



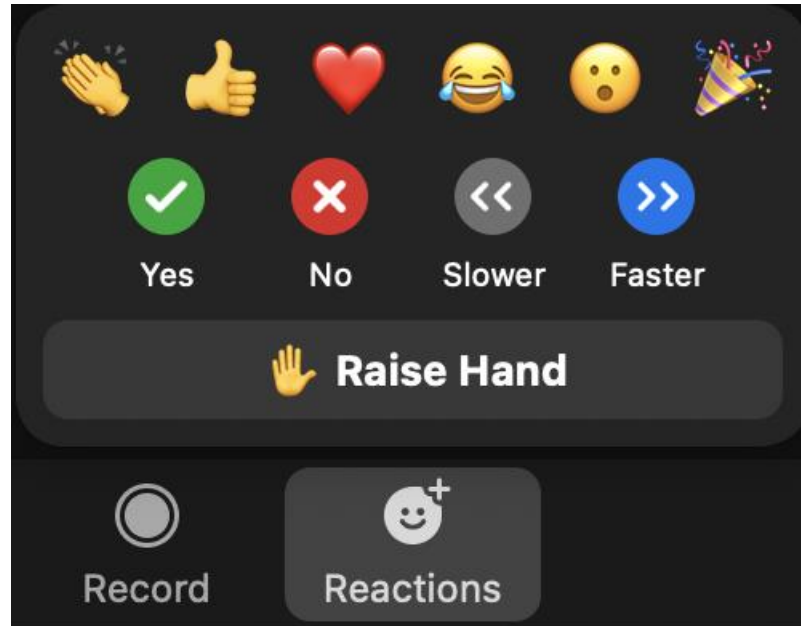
CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

***The Commissioner's Roundtable
for Family and Community
Engagement in Education***

August 10, 2022

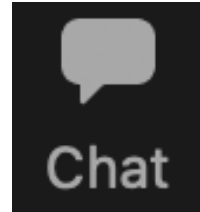
1:00 to 2:30 p.m.

Interacting with Our Zoom Meeting



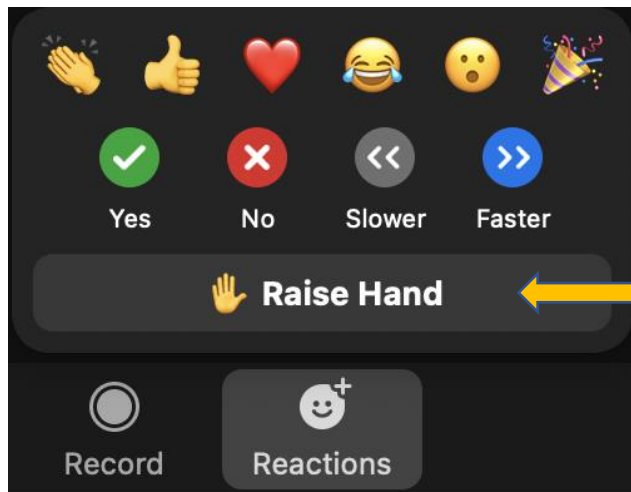
Use **reactions** to share your feelings with the speaker and other audience members.

Interacting with Our Zoom Meeting



To ask a question of our panelists:

Open the Chat panel and type in your question.



If you'd like a chance to unmute your microphone and ask a question:

1. Click the **Reactions** icon, and then
2. Click the **Raise Hand** button.

When you're called on by the facilitator, you'll be able to unmute your microphone.

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.

Our Group Engagement Norms

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
- W.A.I.T. (Why Am I Talking?)
- Be open to honest and real conversation that is fearless (“Say what you want, not what you think others want to hear”)
- 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
Chlo-Anne Bobrowski, Education Manager

Emergent Critical Issues in Education

Charlene Russell-Tucker, Commissioner
Chlo-Anne Bobrowski, Education Manager
John Scianimanico, Director of Special Projects
Kari Sullivan Custer, Education Consultant

CT Learning Hub

Irene Parisi, Chief Academic Officer

Listening to Roundtable Members: Families' Thoughts or Concerns about Returning to School

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





CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Emergent Critical Issues in Education

Charlene Russell-Tucker, Commissioner
Connecticut State Department of Education
August 10, 2022

National Recognition for our Agencies' Collaboration



On June 22, Commissioner Russell-Tucker testified before the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP). She discussed “The Connecticut Difference” - Connecticut’s promising practices and best-in-class collaboration used before and during the pandemic to help our entire education ecosystem survive, thrive, and transform into the future.



