



North Hartford Ascend

Funded by the U.S. Department of Education Promise Neighborhoods Grant Program

Community Conversation

Wednesday, August 20, 2025



**Por favor levante la mano si necesita
interpretación al español**

**Spanish interpretation services are available. Please
see Alba for translation help.**

Agenda



- Welcome & Guidelines
- Featured Presenter: Hartford Public Schools
- Next Steps and Closing Remarks
- **Next Meeting: Wednesday, September 17th**

Discussion Guidelines



- Everyone deserves to be heard. Listen and respond respectfully.
- We are interested in hearing your authentic thoughts—please do not use AI or ChatGPT to respond to questions.
- Let's stay on topic— time is limited, so let's value each other's time.
- Successful dialogue is the responsibility of all participants.

Incentive Available to Hartford Residents

North Hartford Ascend: Overview

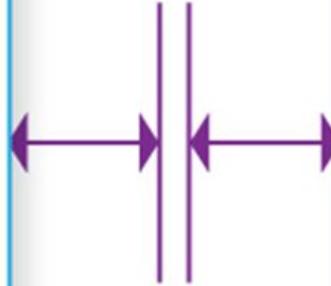


Connect children and families, prenatal through career, living in the **North Hartford Promise Zone** to the programs, services and other resources they need to **reach their full potential.**

