

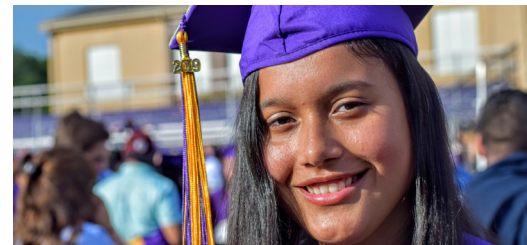
# Community Report

Sept. 2019 - Dec. 2020

**OUR VISION:** All Stamford youth succeed in education, career and life.

**OUR MISSION:** To collectively align community resources to ensure equity and excellence in education, for every child, from cradle to career.

**OUR COMMITMENT:** To promote racial equity in all aspects of life in the City of Stamford by promoting understanding and raising awareness.



## 0-5 Early Childhood

133 infants and toddlers enrolled in the Sparkler App by their caregivers.

## Early Grade Reading

38 children in grades K-3 showed improvements in word fluency through Summer Literacy Initiatives.

## Transition from High School

888 high school seniors received text message reminders about college enrollment over the summer.



## Community Racial Justice

100+ people attend virtual workshops conducted in partnership with Stamford Stands Against Racism.



## Restorative Practices

800+ school staff, community partners and members trained to improve restorative practices and school climate.

## Bringing Community Partners Together

60+

**organizations involved**  
in SC2C's work.

53

**Community Action Network**  
and Workgroup Meetings.

170

**members** attend at least  
one team meeting.

70+

**hours of collaborative**  
team meetings.

**Bringing Resources to the  
Community to Support  
Stamford Children**

**20+ investors** and grant funders supporting our work.

**\$625,000 in grant dollars** awarded to support our infrastructure and program implementation.

## LETTER TO THE COMMUNITY

We all feel privileged to lead an organization that has worked with the Stamford community in responding to the upheaval caused by the twin pandemics of 2020: the effects of COVID 19 and the racial reckoning in our country. Despite these challenges, Stamford Cradle to Career's close network of nonprofit organizations, public school personnel, early childhood providers, and community members positioned our organization to play a crucial role in assisting local children and their families overcome the struggles posed by these crises.

Our collective impact model is a city-wide education initiative rooted in racial equity, and we are committed to finding ways to provide access and opportunities to all students and families in Stamford regardless of their race, zip code, or income. Our signature initiatives – the Sparkler App, Stamford Summer Literacy Initiative, Bridge to College, and Restorative Practices – are intended to provide additional resources to our most fragile students and families to improve educational outcomes. Throughout 2019 and 2020, we were able to expand these initiatives, provide data support to Stamford Public Schools, and partner with Stamford Stands Against Racism to provide a series of Community Racial Justice sessions to help our city understand the issues.

During this time, and thanks to a significant investment from StriveTogether and other funding partners, our SC2C backbone team expanded. We are now a small but mighty team of six full-time and one part-time staff and are focused on continuing to provide exemplary services to the Stamford community, with a focus on making our city a great place to raise children.

Thank you for your continued partnership. We look forward to working together in the coming year.



Robert Arnold  
CEO, Family Centers



Nadene McKenzie-Reid  
Parent, NatWest



Bridget F. Fox  
President, SC2C

## MEET OUR TEAM



**Bridget Fox**  
President



**Lauren Scopaz Daunais**  
Vice President for  
Strategy and Operations



**Yolande Ford**  
Restorative Practices  
Coordinator



**Katherine Murphy**  
Data Manager



**Tashiiyana Schuler-Drakes**  
Community Engagement  
Manager



**Akosua Agyei**  
College and Career  
Readiness Manager



**Tiana Krause**  
Administrative  
Coordinator

For a full list of [Executive Team Members](#) and [Funders](#), please visit our website.

## 0-5 EARLY CHILDHOOD COMMUNITY ACTION NETWORK

The 0-5 Community Action Network (CAN) engages families and early care providers to ensure the healthy growth and development of young children.

**Our Desired Result:** *All Stamford youth will enter kindergarten ready to learn.*

We officially combined our Infant Health & Development and Kindergarten Readiness CAN into one 0-5 Early Childhood CAN and identified three areas of focus: Family and Community Engagement, Screenings and Assessments, and Professional Development.



### HIGHLIGHTS:

#### Family and Community Engagement

SC2C was one of six communities chosen by Connecticut's Office of Early Childhood to pilot the **Sparkler App**. Sparkler is an educational tool for parents of children ages 0-5. It uses the Ages and Stages Questionnaire to follow children's developmental progress, provides tips and activities for parents to do with their children, and includes both chat-based consulting and connections to providers. We provided training and support to partners about Sparkler, helped parents download and use the app, and ensured appropriate follow-up with parents.