The Connecticut Difference

- *This is our longstanding focus on best-in-class collaboration, working together, and listening to one another, in search of common ground for the sake of our students. Throughout this pandemic, and into recovery, we have made it a hallmark of our response and recovery efforts to work with our various partners and stakeholders as often as possible to develop and implement our policies.*
- *Family and community engagement is a particular passion of mine. **In 2017, I developed and implemented the Commissioner's Roundtable for Family and Community Engagement in Education, which is a diverse constituent group of education stakeholders representing school and district staff, advocacy organizations, parents and guardians, community members, and students, to advise the Commissioner of Education regarding policy and programmatic priorities.** The Roundtable meets quarterly to bring authentic parent and community voice to CSDE's products and initiatives; communicate state-level initiatives with families and communities; recommend effective practices to increase successful school and district engagement with families; and provide strategies to empower families in supporting their children's education.*



LAUNCHING INTO HEALTHY LEARNING



LAUNCHING INTO HEALTHY LEARNING – Fall 2022

Respiratory Disease Prevention Strategies for School, Child Care, and Camps:
Continuing forward to support in-person learning and child care.



Minimize impacts from respiratory disease outbreaks and maximize successful in-person learning and child care during the coming school year by thoughtfully employing familiar mitigation strategies.

As we continue last school year's transition away from executive orders to local decision-making regarding COVID-19 response, it is important for schools, child care programs, and youth camps to keep in mind the tools and resources for respiratory disease prevention that remain available to them. As part of this local decision-making process, schools, child care programs and camps are reminded to continue to work collaboratively with their local health departments and members of their communities, including staff and families, to determine which of the various prevention strategies are most appropriate to implement within their facilities. The Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) offers the following guidance to assist in local decision-making, in the context of local conditions, to balance respiratory disease prevention measures with maximizing in-person participation opportunities for children.

START HEALTHY with vaccination.

Vaccinations are the **first and most important** line of defense in preventing respiratory diseases like COVID-19 and influenza from disrupting the continuous operation of schools, child care programs, and youth camps. The effectiveness of any other respiratory disease prevention strategy at a school, child care program or youth camp is likely to be dependent on the underlying level of COVID-19 and influenza vaccination in staff and children. **Everyone 6 months of age or older can receive both COVID-19 vaccine and a seasonal vaccine for influenza.** Many school aged children are eligible for a **COVID-19 vaccine booster dose** right now, and it is likely that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will recommend that **all eligible school aged children should receive a COVID-19 booster dose before winter.** Schools, child care programs, and youth camps should encourage all children and staff to get [up-to-date](#) with their COVID-19 vaccinations prior to the start of the school year and should encourage the same for seasonal influenza vaccines when they become available this fall. Hosting on-site vaccination clinics is a great way to encourage vaccination and show your support to the children and families you serve. [DPH can assist](#) facility administrators with organizing these events and [local health departments](#) can be a great resource as well.

MAXIMIZE IN-PERSON LEARNING with symptom awareness and at-home testing.

It is clear that in-person attendance provides the greatest benefit to children for both social/emotional/physical wellbeing and academic achievement. CDC recommends that people with symptoms of infectious diseases, including COVID-19, influenza, and gastrointestinal infections should stay home and get tested for COVID-19, and DPH supports this recommendation. However, DPH also recognizes the severe impact this prevention strategy can have on in-person learning opportunities, student achievement, attendance, and engagement for some children and communities. This is especially true during fall and spring allergy seasons and the winter months when mild respiratory symptoms seem to be almost constant. CDC continues to advise that children and staff should not report in-person to school, child care, or camp if they are experiencing [any](#) COVID-19 symptoms, regardless of a negative test result. While DPH supports CDC's guidance, we also support an alternative approach for those administrators who feel that it may benefit their students and staff by providing more in-person learning opportunities.

