



CCER

Connecticut Council
for

EDUCATION REFORM

Every child deserves an exceptional education—without exception

Working to narrow Connecticut's achievement gap by:

Supporting CT's Districts • Advancing Policy Solutions • Raising Awareness

SUPPORTING

PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS

CCER provides Connecticut's lowest-performing public school districts with free management-level assistance that increases their capacity to better support teaching and learning. We identify and partner with experts who can meet the individual needs of the specific district, and we collaborate to improve district-wide systems so that districts can be more strategic and hold themselves more accountable. These engagements are not only incredibly helpful to the districts. They also help us to understand the real-world challenges faced by traditional public schools, so that we can be more effective in advocating for change at the state-level. In order to further that understanding, we are also undertaking two significant projects that will have important implications for districts and the state.

For example, some of our **STRATEGIES** include:



Resource Allocation

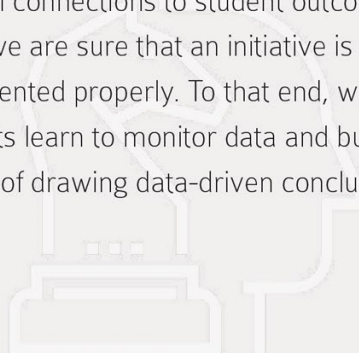
Districts are spread thin, and they need to use their resources efficiently to support their plans. We help them analyze how their resource allocation compares to other districts, and whether resources are used optimally to support their priorities.

We helped one district to examine the equity in funding across different types of schools and students.



Executive Coaching & Strategic Planning

A district needs to plan effectively by focusing its time and resources on a few key priorities. We help a district to refine its goals, create action plans, and identify measurable metrics to monitor implementation. A key aspect of this work is that we measure how adult actions impact student outcomes. We only make causal connections to student outcomes when we are sure that an initiative is being implemented properly. To that end, we help districts learn to monitor data and build a culture of drawing data-driven conclusions.



Leadership Training

High-quality leadership can make all the difference in a district. We are collaborating with Achievement First to provide select leaders from traditional public school districts with access to intensive leadership development training.

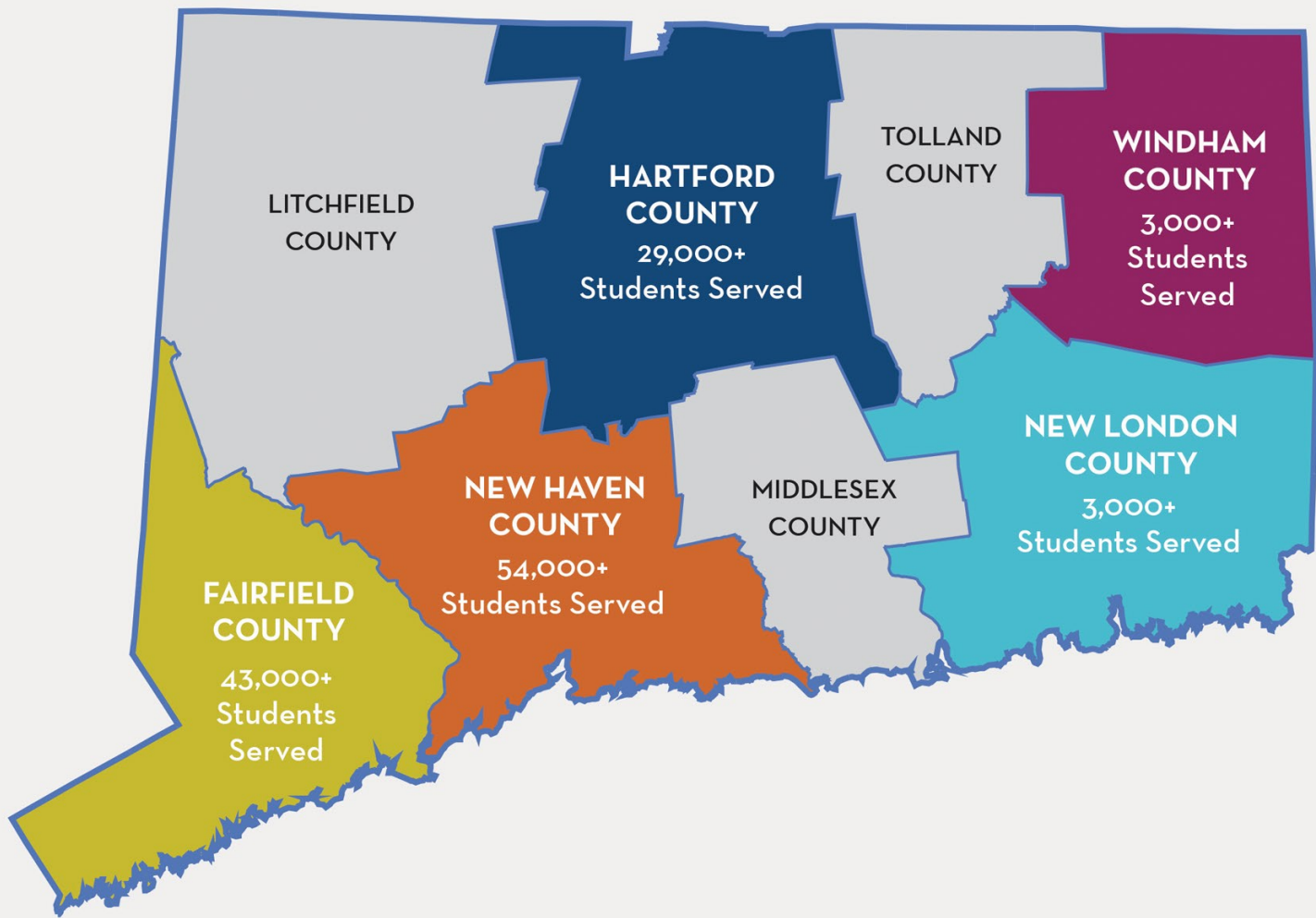
We will then host workshops inside participating districts so that the leaders can share what they have learned with other administrators.