6

community partners help with implementation: Family Centers, CLC, All Our Kin, St. Joseph's Parenting Center, Abilis, and Inspirica.

113

children have been enrolled in the Sparkler app by their caregivers.

127

total ASQ screenings have been completed by caregivers with **60%** of children in Sparkler having had at least one screening. **19%** of students with a screening were flagged for referral.



## Screenings & Assessments

When children could not be in preschool in spring 2020 due to COVID-19, we quickly transitioned the PreKindergarten Transition Summary (PKTS) to an online format and asked parents who had registered a child for kindergarten to fill out the form. (In previous years, preschool teachers filled out the PKTS form for each student entering kindergarten from their program.) This information, combined with Preschool Early Learning Indicators (PELI) literacy assessment data collected by Stamford Public Education Foundation (SPEF), formed the basis for **Stamford Public School's Kindergarten Insight Day**. This was a virtual training session on August 20, 2020 for Kindergarten staff to prepare for their incoming students.



42

Kindergarten staff attended the virtual training.

395

PKTS forms for entering K students were completed by parents and teachers.

787

PELI assessments were completed.

*(These numbers of assessments are significantly lower than in previous years due to COVID-19.)*

## COVID-19 Response

SC2C coordinated several supplies distributions for area early childhood providers, including cleaning supplies, thermometers, and masks.

### Looking ahead:

Virtual Stamford Community Early Childhood event – fall 2021.

Continued expansion of Sparkler, to be available to any parent of a child ages 0-5.

Increased family engagement and parent leadership in our work (e.g. hiring Sparkler Parent Liaisons).

## EARLY GRADE READING COMMUNITY ACTION NETWORK

This SC2C Community Action Network (CAN) focuses on literacy in the early grades, giving children a good foundation for later learning. Studies show that children who are reading at grade level by Grade 3 are more successful in school and life.

**Our Desired Result:** All Stamford children will be reading proficiently by the end of 3rd grade.



### HIGHLIGHTS:

#### Stamford Summer Literacy Initiative

The goal of the Summer Literacy Initiative is to reduce summer literacy loss through literacy rich summer camps, literacy intervention in camps, and public awareness about summer reading. Launched in the summer of 2020 at the height of the pandemic, we ran the program virtually with our partners that offer summer camps: Boys & Girls Club, Intempo, and Family Centers.

4

literacy coaches were hired to provide professional development to camp staff and literacy intervention services to children.

38

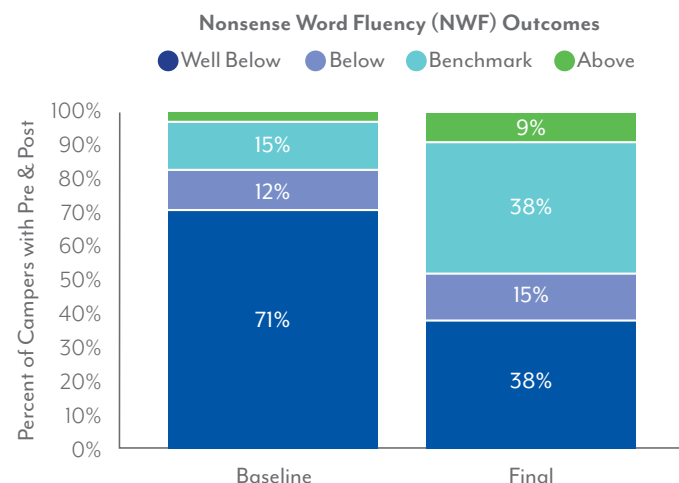
children in kindergarten through grade 3 received at least two small group virtual reading sessions a week over a 5-week period.

100+

community advertisements promoting Ferguson Library's Summer Reading Program.

The children who participated showed a measurable increase in word fluency.

Children who participated showed a measurable increase in word fluency when assessed using the Nonsense Word Fluency portion of the DIBELS assessment.



## Professional Development

The purpose of Early Grade Reading Professional Development is to link out-of-school providers with Stamford Public Schools' literacy curriculum. This CAN worked with Stamford Public Schools to implement a three-part professional development series in January, February, and March 2020. It trained the staff of out-of-school time and summer providers on the literacy strategies and curriculum used in Stamford Public Schools. The purpose is to allow out-of-school time programs to better, align, reinforce, and support the literacy development of youth in their programs with what they are learning in school.



40+ attendees at each session.



Topics included Oral Language and Phonemic Awareness (Third session cancelled due to COVID-19).



10 area organizations participated.