Current State

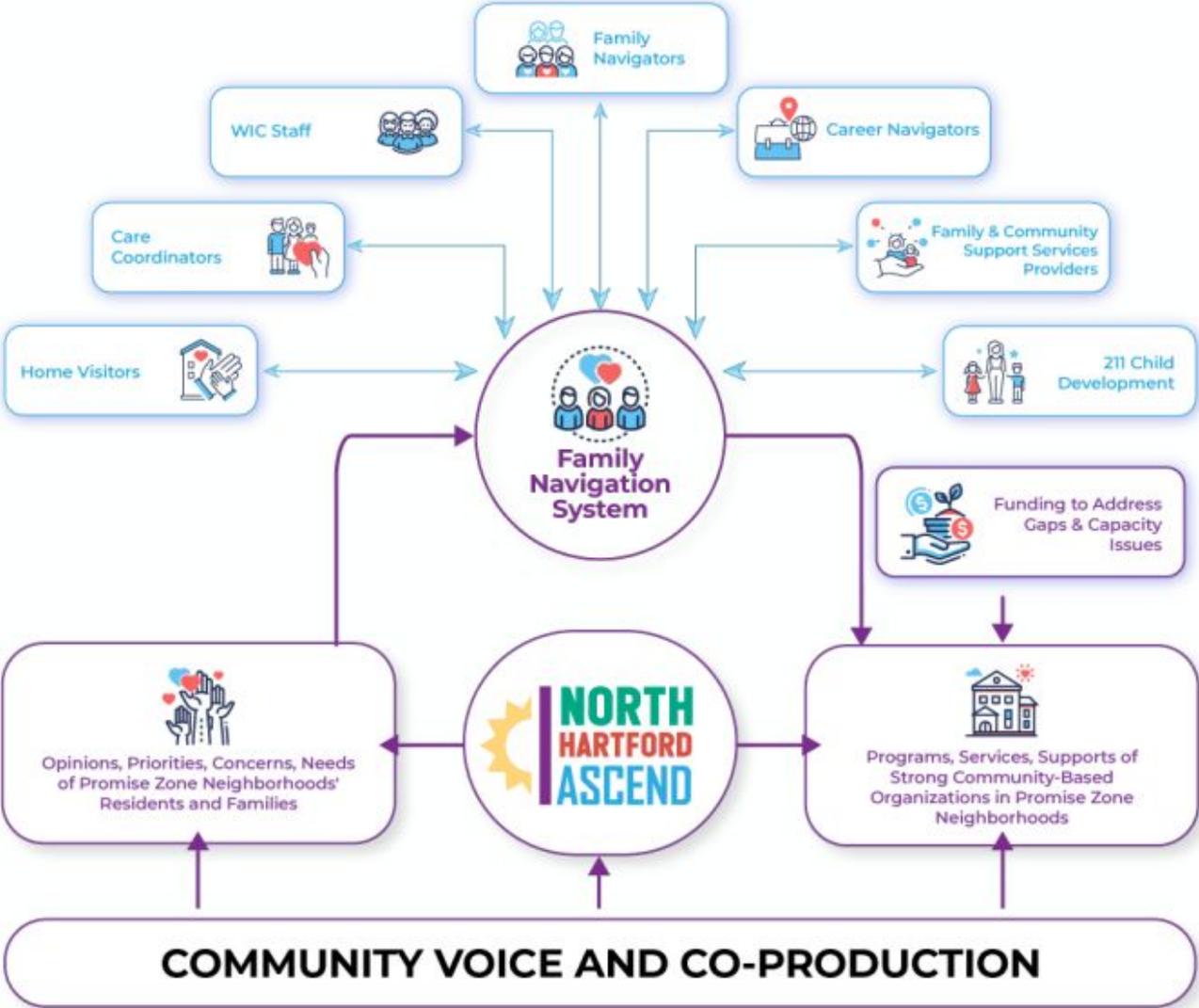


Opinions, Priorities,
Concerns, Needs of Promise
Zone Neighborhoods'
Residents and Families



Strong Array of Programs,
Services, Supports of Community-
Based Organizations in Promise
Zone Neighborhoods

Ideal State-Ascend System Building



Ascend & Community Updates

Ascend & Community Updates



Community Workshops: In-Person

- Thursday, [August 28th](#) from 5:30pm - 7pm - **Young Adults: Step Up & Lead the Room** presented by the Young Legends at Parker Memorial Community Center
- Wednesday, [September 3rd](#) from 6:00pm-7:30pm - **Navigating the System: Partnering with Schools** presented by KJR Consulting at Parker Memorial Community Center





Featured Presenter and Topic Hartford Public Schools



**Welcome to HPS:
SAND School
Courtney McCoy
&
Dwight Thompson**

NORT





Ready for School

Presented by Lore Minich

Director of Early Childhood, Hartford Public School

Principal of Hartford PreK Magnet School

Programs for 3 year old children

- Magnet Schools
- Lottery Process RSCO
 - Application Process
 - Entrance through a lottery
 - Fall Application for School Year 26-27
 - Appropriate Age Children born by September 1,2023
 - Children who will be 3 years old by September 1, 2026



3 year old Magnet Programs

- Hartford PreK North Campus
- Hartford PreK South Campus
- Noah Webster
- Breakthrough North Campus
- Breakthrough South Campus
- Annie Fisher Montessori
- Batchelder Montessori
- Betances
- Capital Prep



4 Year Old Magnet Programs

- Hartford PreK North Campus
- Hartford PreK South Campus
- Noah Webster
- Kinsella
- Breakthrough North Campus
- Breakthrough South Campus
- Annie Fisher Montessori
- Batchelder Montessori
- Betances
- Environmental Sciences
- Dwight Bellizi (dual language)
- Capital Prep



4 Year Old School Readiness Programs

- Funded through the State of CT.
- Rolling Entry throughout the year ..HPS Choice
 - School Year 25-26 Children must turn 4 by September 1, 2025
 - School Year 26-27 Children must turn 4 by September 1, 2026
- Based in our Neighborhood Schools
- Registration Process , No fee



4 Year Old School Readiness Programs

- Rawson
- Wish
- West Middle
- MD Fox
- Sanchez
- Kennelly
- Naylor
- Moylan
- Sand
- Parkville



Special Education

- PreK Students referred to Special Education
 - Birth To Three
 - Pediatrician
- IEP refers to inclusion programs
 - What is an IEP?
 - Speech and Language
 - Special Education support
- Kindergarten Students
 - Follow IEP recommendations for inclusion or specialized program placement
 - HPS provides support/resources according to the IEP

Multi Language Learners

- For 3s and 4s
 - Currently Prek 3 and 4 programs are taught in English. Primary focus for all students is language acquisition, supporting MLL students with visuals
 - PreK4 Program at Dwight Bellizzi is dual language (Magnet School)
- For Kindergarten
 - Students are assessed for MLL support beginning in Kindergarten

