

# Connecticut State Department of Education



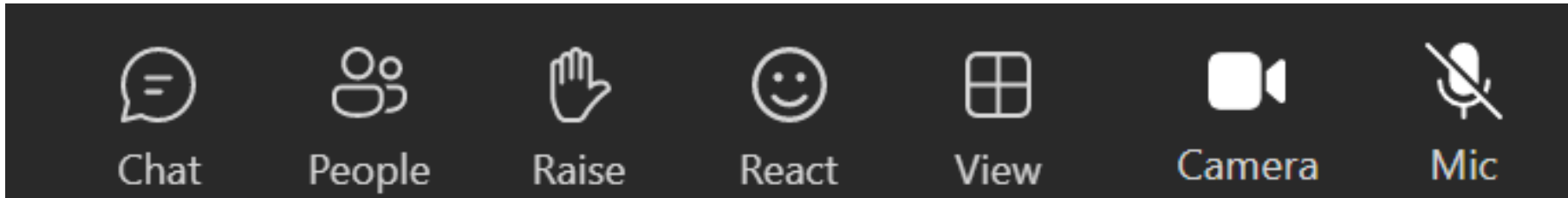
**Charlene Russell-Tucker, Commissioner**

**Commissioner's Roundtable on Family and Community  
Engagement**

**April 13, 2023 – 1:00-2:30 PM**



# Interacting With Our Teams Meeting





# Purpose



The Roundtable's purpose is to advise the Commissioner of Education regarding policy and programmatic priorities to improve outcomes for all students and advance the State Board of Education's comprehensive plan for equity and excellence in Connecticut schools.



# Meeting Ground Rules



**As members of the Commissioner's Roundtable for Family and Community Engagement in Education, we have agreed to:**

- **Be willing to speak our truth** (even the hard truth) while respectfully acknowledging and embracing other views
  - Be open to honest and real conversation that is fearless (“Say what you want, not what you think others want to hear”)
  - W.A.I.T. (Why Am I Talking?)
- **Be active listeners.** Listen respectfully to understand others' opinions
  - Ensure that all voices are valid and respected, making it critical that we hear from everyone in the room
- **E.L.M.O (Enough Let's Move On)**



# Agenda



## **Welcome and Introductions**

Judy Carson, Education Consultant

John Frassinelli, Division Director and Chlo-Anne Bobrowski, Education Manager

## **Emergent Critical Issues in Education**

Charlene Russell-Tucker, Commissioner

## **Featured Presentations**

- **Connecticut High-Dosage Tutoring Program**  
John Scianimanico, Director of Special Projects
- **Learner Engagement and Attendance Program (LEAP)**  
Kari Sullivan Custer, Education Consultant
- **McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Campaign: “No Matter What, School Is For Everyone”**  
Agnes Quinones, Education Consultant and Eric Scoville, Director of Communications
- **21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers Student Internship Program**  
Shelby Pons, Education Consultant

**Listening to Roundtable Members: Strategies for Sharing Information with Families and Community Members**

**Discussion Wrap-up and Charge to the Roundtable from Commissioner Russell-Tucker**



# Emergent Issues in Education



# Emergent Issues in Education



## CSDE Reports to the State Board of Education

- [The Condition of Education in Connecticut 2021-22](#)
- [2021-22 Report on Student Discipline in Connecticut Public Schools](#)

## [Summer Enrichment Grant Program](#)

- CSDE launched its third Summer Enrichment Grant Program in March 2023
- \$11.5M dedicated over the course of the next two summer periods (2023 + 2024)
- Over 240 eligible applicants; decisions to be finalized by early May



# School Mental Health Grant Programs



## ARPA School Mental Health Grant Programs:

- School Mental Health Workers Grant - \$5M
  - 20 grants awarded in early February
  - Social Workers primarily hired
- School Mental Health Specialists Grant - \$15M
  - Adds BCBA's, Behavior Techs, Trauma Specialists, Licensed Professional Counselors
  - Currently accepting applications through April 20th
- Summer Mental Health Supports- \$8M
  - Open to all school districts, summer programs and camps.
  - Applications will open in late spring







