



# SHARED RESPONSIBILITY





WHO WE

# Are

Achieve Hartford! is an independent nonprofit organization founded by business and community leaders with the belief that strong schools lead to a strong city. As Mayors, Boards of Education and Superintendents change over time, we are the consistent voice pushing for high-quality education in our city since 2008.



## OUR MISSION

Through independent research, evaluation, and engaging the community, Achieve Hartford! creates urgency and shared responsibility for closing the educational achievement gap in Hartford.

## OUR VISION

In our envisioned future, the entire Hartford community values high-quality public education and maintains high expectations of both the schools and the children in Hartford. Students graduate prepared for college and career, thereby building a viable talent pipeline for local businesses and secure futures for Hartford residents.

## OUR VALUES

**High Expectations:** We believe every participant in the educational system, including students, parents, teachers, community leaders, district leaders, and the Board of Education, has the capacity to perform at high levels and fulfill their highest potential.

**Fact-Based Decision Making:** We value the use of unbiased data and analysis as the platform for decision-making.

**Community Focused:** We believe that sustainable progress comes from the incorporation of all voices from across our community in school improvement efforts.

**Collective Action:** Only through shared responsibility and the alignment of efforts and resources will significant progress be made toward ensuring Hartford students succeed.

## OUR STRENGTHS

Achieve Hartford! operates using 4 core strengths:

- Our expertise in data analysis fosters **transparency**;
- Our expertise in communications drives **urgency**;
- Our independent position and our willingness to hold everyone accountable breeds **trust**; and
- Our understanding of Hartford's residential community gives us **credibility**.



WHY WE

Do



WHAT WE DO

Achieve Hartford! believes that strong schools lead to a strong city. Developing great schools requires not only that the school system operate with excellence, but also our entire community. It takes a village to educate a child and it is our job to help stakeholders play their unique set of roles for school improvement now and long into the future.



## WE ADDRESS THREE COMMUNITY NEEDS

### ACCOUNTABILITY

- Credible information is needed to understand the challenges facing our schools.
- Monitoring progress helps ensure accountability for what matters most: student achievement.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- To overcome the immense challenges facing urban education, stakeholder groups need to align resources towards very specific solutions.
- Communications and outreach must be delivered meaningfully and must move stakeholders to action.

### RESEARCH

- Knowing there is a problem isn't enough; it is critical that solutions be based on research that is specifically relevant to Hartford.











WHAT WE

Do

Achieve Hartford! provides meaningful and credible information to diverse education stakeholders in ways that encourage action.

# HERE'S HOW WE ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF OUR COMMUNITY

-  **We evaluate progress.** We track the performance of Hartford schools against the rest of the state and report on the impact of key reform strategies in Hartford, such as school governance councils, student based budgeting, and school climate.
-  **We hold the system accountable.** We publish data and information on student achievement, principal attrition, school spending, communications, college readiness, and other key indicators of a strong school system.
-  **We create urgency.** Without bias or politicization, we create messaging, communications and events that encourage more stakeholders to get involved, including canvassing, rallies, Board of Education testimony, and letters to local newspapers.
-  **We engage the community.** Through community conversations, workshops, social media, TV programming, neighborhood newspaper columns, our website, attending key events, our weekly e-publication, 1-on-1 meetings with stakeholders, and presentations in the community, we engage a diverse group of stakeholders.
-  **We convene.** We lead and catalyze coalitions focused on solutions that significantly change practice and directly impact students.
-  **We research solutions.** We commission independent research that explores critical questions within Hartford's reform, such as how the school choice process works for families and why students aren't completing college on time.

## INNOVATIONS

### STUDENT CENTERED AND BLENDED LEARNING

This initiative is designed to build public understanding and support for the creation of more student centered and blended learning environments for Hartford students. This effort is focused both on large scale awareness events as well as small-scale coalition building around key opportunities to advance student centered and blended learning models in the city.

### DEGREE COMPLETION COALITION

We convene five stakeholder groups – Hartford parents and residents, local corporations and foundations, educators, community-based organizations and universities – to ensure more college and career readiness and retention programming is provided to significantly increase the rate of post-secondary degree completion.

### [www.SmarterHartford.org](http://www.SmarterHartford.org)

Our school data website, provides parents and other community stakeholders access to up-to-date information in the form of reports and a live database that users can use to filter data on schools and create custom reports and graphs.

### [edfocus](#)

The new publication shines a fact-based spotlight on the status of a particular issue that all stakeholders deem critical to improving education. By providing the context for the issue, assessing its current status, identifying local and national best practices where available, and offering targeted recommendations for action, we can help our city address issues such as family engagement, district communications, college readiness, and more.

TEAMWORK  
MAKES THE  
DREAM WORK



**Achieve  
Hartford!**  
Strong Schools, Strong City

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