**Video links and presentations from the sessions are available on our website here:**

**<https://stamfordcradletocareer.org/supporting-early-literacy-outside-of-school-professional-development/>**

## TRANSITION FROM HIGH SCHOOL TO COLLEGE OR CAREER COMMUNITY ACTION NETWORK

This SC2C Community Action Network (CAN) helps students successfully transition out of high school, focusing on the tools they need to make the next step to college, a certificate program, an apprenticeship, or a career.

**Our Desired Result:** All Stamford youth will graduate from high school and obtain postsecondary degrees and/or employment.

This CAN's leadership includes: a representative from Stamford Public Schools, a representative from a community organization, and a student/community representative. Rachel Dewey, Executive Director for Future 5, and Michael Hernandez, Student Body President of the University of Connecticut, joined Tina Rivera, Principal of AITE, who is chair.



Bridge to College Orientation at NCC, August 2019.

## Bridge to College

Bridge to College successfully completed its second year in summer 2020. This program combats “**summer melt**” by ensuring that students fulfill their requirements prior to the start of the fall semester. According to a post-participation survey, 80 percent of responding students found the program helpful in completing all the steps to enroll in college.

FAFSA completion has been one of the biggest barriers for students in Bridge to College over the past two years. SC2C partnered with the Financial Planning Association to conduct three virtual FAFSA information sessions, one each in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole, with over 80 attendees across the three sessions in November 2020 through January 2021.



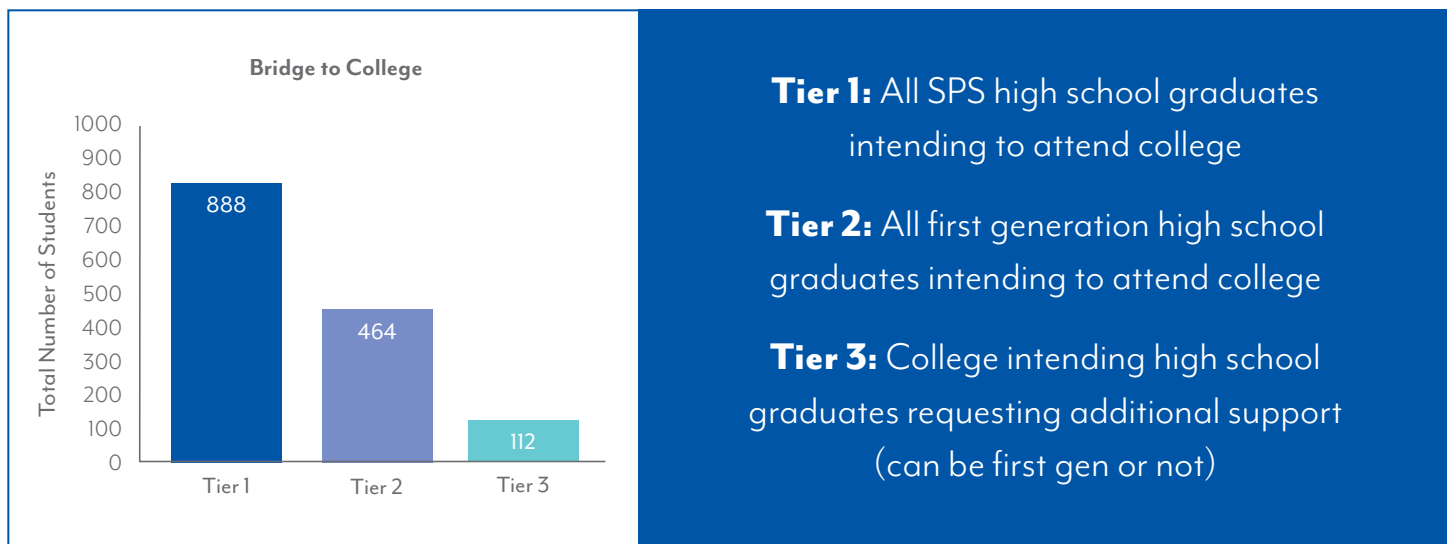
of respondents found their counselor helpful (those rating a 4 or 5).



seniors reached with ongoing messaging about college enrollment over the summer of 2020.



of students receiving Tier 3 support successfully enrolled in college in the fall of 2020.



seniors received one-on-one support with a dedicated college counselor.



higher enrollment for Bridge to College Tier 3 participants at Norwalk Community College in the fall compared to the overall population in 2019. 12% higher enrollment in 2020.



Net Promoter Score, with 73% of respondents giving a 9 or 10 rating which is a promoter level.