# Featured Presentations

## **Connecticut High-Dosage Tutoring Program**

John Scianimanico, Director of Special Projects

## **Learner Engagement and Attendance Program (LEAP)**

Kari Sullivan Custer, Education Consultant

## **McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Campaign: “No Matter What, School Is For Everyone”**

Agnes Quinones, Education Manager and Eric Scoville, Director of Communications

## **21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers Student Internship Program**

Shelby Pons, Education Consultant



# Connecticut High-Dosage Tutoring Program



## Vision

Implement research-based HDT model in Connecticut to accelerate Mathematics recovery for priority students by providing competitive grant funding and supports to successful LEA applicants starting in SY2023.



**HDT is one of the most rigorously evaluated and cost-effective interventions** for accelerating learning in Grades 6-9 Math



HDT is a **component of Connecticut's ARP ESSER Plan** to increase educational equity in our state



**President Biden and Secretary Cardona called on states** to use ARP ESSER funds for high-quality tutoring programs, and many have answered the call.



There is a large contingency of public and private organizations **eager to provide trained tutors to support schools.**



# Program Guardrails: How CSDE Defines HDT



## LEA Champion

- An LEA-appointed individual with the time and administrative power is necessary to coordinate efforts across school(s)

## High Quality Tutors

- Former/retired educators, contracted tutors, paraprofessionals, Americorps members, college students
- CSDE will provide a short list of vetted vendors

## Targeted Academics

- Math (Grades 6-9)

## Frequent Tutoring Sessions

- 3x week, 30-minute sessions (minimum)

## Tutor-Student Ratio

- 1:4 (maximum)

## District Program and Curriculum

- District selected, aligned to CT Core standards, builds foundational skills
- May also be provided by selected tutoring organization

## Timing and Delivery\*

	During School Day	Before/After School Day
In-Person Tutoring	Strongly Encouraged	Acceptable
Virtual Tutoring	Acceptable	Strongly Discouraged

\*Regardless of timing and delivery, what's most important is having a structured, recurring time for students to meet with tutors.



# How will CSDE support LEAs and schools implement this program?



1. **Grant Funding**. Provide **competitive grants of up to \$2,500** per student per year served starting in fall 2023 to successful applicants. Grant awards will be contingent upon on size of LEA's ARP ESSER allocation.
2. **High-Quality Tutors**. Vet and select **approved organizations (for-profits, nonprofits, universities) to source, train, and manage tutors for schools**. LEAs will contract with selected organizations.
3. **Community of Practice + Coaching**. CSDE will identify an organization to lead a **Community of Practice** for LEA leaders, school leaders, and other staff to guide scheduling, family engagement, use of data, and other aspects of HDT implementation.

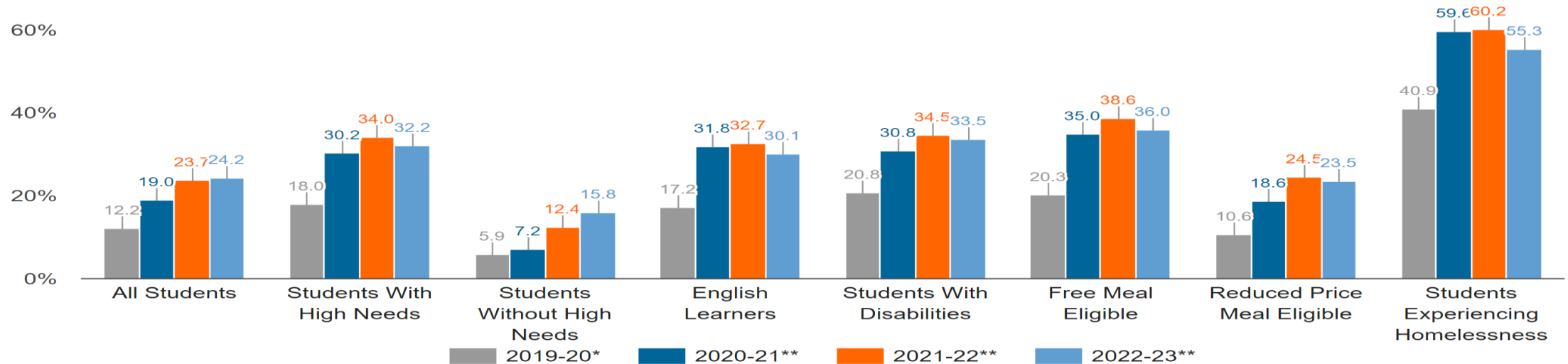
*While all LEAs are invited to apply for the HDT grant program, grant funding (Resource #1) will be scaled to an LEA's ARP ESSER funding.*



