

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CREC Awarded \$4.9 million by U.S. DOE to Lead Partnership for Family Engagement

(Hartford, Conn.) The Capitol Region Education Council (CREC) has been awarded a grant for \$4.9 million from the U.S. Department of Education to fund and design the establishment of a Statewide Family Engagement Center (SFEC). The five-year grant is a collaboration between CREC, the African Caribbean American Parents of Children with Disabilities (AFCAMP), the Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC), the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), and the State Education Resource Center (SERC). The grant will enable partners to work with communities across the state, providing resources and promoting the engagement of parents, families, students, and other community stakeholders to improve students' academic, social and emotional development.

"This is a unique and timely opportunity to support family engagement statewide. This grant will give all stakeholders—students, parents and families, school and district leaders, state-level policy makers, and community partners—the opportunities and support needed to increase engagement and impact outcomes for our students," stated CREC's Executive Director, Greg Florio. "CREC is honored to lead this work, and committed to promoting full, equal and equitable partnerships."

Through the grant, partnering agencies will implement and expand proven family engagement policies, programs, and activities that lead to improvements in student development and academic achievement.

"SERC is excited about the announcement of the award for funding a new CT SFEC," said SERC's Executive Director, Ingrid Canady. "We have long approached family engagement as a pillar of our work on behalf of Connecticut's students and families, including as operators of the CT Parent Information and Resource Center. The award for the new center demonstrates Connecticut's commitment to family engagement."

The purpose of the SFEC grant program is to provide financial support to organizations that provide technical assistance and training to state educational agencies and local school districts.

“We look forward to working with our partners to strengthen the family voice and improve educational outcomes for all of Connecticut’s children,” said Ann R. Smith, Executive Director of AFCAMP. “This investment presents a significant opportunity to expand family participation in Connecticut’s evolving family engagement framework.”

John Flanders, CPAC Executive Director, echoed support for the work of the SFEC partnership. “CPAC enthusiastically looks forward to working with the partners to bring mothers and fathers more fully into collaboration with their children’s schools. The \$4.9 million award over five years to engage school systems and families to work together for better education outcomes is an incredible opportunity.”

The U.S. DOE permitted each state’s central education agency to endorse one applicant per state; CREC was the chosen recipient of the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE)’s endorsement. Connecticut joins ten other states awarded similar grants: Arizona, Hawaii, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nebraska, Ohio, South Carolina, South Dakota, and West Virginia.

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*The **Capitol Region Education Council** was established in 1966. Working with and for its member districts, CREC has developed a wide array of cost-effective and high-quality programs and services to meet the educational needs of children and adults in the region. CREC brings more than five decades of experience in education, regional collaboration, and operations to provide innovative strategies and products that address the changing needs of school districts and their students, corporations, non-profits, and individual professions. CREC regularly serves 36 towns in Greater Hartford, offering more than 120 programs to more than 150,000 students annually. CREC manages more than 35 facilities throughout the area, including 16 interdistrict magnet schools. More information about CREC and CREC’s award-winning schools is available at www.crec.org.*