## Skill Building for Success

The focus of our Skill Building for Success efforts for 2019-2020 were on sharing the two-page brochure in the community and determining additional supports needed to build the common language on the importance of and how to help students build essential skills for college and career.

Unfortunately, the original plan for continued workshops and developing a learning community of supports was halted due to COVID-19. But we were able to hire two Mayor's Youth employment interns in summer 2020 who researched and made recommendations to improve our initiative and better reach students. A one-page flyer has been created to explain the essential skills and their importance.

25

people attended an October 2019 Mayor's Youth Services Bureau meeting, where an initial brochure and plan were shared.

6

community providers attended 2 in-depth workshops (SPEF, the Ferguson Library, Women's Mentoring Network, Future 5, Family Centers, and Mayor's Youth Services). These workshops helped providers understand what the Essential Skills are, identified which skills are developed in existing youth programming, and identified ways to enhance existing programming.



### Looking ahead:

Build out youth engagement framework to include ongoing youth voice in SC2C's work.

Continue to share and align Skill Building for Success with Stamford Public Schools, youth and parents, building out resources hub on our website.

Track Bridge to College student persistence over time.



## COMMUNITY RACIAL JUSTICE

Stamford Cradle to Career recognizes that racism is the root of many problems and inequities in educational opportunity and achievement in Stamford. As our mission is to ensure educational excellence and equity for all children in Stamford, helping to understand, raise consciousness, and dismantle racism is the foundation of our work.

We are providing free and accessible virtual trainings for non-profit and faith-based partners that signed **Stamford Stands Against Racism's Call to Action**. Sessions are coordinated in partnership with Stamford Stands Against Racism and have been held monthly since October 2020.

### October – December topics included:

Community  
Adverse  
Experiences.

Toward Community  
Healing: Uncovering and  
Addressing Racial Trauma.

Steps to Becoming  
an Anti-Racist  
Organization.



De-brief sessions are held  
after each session.



**112** people, on average,  
attended each session.



**59** organizations were  
represented at the sessions.

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Olympia Della Flora, Associate Superintendent of Stamford Public Schools, leads an online conversation about Community Adverse Experiences, the first session on Community Racial Justice coordinated by Stamford Cradle to Career as part of its partnership with Stamford Stands Against Racism.

# RESTORATIVE PRACTICES AND SCHOOL CLIMATE

The achievement gap derives from an “Opportunity Gap” that can be addressed by promoting equity in all forms and reducing biased treatment of students and their families, whether intended or unintended.

SC2C has been leading community-wide trainings on Restorative Practices and School Climate since January 2020. We work in partnership with Stamford Public Schools to coordinate these trainings with administration and staff at two middle schools that have committed to becoming restorative communities. We were also able to integrate two elementary schools into our plan by training its core staff.

The Associate Superintendent of Stamford Public Schools, along with two middle school principals, have embraced this model and work in collaboration with SC2C’s Restorative Practices Coordinator to make trainings possible within the schools and have found creative ways to offer trainings in a virtual environment.