# Chronic Absence Trend Data 2019-20 to February 2023



Percentage of Students Chronically Absent by Student Group (YTD as of February 2023 compared to 2021-22, 2020-2021, and 2019-20)



\*Calculations are based only on in-person school days until mid-March 2020. \*\*Calculations include both in-person and remote days.

Source: CT EdSight, Monthly Attendance Reports, [Supporting Student Participation \(ct.gov\)](https://www.ct.gov/education/Supporting-Student-Participation)

## Current Data Files

- [Attendance Rates for State and Districts, Student Groups by tab \(.xlsx\)](#)
- [Chronic Absence Rates and Remote Attendance Information for State and Districts, Student Groups by tab \(.xlsx\)](#)
- [Attendance Rates for Schools \(.xlsx\)](#)



# Learner Engagement and Attendance Program (LEAP)

In response to high levels of chronic absence and remote learning, LEAP was launched in April 2021

- **Positive, supportive, and relationship-focused** effort
- **\$10.7** million for 15 districts (2021-22) **\$7** million (2022-24)
- Partnership with RESC Alliance and Attendance Works with input from state and national experts
- **8,700** students in the first school year

## Essential Design Elements

1. Collaborative and flexible framework
2. Home visitors from the school or community
3. Multi-visit model
4. Tier II intervention to address attendance & engagement
5. Voluntary
6. Data informed
7. Home Visit Hub training and support (LEAP101, ConneCTions)
8. Pairs of home visitors



Nationally recognized by the [Collaborative for Student Success](#): A documentary promotional video about [LEAP](#) and its success! [Watch video!](#)

## Forbes

Connecticut's Funding What Works In Education Recovery. They Can Prove It [Read article](#)

Gov. Ned Lamont has been a champion of the program from its start, telling me, "LEAP is so successful because you had a trusted member of your community knocking on your door...Those personal contacts make a big difference in getting a person back in the classroom."



Evaluation of the LEAP program by the Connecticut Department of Education has shown as much as a 30% increase in school attendance for students across 15 school districts. [-] COLLABORATIVE FOR STUDENT SUCCESS AND TORRINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS, TORRINGTON, CONNECTICUT.

# LEAP Evaluation

*"When implemented with fidelity, LEAP has a positive impact on students and families"*

[Center for Connecticut Education Research Collaboration \(CCERC\) Evaluation.](#)

Released in January 2023.

## After initial home visit:

- 1 month = **4 point** increase in attendance
- 6 months = **10 point increase PK to 5** and **20 points for Gr. 6-12**

## Results did not differ based on:

- Title of personnel conducting the home visit (certified/non-certified)
- Whether the home visitor was from the **school/district or from a community-based organization.**

## What did make a difference!

- Visits that were made **in-person** had more impact than virtual visits or phone calls.

## Main Benefits of LEAP (families/home visitors)

- improved family-school relationships
- increased student attendance
- increased student engagement
- increased student achievement
- increased feelings of belonging
- increased access to resources
- increased expectations of accountability
- greater gratitude and appreciation

## What's Next!

- Expanding LEAP 101 training for additional districts
- Releasing LEAP implementation guide
- Forming family advisory group
- Conducting focus groups
- Continuing Attendance Awareness Campaign
- Preparing to release research brief with Attendance Works on improving attendance in high schools
- Continuing our partnership with RESC Alliance to expand district capacity to improve attendance.

