

### Q17. Connecticut High-Dosage Tutoring Program: Approved Tutor Provider Survey

The purpose of this survey is to build a list of 3-5 high-quality tutor providers to support Connecticut's High-Dosage Tutoring (HDT) program. The HDT program is a new state initiative that aims to implement a research-based model to accelerate mathematics recovery for priority students in Grades 6-9 in SY2023. Recognizing the challenge of recruiting and training individuals to provide tutoring services in middle- and high-school math, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) invites organizations to submit information that can be shared with local education agencies participating in the HDT program.

Please refer to the associated [HDT Vendor Survey Guidance Document](#) for more information regarding this program and the assessment process. The application questions in this Qualtrics survey can also be found in this Document.

Survey responses for each question should be limited to a max of 200 words. Submissions will be accepted until April 7, 2023 at 5:00PM.

Q1. Organization Name:

SmartStart Education, LLC ("SmartStart")

Q2. Organization Address:

59 Elm St, Suite 225, New Haven, CT 06405

Q3. Organization Website:

<https://www.smartstarteducation.com/hdt/>

Q4. Organization Point of Contact Name:

Dr. Isaak Aronson

Q18. Organization Point of Contact Role:

CEO

Q19. Organization Point of Contact Email:

iaronson@smartstarteducation.com

Q20. Organization Point of Contact Phone Number:

2037517160

Q6. Briefly describe your organization, including its mission, leadership, years of operation, number of students served, and other notable points.

SmartStart was founded in 2007 and is headquartered in Connecticut. SmartStart provides high-quality educational services which improve academic achievement, including High-Dosage Tutoring, across dozens of districts, both within Connecticut and out-of-state (NY, DC, Maryland, Texas). SmartStart's mission is to ensure that every student has ongoing access to high-quality, empowered educators, who can help each student to realize their full academic potential. Dr. Isaak Aronson, CEO/Founder, is a Senior Lecturer at Johns Hopkins University School of Education, a birthplace of High-Dosage Tutoring. As a result, SmartStart was an early adopter of HDT. He is hands-on, responsive to feedback, and involved in ensuring that SmartStart's contracts are implemented with fidelity. We attach an organizational chart and resumes for key members of the leadership team. SmartStart has served over 35,000 students (95% ethnic/racial minorities, 25% ELL, and 15% designated as having special needs). The number of students participating in SmartStart's programs continues to grow due to our reputation for program management, excellent instruction, and dedicated staff. Notably, SmartStart has demonstrated capacity to hire/manage tutors at scale. In addition to working with several districts in Connecticut, we work with Baltimore, NYC and DC, where SmartStart successfully filled "unfillable" positions with high quality in-person educators, who contribute to the educator pipeline.

Q6. Provide an overview of the tutoring services your organization provides, including grade levels, time of day, content areas, frequency, teacher-student ratio, and instructional model, including in-person or virtual.

SmartStart is able to and has extensive experience providing face-to-face tutoring in all subject areas for grades K-12. SmartStart typically provides face-to-face tutoring (virtual also available, if desired) in schools during normal school hours, but has the capacity to also provide its tutoring services before and after-school, on weekends, and over Summer and holiday breaks. SmartStart can provide mathematics instruction at all levels, from basic addition and subtraction to advanced Calculus. SmartStart has the resources and the staffing infrastructure to be very accommodating and tailored to individual school and student needs. With respect to frequency, SmartStart is able to provide in-person tutoring sessions that occur three to five times per week, for 30-90 minute sessions during school hours, depending on student availability, scheduling and need. SmartStart offers 1:1, 2:1, 3:1 and 4:1 student/teacher ratio tutoring sessions. SmartStart strives to ensure tutor reliability and consistency by algorithmically matching tutors to students based on 16 years of data in compatibility, and monitoring and supporting tutors throughout programs to ensure that the tutor-student bond is strong and unbroken during the tutoring assignment. SmartStart was an early adopter of HDT and adheres strictly to its research-based precepts, which are discussed further on our website.

Q22. Briefly describe the curriculum, digital tools/online platforms (including how students access the platform), and instructional materials your organization uses and how they align to Tier 1 instruction and Connecticut Core Standards. Please also include middle and high school math programs your organization/tutors are familiar with.

