



Learning and Growing Together to Reimagine the Possibilities: Snapshot of Best Practices and Innovations in Teaching, Learning, and Community Building for 2020–21

As a strategy, “Learn Together, Grow Together” has never been more crucial than in the context of this pandemic. Districts across Connecticut are getting results by innovating and adapting to successfully address common challenges. We inventory and share these best practices so fellow districts can adjust and put them into use in their own schools. The goal? Foster collaboration and leverage our collective capacity to continue educating forward — together.

Communicating for Understanding — Engaging Families and Communities

Overall, relationships between schools and families have improved since the pandemic forced class cancellations last spring. For example, remote learning has given teachers and parents a window into each other’s world with both groups reporting feeling more connected to and respect for one another ([CT Family School Partnership](#)). We can maximize this opportunity to reimagine schools as places that truly welcome all families as active allies and co-creators of their children’s education. This issue we focus on how districts are making that happen:

 **New Canaan Public Schools’ [Charting Our Course COVID Operations Guide](#)** is the go to source for communicating information to parents and families about the district’s COVID-19 updates.

 **East Hartford Public Schools** created a [Family Resources](#) page with community resources, district communications and friendly “parents-as-teachers” material to see families through these challenging times and beyond.

“Request to families: Make sure you have a quiet/professional work space. At-home learning days are learning days.”

— **East Hartford Public Schools** on importance of a structured schedule

 To help maximize and foster successful remote instruction time, **Waterford Public Schools** published [distance learning/hybrid expectations](#) before the start of the year, and **Cheshire Public Schools** created a set of [reminders](#) for their remote families.

 **Coventry Public Schools** is committed to continually supporting the health and well-being of their families and community. As such, they have created a dedicated [Family & Student Supports](#) page to help share information regarding a variety of issues categorized by Technology Support, Remote Learning Guides, and Additional Supports (food/nutrition, social emotional well-being, etc.).

 **Derby Public Schools** established [Remote Learning Guidelines](#) designed to provide meaningful, manageable experiences that nurture strong, positive connections between students, parents and teachers while emphasizing the most essential learning targets in each grade level or subject area.

“The relationship of the teachers to parents has been more important now than ever.”

— **Bolton Public Schools** on dedicated [‘Parent Time’](#) each Wednesday