Social Emotional Skills 3s and 4s..developing 5s..on their way

- able to share and take turns
- expresses feelings and needs
- able to independently play
- can separate from parents for a couple hours
- able to wait for a few minutes
- cares for school materials (ex: doesn't draw on the walls or destroys toys)
- listens while others speak
- is polite to peers and adults
- helps classmates
- follows 1-2 step instructions



Self Help Skills

- Toileting:
- Communicates need to use the bathroom
- uses the bathroom independently (yes, that means wiping themselves!)
- washes and dries hands



Self Help Skills

- is able to dress themselves
- can put on a coat (or is starting to)
- Able to put shoes on and tie
- Feeds themselves
- Cleans up toys or belongings



Communication

- Knows their first and last name
- speaks in complete sentences
- can speak clearly
- sings simple songs with an adult
- responds to verbal cues
- seeks help when needed
- converses with adults and other children



Cognitive

- identifies some colors
- recognizes a few basic shapes
- is starting to count
- matches objects
- sorts objects by color
- understands that words convey a message in a story
- recognizes the first letter of their name
- knows some letter names

Gross Motor

- Walk independently
- maintains balance in everyday tasks
- jumps with two feet
- can gallop
- can skip
- rides a tricycle



Fine Motor Skills

- Cutting with scissors
- Holding and using a pencil, crayon, or marker
- Building with blocks or Legos



Classroom Rules

- Self -regulation
- be able to follow simple directions
- Responds to re-direction



Things to help your child get ready for school

- Focus on fostering independence
- Encourage self-help skills like dressing, eating, and using the bathroom independently.
- Help them practice following directions
- Engage in conversations
- Enjoy reading together
- Exploring letters and numbers
- Playing games like candy land, chutes and ladders



Getting Ready For School

- Know first and last name
- Begin writing first name
- Naming the letters in first name
- Provide opportunities for writing, coloring, drawing

Questions





Ascend Partners Presentation

Special Education Overview

Dr. Jennifer Hoffman
August 20, 2025



Learning Objectives



- Learn what special education is,
- Understand the process
- Know your rights as a parent.

What is Special Education?



- Special education provides tailored instruction and support for students with disabilities to help them succeed in school.
- The key is that it's an **individualized** approach.
- It's about giving a student what they need to learn the same curriculum as their peers, just in a different way.



Special education is governed by a federal law called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

This law ensures that all children with disabilities have the right to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). IDEA outlines specific disability categories, such as:

Autism, Deaf-Blindness, Deafness, Emotional Disturbance,

Hearing Impairment, Intellectual Disability, Multiple Disabilities,

Orthopedic Impairment, Other Health Impairment, Specific Learning Disability,

Speech or Language Impairment, Traumatic Brain Injury, and Visual Impairment



Referral: A parent, teacher, or other school staff member can suggest that a student needs an evaluation. As a parent, you have the right to request an evaluation for your child at any time. It's best to put this request in writing.

PPT 1: A Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meeting will be scheduled

- **Evaluation:** A team from your child's school will assess your child to determine if they have a disability and if that disability impacts their ability to learn. This assessment includes various evaluations and observations.

PPT 2: The PPT has 45 days to complete the evaluation

- **Eligibility:** The team will review the evaluation results to determine if your child is eligible for special education services under one of the IDEA categories.

Members of a PPT



A PPT is composed of the following members:

- Parents/guardians/DCF & Surrogate
- Student (if appropriate)
- General Education Teacher (if the student is participating in the general education environment)
- Special Education Teacher
- Representative of the school district who is qualified to supervise the PPT, is knowledgeable about the general education curriculum, and the availability of resources within the district
- A related services staff member

Each member is an equal participant of the meeting and should come prepared with a written report to document the student's progress in their specific area with recommendations for further instruction.

For a more detailed description of each team members role in a PPT, click [here](#).

The IEP: Your Child's Roadmap



If your child is eligible, the next step is developing an **Individualized Education Program (IEP)**. This is a legal document that outlines your child's special education services. The PPT team includes you, the parent, and school professionals. The IEP includes:

- Your child's present levels of performance.
- Annual goals.
- Related services and supplementary aids and services support (e.g., speech, extra time for tests).
- How and when progress will be measured.
- **Placement** or where the services will be delivered (e.g., in a regular classroom with support, in a small group setting).
- The law requires that students with disabilities are educated in the **Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)**, meaning they should be with their non-disabled peers as much as possible.