## Watch LEAP Presentation on Talk Tuesday!

[Overview and Evaluation of the Learner Engagement and Attendance Program \(LEAP\)](#) Caroline Calhoun, EdAdvance, Francisco Baires, CREC, and LaTasha Easterling-Turnquest, Manchester Public Schools, February 7, 2023. [Watch recording!](#)







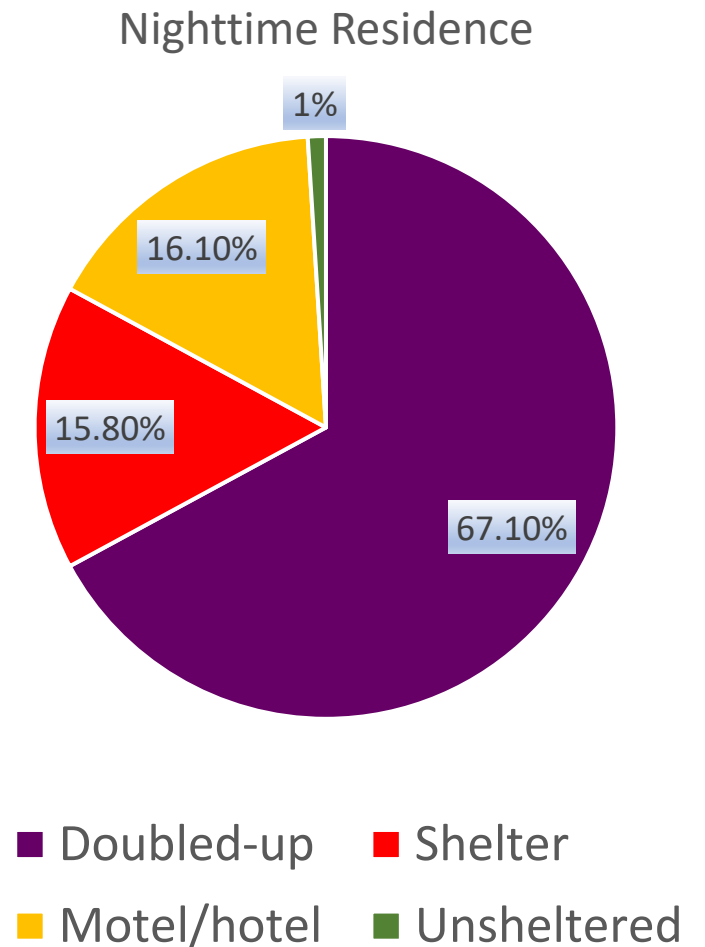
# McKinney-Vento Definition of Homeless

## 42 U.S.C. § 11434a(2)



Children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, and includes:

-  • in a shelter
-  • in a motel or hotel due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodation;
-  • in a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station;
-  • doubled-up with other people due to loss of housing or economic hardship.







# McKinney-Vento Campaign



## Campaign Objectives

- Increase awareness of the McKinney Vento Act and how this allows students experiencing homelessness/housing insecurity to remain in school
- Increase ability for school-based staff/district staff to identify all students experiencing homelessness/housing insecurity



### Get Help

Find your homeless liaison and search by district.



### Get Answers

Frequently Asked Questions on homeless assistance.



### Spread the Word

Tools you can use to get the word out about opportunities for homeless students.



# McKinney-Vento Campaign



## Research Based

In order to better understand the campaign audience groups, barriers they are facing in connecting to education, as well as the process by which students are identified, OC conducted the following research steps:

- Digital surveys with McKinney Vento Liaisons and General School-Based Staff
- Subject matter expert interviews

## Key Takeaways

- Important to be clear on definitions of homelessness and help available based on status:
  - HUD definition of homelessness (literally living on the street or in a shelter)
  - MV's definition (unstable housing)
- Easier to track students who are in shelters; the hidden people are staying with family/friends and are not meeting the HUD definition
- People do not associate themselves with the term "homeless"
- Terms used: moving around, staying with a friend, couch hopping
- Returning a student to their home school is easier than starting over with a new placement



# McKinney-Vento Campaign



## Messaging Approach

- Clear, simple communications
- Key points for community organizations and school district staff
- Supportive and understanding
- Create a sense of empowerment
- The target audience is dealing with a host of difficult issues and, in some cases, trauma—calls to action should have a clear benefit
  - Multi-lingual – English, Spanish Polish and Portuguese
  - Multi-modal – in person outreach, bodegas, and stores, gas stations, social media and digital
- Language matters. People do not necessarily associate themselves with the term homeless



# McKinney-Vento Campaign



## Content:

Even when so much in life is unstable and you don't have a home of your own, you still have protections. No matter what your situation, there is support. School can provide stability in uncertain times and help you get support.