Minimize impacts from respiratory disease outbreaks and maximize successful in-person learning and child care during the coming school year by thoughtfully employing familiar mitigation strategies.

1. **Start Healthy** with vaccination
2. **Maximize In-person Learning** with symptom awareness and at-home testing
3. **Use Available Prevention Tools** based on conditions in your area

USE AVAILABLE PREVENTION TOOLS based on conditions in your area.

School districts, child care programs, and youth camps are **still required to report COVID-19 cases** using systems put in place by DPH and OEC, and DPH encourages continued sharing of general information about COVID-19 cases in your facilities with families. However, DPH recommends that school, child care, and camp administrators rely on the [CDC COVID-19 Community Levels](#) to determine when to consider applying enhanced measures for the prevention of respiratory viral diseases (e.g., COVID-19, influenza). Facilities located in counties with **Low** community levels can focus on maximizing in-person learning days and rely on routine everyday strategies to provide healthy learning environments. If their county moves to the **Medium** level, administrators can consider whether implementing some additional prevention strategies could be beneficial in mitigating any impact that increased COVID-19 cases in their community may have on in-person learning. Facilities located in counties with a **High** COVID-19 Community Level can consider whether implementing even more advanced mitigation strategies could be beneficial, including such things as universal masking and contact tracing, to prevent further surges or outbreaks at their facilities. Administrators who may be experiencing case clusters or outbreaks at a facility should [contact DPH](#) and [their local health department](#).

[Fall-2022-Respiratory-Disease-Prevention-Strategies-K12_08012022_FINAL.pdf \(ct.gov\)](#)



LAUNCHING INTO HEALTHY LEARNING – Operational Strategies Fall 2022

Release of Operational Strategies – Fall 2022: Goal: to get Connecticut’s kids back to school, child care, and camp at the scheduled time of the school, to keep them there in-person as much as possible throughout the year, and to keep them healthy and learning all year long.

- 1. COVID-19 Vaccination Clinics:** will be organized for all 36 of CT’s Alliance Districts with mobile vaccination clinics (yellow vans)
- 2. Self-Test Kits:** will be available free of charge to all CT schools, child care, and camps for students, staff, and service providers. Ordered approximate 5 million individual tests and plans to order more.
- 3. Test-Mask-Go (optional):**

Children and staff with mild respiratory disease symptoms (e.g., infrequent cough, congestion, runny nose, sore throat, etc.) the option to continue participating in-person provided:

- they are fever-free (< 100°F) and feel well enough to participate,
- they do not live with anyone who has had COVID-19 in the past 2 weeks,
- they can wear a mask consistently and correctly (if facility operators require them to do so), and
- they test negative for COVID-19 prior to reporting in-person on every day they have symptoms, as well as one final test on the morning their symptoms have completely resolved.

Individuals who have any respiratory disease symptoms should not use the Test-Mask-Go strategy if:

- 1) they have a fever ($\geq 100^\circ\text{F}$) or feel feverish (they should not report in-person until their fever has resolved for at least 24 hours without the use of medication) or 2) they live with a person who recently tested positive for COVID-19 (within the past 2 weeks)

Reminder: School Nurse can be the medical provider to excuse absences due to illness.

[Download Document](#)



2022 Connecticut Summer Enrichment Grant Program

Context & Strategic Vision

In light of the unprecedented challenges faced by Connecticut children over the last two school years—including academic learning loss, social isolation, and more—the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) has partnered with leaders across the state to define a bold vision for Summer 2022:

*Provide **equitable, high-quality, accessible** summer learning enrichment programming opportunities for Connecticut children, especially vulnerable populations*

With 97% of students learning in mostly hybrid or remote learning models during the 2020-21 school year, this program aims to provide an outlet for all students to continue to nurture their academic and social-emotional development.

Elements of the Vision



Equitable: Summer programming will be available to every child ages 5-18 (students with special needs can be up to age 22), though funding for students from high-needs backgrounds will be prioritized.



High-quality: Program providers will bring innovative, creative, and developmentally appropriate approaches to meet both educational and social-emotional learning (SEL) needs.



Accessible: Financial and logistical barriers (e.g., program fees, transportation) will be reduced to allow all students to participate in summer enrichment programming.