Your Role and Rights as a Parent



You are the most important member of your child's PPT team! Your input and perspective are invaluable. You have the right to:

- Receive notice and provide consent for evaluations and services.
- Participate in all PPT meetings.
- Request a PPT meeting at any time.
- Access your child's educational records.
- Disagree with the school's decisions and seek resolution through various dispute resolution options.

Team Members



Dr. Jennifer Hoffman	Assistant Superintendent for Special Education and Pupil Services
Teresa Davis	Assistant Director of Psychological and Itinerant Services
Cheyenne Mann	Director of Accountability and Compliance for Special Education
Erika Rivera	Assistant Director of Student Support Services
Laura Rzeszutek	Assistant Director of Special Education
Joanne Tremblay Jackson	Director of Student Support Services, Social, Behavioral
Alison Ward	Director of Specialized Programs and OOD Placements

Team Members



Katie Leonard	Director of Special Education, Elementary	AFStem, Breakthrough North, Capital Prep, Classical Magnet, HMTCA, Milner, MLK, Renzulli, SAND, Weaver, West Middle, Wish, Montessori Magnet @Batchelder, Montessori Magnet @Annie Fisher
Charity Smith	Director of Special Education, Secondary	Bellizzi, Betances Learning Lab, Betances STEM, Bulkeley, Burr, ELAMS, ESM, Kennelly, MDFox, Parkville, Sanchez, UHSSE
Noreen Trenchard	Director of Special Education, Secondary	Breakthrough South, Burns, Global, Great Path Academy, HPHS, Kinsella, McDonough, Naylor, Pathways, Rawson, SMSA, Webster

Thank You!



PowerSchool

PARENT PORTAL



What is PowerSchool Parent Portal?



The PowerSchool Parent Portal is a secure website and mobile app.

- View your child's daily schedule
- See multiple students under one account
- Get real-time access to attendance
- Check grades and assignments



Stay Informed, Stay Engaged



- ✓ **View Schedule:** Know your child's daily plan.
- ✓ **Monitor Attendance:** Know when your child is present, tardy or absent from class.
- ✓ **Check Grades:** See assignment and test grades as soon as they're posted.
- ✓ **Track Assignments:** See what's due, what's missing and what's coming up.
- ✓ **Communicate with Teachers:** Easily find and contact your child's teachers.
- ✓ **Push and Email Notifications:** Adjust settings to keep you instantly informed.

Get Connected



Step 1: Go to [Parent Square](#) to find your Access ID & Password

Step 2: Download App

Step 3: Click "Create Account."