[CT.GOV/NOMATTERWHAT](http://CT.GOV/NOMATTERWHAT)

**no matter what.**  
school is here for you

**siempre serás parte de tu escuela.**

**school is for everyone... no matter what.**

**supporting you, no matter what.**

**no tienes que hacerlo solo**

**school is here for your child**

## Supporting Students No Matter What

School staff can help students dealing with unstable housing or homelessness get the tools and support they need to succeed.

Housing instability and homelessness can cause many struggles for children and teens, especially in school. Because students and families may not want to share information about such difficult situations, school staff members can play an important role in helping to identify and support students who may be experiencing homelessness.

If you're noticing signs that a student may be unstably housed (e.g. poor attendance, statements suggesting lack of shelter, poor hygiene, etc.), you can ask these questions to better understand their housing situation:

- Have you recently moved?
- Was your move due to a loss of housing?
- Are you in a safe place?
- Are you staying far away from school?

Avoid using the word "homeless" when speaking to students about their housing situation. Try these suggestions instead:

- Family in transition
- Temporary housing
- Loss of housing
- Unstable housing
- Moving from place to place
- Doubling up with family or friends
- Couch surfing

If you believe a student is likely experiencing homelessness, please direct them to their district **McKinney-Vento Liaison** and assure students that any information disclosed will be kept confidential.



# 21st Century Community Learning Centers Student Internship Program



**Funding:** Bipartisan Safer Communities Act \$452,191

## **Purpose:**

- Build local staffing capacity for afterschool/summer programs
- Youth employment: Students earn at least minimum wage
- Career pathways in education
- Foster connection to professionals in the education field



# 21st Century Community Learning Centers Student Internship Program



## Planning/Outreach Team

- Engage High School Youth as Team Members
- Student internship recruitment/placement.
- Monitor and support student intern progress
- Provide professional development
- Utilize strengths of student interns
- Build a future of diverse professionals
- Provide high school students with real world experiences.
- Build LEA/CBO capacity to hire high school students.



# Listening to Roundtable Members



Based on your personal, organizational, and advocacy perspective, please share with us:

**What did you learn? How will you share today's information with families and community members?**

**What thoughts or concerns are you hearing from your constituencies regarding today's topics?**



# Thank You!



## Dates for Summer and Fall 2023 meetings:

- August 8 and October 17, 2023
- All meetings are 1:00-2:30 p.m.





# Contact Information



## Office of Student Support Services

Division of John Frassinelli, Division Director

[john.frassinelli@ct.gov](mailto:john.frassinelli@ct.gov)

Chlo-Anne Bobrowski, Education Manager

[chlo-anne.bobrowski@ct.gov](mailto:chlo-anne.bobrowski@ct.gov)

### Commissioner's Roundtable for Family and Community Engagement

Judy Carson, Education Consultant

[Judy.carson@ct.gov](mailto:Judy.carson@ct.gov)

### Connecticut High-Dosage Tutoring Program

John Scianimanico, Director of Special Projects

[john.scianimanico@ct.gov](mailto:john.scianimanico@ct.gov)

### Learner Engagement and Attendance Program (LEAP)

Kari Sullivan Custer, Education Consultant

[kari.sullivan@ct.gov](mailto:kari.sullivan@ct.gov)

### McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Campaign: "No Matter What, School Is For Everyone"

Agnes Quinones, Education Consultant

[Agnes.Quinones@ct.gov](mailto:Agnes.Quinones@ct.gov)

Eric Scoville, Director of Communications

[Eric.Scoville@ct.gov](mailto:Eric.Scoville@ct.gov)

### 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers Student Internship Program

Shelby Pons, Education Consultant

[shelby.pons@ct.gov](mailto:shelby.pons@ct.gov)