supporting solutions that address the identified needs of children, youth, and families;
- Developing and supporting effective local planning that uses resources to:
 - Fund unmet service needs
 - Develop local leadership capacity
 - Engage local stakeholders, including families, to improve educational opportunities and reduce health, safety, and social risks to children in communities; and
- Supporting community collaboration to provide out-of-school and extended-school services for students and families.

By partnering with an important statewide organization that has strong ties to local community agencies, our team seeks to strengthen the community piece of our school-family-community partnerships. The State Department of Education and SERC, the state's special education and

family support resource center, will continue to focus on finding new strategies and programs to bolster the school portion of the work. We are currently seeking a strong partnership with a state parent organization to help us expand in the family part of school-family-community partnerships.

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