2022 Connecticut Summer Enrichment Grant Program

- This summer, the CSDE awarded \$12.2M in summer enrichment grant funding to 200 summer camps, child care centers, and other programs serving K-12 students
 - 182 Expansion Grants (up to \$75,000 were awarded)
 - 18 Innovation Grants (up to \$250,000 were awarded)
- Of the \$12.2M, camps allocated approximately \$3.2M for student scholarships to reduce or eliminate the cost of attending.
- Over 50 percent of awarded programs are located within a Connecticut Alliance District
- Camps are collectively projected to serve over 65,000 students

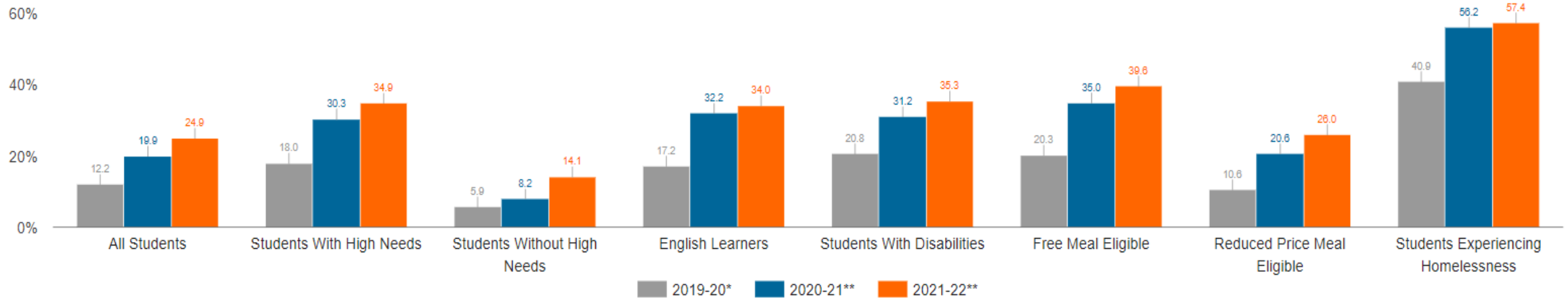
"I cannot thank you enough for this experience. Not only did it offer peace of mind to my husband and myself, but it also offered Jamie the opportunity to explore and learn new skills with new adults and peers. I've even noticed an improvement in his self esteem and behaviors at home – I know this isn't a coincidence! This was one of the best summers we could have had, and I know that a huge part is due to the help and support we received at the camp this year."

- 2022 Summer Enrichment Camp Parent



Starting with the Data! Percentage of Students Chronically Absent by Student Group

Percentage of Students Chronically Absent by Student Group (YTD as of June 2022 compared to 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.

Back to School Efforts to Improve Attendance in 2022-23 - UNIVERSAL

Tier 1 – for everyone

- **Consistent messaging and events**
 - Community rallies and BBQs
 - School-based back to school BBQs/ parties
 - Parent Square and other text messaging platforms (multiple languages)
 - Billboards with actual students – “think they are celebrities!”
 - Community canvassing
 - [CT Attendance Awareness Campaign Materials](#)
- **Parent Teacher Home Visits** (universal/not targeted, home visits by student’s teacher)
- **Professional development and training** for administrators and school staff
 - All administrators are being trained on "Creating Restorative Schools" and "Engaging Families"
 - Conducting “Welcoming Schools” Walkthroughs (CFSP/CREC)
- **Shifts in mindsets** from punitive to caring and supportive communities and interactions
 - “Disney-level” (customer service) engagement with families
 - Good news communications – positive, individualized messaging to families about their child from teacher or other school personnel



Back to School Efforts to Improve Attendance in 2022-23 – TARGETED Individualized Efforts

