



NEWS RELEASE

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Achieve Hartford!’s 2011 Choice Education Program Reaches 900-Plus Families with More than 80 Visits

(HARTFORD – AUGUST 4, 2011) Achieve Hartford! today reported on its 2011 Choice Education Program, in which the nonprofit organization assisted more than 900 Hartford parents whose children are entering school for the first time or moving up to middle school or high school.

Achieve Hartford!’s Choice Education Program is designed to help families gain the knowledge and confidence they need to effectively navigate school choice in Hartford on behalf of their children. The goal is not only to help *more* families make *more* informed choices, but also to help families in Hartford become familiar with the school district processes so they can have a sustained, positive relationship with the education system.

“Our goal was to help connect parents with their children’s schools, and we are very pleased with this year’s outreach results,” Achieve Hartford! Executive Director Jim Starr said. “With the use of the *SmartChoices* digital tool (www.smartchoiceshartford.org) and by bringing on bilingual Parent Choice Advisers who know Hartford neighborhoods and schools, we were able to simplify access to the information that parents need, including academic performance, location, and transportation options. Survey results showed that parents’ knowledge increased 100 percent and their confidence in understanding school choice rose 95 percent, following our interventions,” he added.

From December 2010 throughout the spring of 2011, Achieve Hartford! worked with the City of Hartford Department of Families, Children, Youth and Recreation, Hartford Public Schools, the State Department of Children and Families (DCF), and numerous community-based pre-school providers to help parents participate in the District’s all-choice process.

The Achieve Hartford! program this year targeted approximately 1,500 families, and reached more than 58 percent of them through 80 site visits. “We hope that in years to come, we have the opportunity to reach all of the roughly 4,000 families that participate in HPS school choice each year,” Starr said.

Achieve Hartford! is an independent, nonprofit organization of business and community leaders that focuses on improving student achievement and college and career readiness in Hartford. For a copy of this report - *Building Knowledge and Confidence: How Achieve Hartford!’s Choice Education Program Assists Capital City Parents* - or for more information on Achieve Hartford!, please visit our website, www.AchieveHartford.org.