Tutors utilize the scope and sequence of district curriculum and school course requirements primarily in their tutoring, so that there is alignment to current classroom units of study and coursework. In addition to district curriculum, tutors are trained in supplemental curriculum, including Voyager Math, which is aligned to the Common Core Standards (foundation of Connecticut Core Math Standards), and transferrable to Tier 1 Math standards/content. Tutors are experienced in using district curriculum in concert with supplemental curriculum, as needed. SmartStart tutors also use the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model. Vmath® and Trans Math are targeted math intervention programs for struggling students which provide additional opportunities to master critical math concepts/skills. Programs deliver essential content using strategies proven to accelerate and motivate at-risk students. They include targeted assessments that help inform instruction and actionable data to drive differentiated instruction. Curriculum contains fully integrated digital tools that link to vocabulary, resources and audio tools, which students can access on school or home devices through the use of a password. Students will also use district platforms/instructional materials during tutoring sessions. SmartStart is accustomed to making adjustments to curriculum to ensure all students can access the benefits of HDT instruction, including students with IEPs and ELL students.

Q8. Describe the tutors your organization employs, the training they receive (including pre-service and in-service training, cultural-competency training, and bilingual competencies, especially related to supporting Spanish-speaking students), and their experience working with high-needs students (students with disabilities, students receiving Free- or Reduced-Priced Meals, and English Language Learners). Are your tutors experienced in leading tutoring sessions without the supervision of school staff?

Details regarding SmartStart tutor qualifications are provided further below (Q16 relating to cost-per pupil). SmartStart has a Talent Acquisition Team in place, whose job is to scout, hire and retain highly capable educators (through broad network, competitive compensation, and variable marketing of available positions) for its HDT programs. Tutors are trained before and during service, including weekly 1:1 support from an experienced K-12 instructional coach who specializes in high needs students. Tutors are intensively trained in usage of scope and sequence of district curriculum and school course requirements, as well as in evidence-based HDT best practices. Throughout the duration of the HDT program, all tutors receive three levels of training/support: weekly 1:1 instructional coaching (virtual or in-person), monthly self-directed reflective learning activities, and live group training on research-based strategies/techniques/best practices. For self-directed learning, tutors are provided a comprehensive list of research-based resource videos, presentations and articles related to relationship-building, social-emotional learning and culturally responsive teaching practices. Tutors receive training on instructional strategies for ELLs, working with students with disabilities and relationship building, to ensure all students can equitably access HDT instruction. Tutors are also extensively trained on how to utilize assessment data to adjust instruction.

**Q9.** Describe how your organization uses data-driven instruction, formative assessments, formative assessment practices during the tutoring sessions, and other tools to gauge student learning and growth.

Baseline data is collected before tutoring begins to make data-driven decisions on topics and level of intensity of instruction. Learning goals and progress monitoring is structured based on initial and frequent assessments. Formative assessments are administered at the beginning of each HDT program to determine initial placement for instruction. Further, formative assessments are embedded in every lesson to determine if reteach, remediation or enrichment is needed. Summative assessments are administered at the end of each unit to determine what level of mastery the student has achieved and progress towards learning goals as a result of HDT. The tutor and SmartStart's curriculum coordinator collaborate and plan weekly, which involves analyzing student data to monitor student progress and modifying the learning plan and pace, as needed. Students demonstrating mastery at 80% or less will automatically receive reteach and extra practice. Data is used to gauge when differentiation, English Language Learner and Special Education strategies and best practices need to be employed and if supplementary materials would be useful. Weekly lesson assessments provide vital data that tutors use to revise, add and adjust instruction.

**Q10.** Describe how your tutors collaborate and communicate with teachers, families, and school officials to maximize the impact of tutoring and student learning outside of regular tutoring sessions.

Each tutor is assigned to partner with one or more classroom teachers. Tutors communicate with their assigned classroom teachers informally, on a daily basis, both to report student progress and to raise issues around lesson planning. On a weekly basis, tutors and teachers meet to review student data, lesson plan and review and adjust student learning objectives. At the end of every assessment cycle (typically 2 weeks), SmartStart reports student assessment data to school administration. SmartStart tracks attendance daily and reports to school and district administration on a weekly basis. Tutors provide weekly email check-ins with parents to share attendance data, progress reports, assessment scores and program updates. SmartStart can translate progress reports into parents' native language, if needed. If oral communication is required, SmartStart can provide this, as well as translators (as needed). The Program Managers communicate to the Program Director, who communicates directly with the COO and CEO, so that macro-adjustments can be made to HDT programs. SmartStart is committed to ensuring a quality tutoring experience for every student and communicates liberally to make sure that all parties are satisfied and successful. All communication between classroom teachers, students, school officials and families is a two-way street and insights gathered from these communications are incorporated into the structural plan. A communication loop diagram is attached.