**Step 4: Fill Out the Form.
Enter your information and your student's Access ID and Password to link them.**

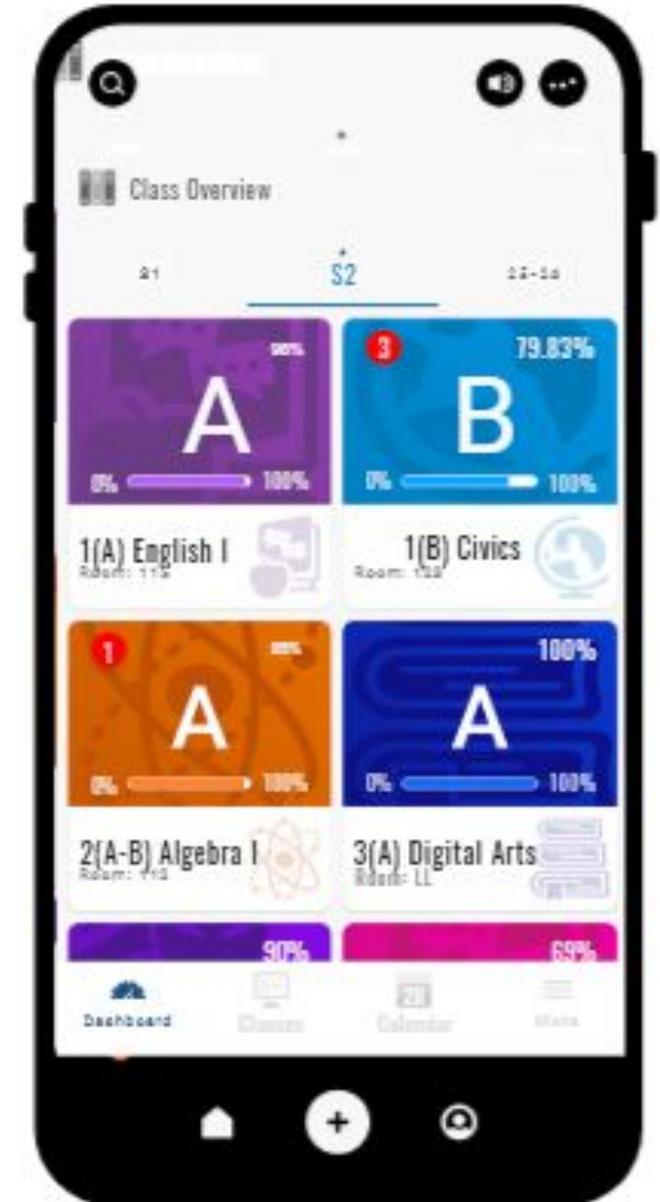


DISTRICT CODE: SMCQ

Navigating the Dashboard



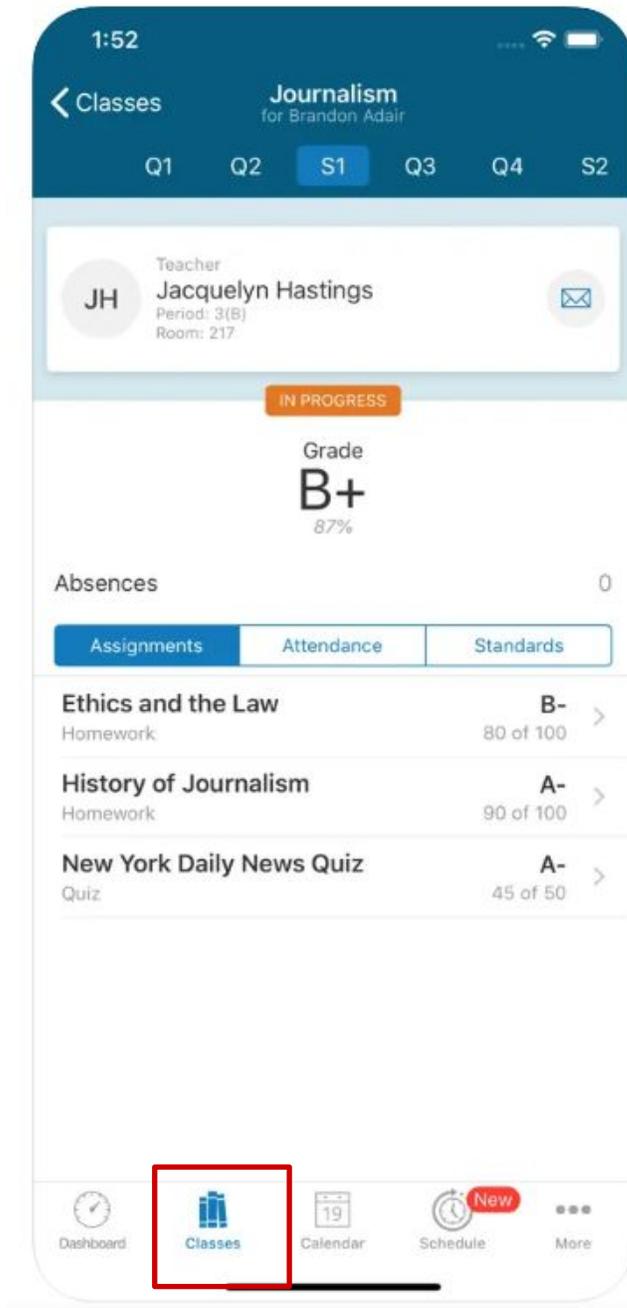
- **Current Grades At-a-Glance**
- **Click to Dive Deeper**
- **Scroll to Bottom to See Recent Assignments and Attendance Activity**