TO DATE we have worked in the following counties:



Impact Through DISTRICT WORK



In 2016, we embarked upon two **SIGNIFICANT PROJECTS** that will have an impact on both district leadership strategies and state policy efforts.

Study of the Effectiveness OF THE ALLIANCE DISTRICT PROGRAM

We are studying the efficacy of Connecticut's Alliance District program. This study will help to draw meaningful conclusions about the nature and impact of the Alliance District program, which has cost the state approximately half a billion dollars to date, and the extent to which district turnaround plans are being developed strategically. Based upon this study, we will be able to make policy recommendations to improve this program.

Online Clearinghouse FOR LITERACY & STRATEGIC PLANNING

We are also working to develop a clearinghouse about research-based literacy and strategic planning practices, in partnership with two other well respected literacy-focused organizations. This project will provide district leadership teams with access to high-quality information on literacy and action steps for monitoring a literacy initiative, while embedding concepts of long-term strategic planning.

We advocate for state-level policy solutions designed to narrow Connecticut's achievement gap while raising academic outcomes for all students. The 2016 legislative session was particularly challenging due to Connecticut's historic budget deficit. During these difficult times we successfully collaborated with other key stakeholders across Connecticut to advance the following successes:

Advancing POLICY SOLUTIONS



DEFENDED LINK BETWEEN TEACHER EVALUATION & STUDENT LEARNING

Defeated a bill that sought to permanently prohibit linking student achievement data and teacher evaluations. The job of a teacher is to help a child learn, so a teacher's impact must be part of her performance evaluation.



IMPROVED TEACHER CERTIFICATION

Advocated for passage of a bill that improves teacher recruitment by removing some of the onerous licensing requirements that form barriers to out-of-state educators. We want to encourage great teachers to come to Connecticut because this will create a more competitive and talented pool of teachers for our students.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

We raise awareness about the need to improve public education so that every Connecticut child has a fair shot at success, regardless of race or socio-economic background.



Creating a strong media presence

with significant print coverage, as well as TV and radio.



Engaging the public

in conversations about the need to narrow the achievement gap through: regular blogs on policy, current events, and research; e-blasts to approximately 7,500 contacts; and an active social media account.



Building consensus

through coalitions working together on solutions that can be agreed to by varied stakeholders.



Highlighting success stories

in schools and districts that use innovation and hard work to improve outcomes for students.

CONFERENCES

In addition, we host two conferences each year that raise awareness about research-based practices and create a forum for addressing timely education issues.



Creating Learning Opportunities FOR ALL STUDENTS

Promoting discussion about successful models for improving academic achievement for all students and sharing strategies that have moved schools and districts forward. This event featured two keynote speakers from Massachusetts—Dr. Jason Irizarry and Dr. Paul Ash—as well as three panel discussions on successful turnaround strategies, personalized learning, and English learners.



The High School Principal LEADING FOR INNOVATION

Exploring topics and issues with which high school principals must grapple as they work to improve the effectiveness of their programming for all students. This event featured a keynote by award-winning New Jersey principal Baruti Kafele, as well as panel discussions and sessions on topics like STEM education; student-centered learning; accountability and strategic planning; and principal induction and mentoring.

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