**Q11.** Describe any relevant experience working in Connecticut public school districts.

SmartStart was founded and is headquartered in New Haven, Connecticut. Since its inception (2007), SmartStart has developed deep roots in and a long-standing positive history working with numerous Connecticut public school districts. Over the last 16 years, SmartStart has established a strong record of identifying and training individuals to work directly with Connecticut's most needy students. Between the period of 2007 through 2012, SmartStart provided afterschool and weekend tutoring in partnership with 18 districts in Connecticut, including, New Haven, Hartford, New Britain, New London, Waterbury, Bridgeport, Stamford, and so forth. These programs were well received and highly effective. We served over 10,000 K-12th grade students across the state, including English Language Learners and students with special needs. Our students consistently demonstrated strong academic gains. Our ELA students increased on average by 22% from pretest to posttest and our math students increased by 24% from pretest to posttest. SmartStart currently provides High Dosage Tutoring in Fairfield, CT and Stamford, CT as well as Long-Term Substitute Teacher staffing in Bloomfield, CT.

**Q13.** If available, please provide any data or evaluations of your tutoring model as evidence of the program's overall effectiveness. Data showcasing progress made in middle and/or high school math is of particular value to this project.

SmartStart collects pre/post-test data on students, surveys from parents and classroom teachers, and performs classroom observations to evaluate our programs. SmartStart students, on average, achieved an increase of 23.6% in math scores (measured by pre/post-test). Over 85% of SmartStart's students showed a greater than 10% increase from pretest to posttest. Nearly 50% of SmartStart students increase their scores by more than 60% in at least one National Council of Teachers of Mathematics content standards. Whenever possible, we get student state test scores from schools. We compare their scores on the state test in the year prior to and post working with SmartStart. In 2022, SmartStart's students increased their state assessment scores in math by 12.7% from 2021 results. At Vivien T. Thomas Academy, SmartStart provided academic support in Algebra 1 (11/11/2019-2/7/2020). The grades and test scores of these students showed a 40% increase during the months they received SmartStart instructional support. Classroom teachers report: Students enrolled in SmartStart program improved their academic performance in class (88%); SmartStart students are more engaged in classroom instruction and have gained academic self-confidence (82%). Parents report: "agree" or "strongly agree" they are satisfied with our program and want their children enrolled with SmartStart program again (97%).

Q14. Please provide an estimate of your organization's cost per pupil.

Tutoring Ratio (Student: Tutor) In-Person tutoring (Per pupil cost per hour) 1:1 --&gt; \$55 2:1 --&gt; \$32 3:1 --&gt; \$23 4:1 --&gt; \$19 Tutor qualifications: - Bachelor's degree or higher in related field to demonstrate content mastery - One-year prior teaching/tutoring experience (including former educators, career-change professionals, teacher candidates, paraprofessionals) - Able to pass a background check (as required by CT state law) - Racially and linguistically representative of the student populations served - High emotional quotient (EQ)(able to respond to students' social, emotional, physical and mental health, and academic needs) - Hireable by school/district, as needed and upon attaining all necessary certifications - Preference for tutors with foreign language capabilities (particularly Spanish) - Able to demonstrate stability, reliability and passion for helping students achieve their goals

Q15. Is your organization currently under contract with a Connecticut district?

Yes. SmartStart currently has contracts with the following Connecticut districts: City Entity: Fairfield Public Schools, Connecticut Contract Period: 9/1/2017 - Present Description of the services provided: Providing in-school, home-bound and virtual HDT for students with special needs. City Entity: Stamford Public Schools, Connecticut Contract Period: 2/10/2023- Present Description of the services provided: Provide special education HDT services. City Entity: Bloomfield Public Schools, Connecticut Contract Period: 11/16/2022- Present Description of the services provided: Providing long-term substitute teachers for middle and high school science and language classes. We attach copies of each of these contracts for your review.

Q16. Is your organization currently under contract with another state? If yes, please upload the current contract.

[NYC PD Contract- QR1256.pdf](#)

11.2MB  
application/pdf

Q25. Please use this space to upload any relevant data or evaluations you would like to include for consideration.

[Stamford CT Award of RFP 22-23A.pdf](#)

4.9MB  
application/pdf

Q23. Click the button below to submit your application. Be sure to retain a copy of your application for your records!

## Location Data

**Location:** ([41.3136, -72.9272](#))

**Source:** GeolIP Estimation