Tier 2 and 3 – **Beyond the BBQ**

- **Data-informed, research-based approach** that monitors for root causes, trends and effectiveness of strategies.
- **Maximizing community agencies** to support students and families
 - **Targeted Home visits (LEAP)**
 - **Using data** to look at historical markers to determine pro-active home visits
 - **School-based mentoring** and other **adult relationships** to support students returning to school after experiencing high level of absences
 - **Flexible credit recovery programs** for students that are behind in credits
 - **Summer and afterschool enrichment programs** that meet the interests of the students and priority enrollment for students who have missed too much school or behind academically
 - **Targeting efforts to students in transition years**, e.g., Grades K, 6, 9
 - **Connecting with families of students who struggled with attendance** last year before school starts so that we can work together to ensure improved attendance this year
 - **Health services** located in convenient locations for COVID-19 vaccines/boosters, physicals and immunizations
 - **Access to mental health assessments and support services**

CT Attendance Awareness Campaign

In partnership with the LEAP/RESC Alliance, [Attendance Works](#), CSDE has created messaging materials, in English, Portuguese, Haitian-Creole, and Spanish, for Connecticut districts and schools to use in their own attendance awareness campaigns. All materials can be downloaded and branded with a district or school's logo. The resources include banners, parent handouts, posters and coloring pages. All resources are in PDF format. Find the materials on the Connecticut [Attendance Awareness Campaign webpage](#).



Attend Today Connecticut

Stay on Track with Good Attendance...

©Attendance Works

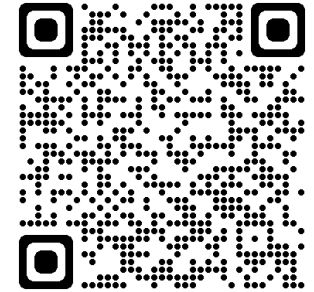
PRECHOOLERS build skills and develop good habits for showing up on time	ELEMENTARY STUDENTS read well by the end of third grade	HIGH SCHOOLERS stay on track for graduation	COLLEGE STUDENTS earn their degrees	WORKERS succeed in their jobs
---	---	---	---	---

Too many absences—excused or unexcused—can keep students from succeeding in school and in life. How many are too many? 10% of the school year—that's 18 missed days or 2 days a month—can knock students off track.

CSDE
CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE>

#attendtodayCT

Attendance Works
Advancing Student Success By Reducing Chronic Absence
www.attendanceworks.org



<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Chronic-Absence/Awareness-Materials>

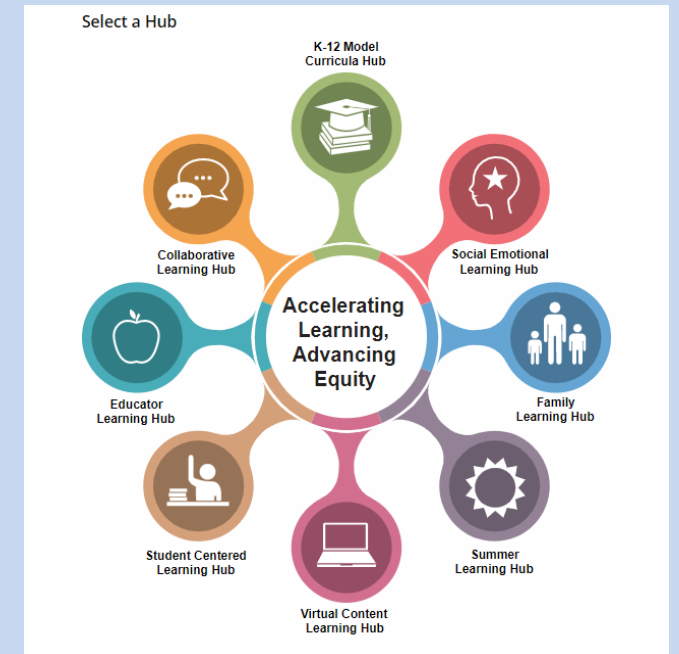
CT Learning Hub Reimagined

Irene Parisi

Chief Academic Officer

[CT Learning Hub: https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Academic-Office/CT-Learning-Hub](https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Academic-Office/CT-Learning-Hub)

Launched June 2020 to provide educators, students and families with equitable access to high quality resources anytime, anywhere



Listening to Roundtable Members

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

- **What are the bright spots in back-to-school activities in your community?**
- **What thoughts or concerns are you hearing from your constituencies about returning to school?**



CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Thank you!

Be safe and be well!

Next meeting: October 19, 2022, 1-2:30 p.m.