Digging into Classes



- Click on Classes Menu to see each assignment, due date, and grade



Know the Schedule



- See the Daily Plan
- Coordinate Activities
- Support at Home

Class Schedule
Thursday, January 30, 2020

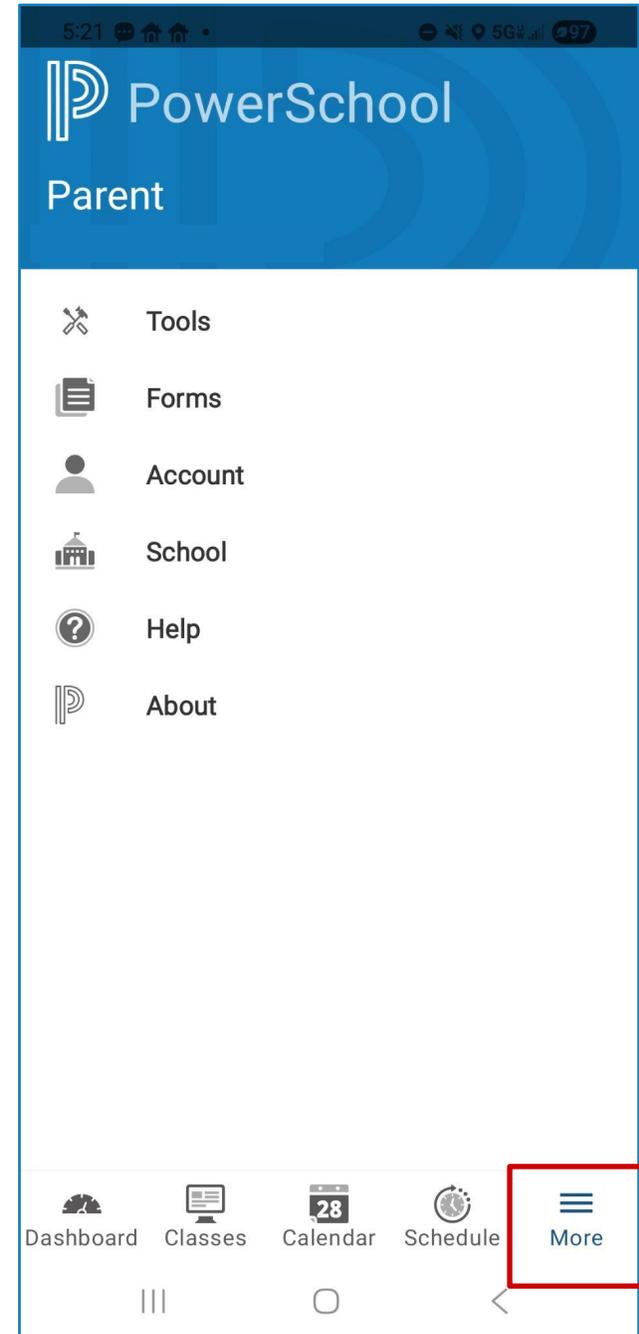
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				7:30 AM		
				Algebra 1		
				🔔 Period: P1(A,C,E)		
				8:20 AM		
				🏢 Room: 110		
				Natalie French		
				7:30 AM		
				Science Fiction Lit		
				🔔 Period: P1-P3(A) P4(A-B) P5(A)		
				8:20 AM		
				🏢 Room: 150		
				Stephen Gregory		
				8:25 AM		
				Science Fiction Lit		
				🔔 Period: P1-P3(A) P4(A-B) P5(A)		
				10:05 AM		
				🏢 Room: 150		
				Stephen Gregory		
				8:25 AM		
				C++ 1		
				🔔 Period: P2(A-B)		

Navigation: Dashboard, Classes, Calendar, **Schedule**, More

More Options



- **Adjust Account Settings**
- **Control Notifications**



Thank You!



Discussion Questions



- In what ways do family navigation services benefit our community?
- What is the process for referring individuals to family navigators?
- How can we increase awareness of family navigation services within the community?

Thank You!



- **Next Conversations:**

- **Wednesday, September 17th - Parker Memorial Community Center**
- **Wednesday, October 15th - Parker Memorial Community Center**

- Please take the [Post Meeting Feedback & Incentive Survey](#) to share your thoughts and feedback and access the incentive for Hartford residents. Use the QR code, or visit the link sent out via email following the meeting.
- Contact nhap@connecticutchildrens.org with any questions.

Feedback & Incentive



Community Workshops