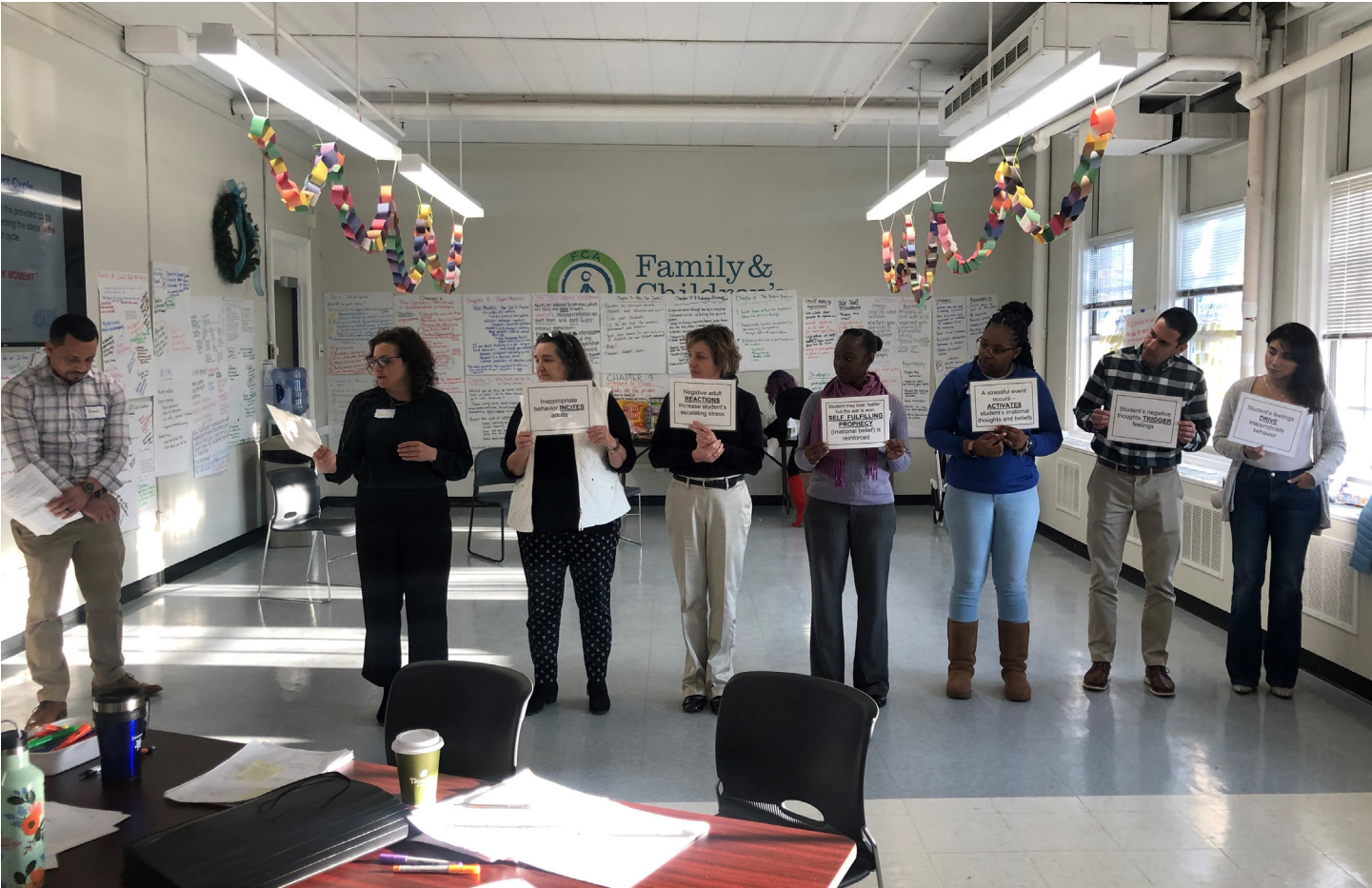
Additionally, we have hosted a monthly **Restorative Practices Convening** that explores ideas and active work that promotes restorative communities and schools.



school staff, community partners  
and members trained to improve  
restorative practices and school climate.



sessions held.



Restorative Practices Train the Trainer Session, January 2020.

## NETWORK EVENTS

We hosted a successful **regional CT StriveTogether** conference in Bridgeport on November 13, 2019. Our keynote speaker was Jennifer Blatz, President and CEO of StriveTogether. The panel discussion focused on the value cradle to career initiatives play in a community and included: Dr. Tamu Lucero, Superintendent of Stamford Public Schools; Rob Cashel, President & CEO, Family and Children's Agency (Norwalk); Steve Jakab, President of Bridgeport Hospital Foundation; and Maria Sanchez, Director of Grantmaking & Community Investment, American Savings Bank (Waterbury & New Britain).

Bridget Fox and Rebecca Wilson highlighted our Bridge to College pilot in the breakout sessions alongside Bridge to Success's (Waterbury) Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Action work. Norwalk ACTS and Bridgeport Prospers highlighted their early childhood initiatives: Bridgeport's Baby Bundle and Norwalk's pre-natal to 3rd grade initiative.

160

attendees.

60

attendees affiliated with our  
Stamford community!

We hosted a successful **Stamford Community Convening** on February 7, 2020. Mayor Martin and Superintendent Dr. Lucero opened the convening, and Assistant Superintendent Olympia Della Flora provided the closing keynote. Four dynamic breakout sessions included best practice initiatives from our three other CT StriveTogether communities and Restorative Practices.

45%

of attendees responded to  
our post event survey.

131

attendees.

35

35 area organizations  
represented.

Mara Siladi, Dr. Tamu Lucero, Bridget Fox,  
and Lauren Scopaz Daunais.



Rebecca Wilson, Coordinator for  
College and Career Readiness/School  
Counselor Services, K-12, Stamford  
Public Schools.



## COMMUNITY TASK FORCE

When the four campaigns of the Community Task Force (CTF) were originally created, no one could have foreseen that each of the indicators the Task Force addresses would take on such urgent significance.

CTF's four campaigns (below) were created to bring focus and attention to issues affecting students and families lives. With the COVID-19 pandemic and the reckoning that took place following the death of George Floyd in the summer of 2020, each of these issues took on great urgency. The structure and relationships in place, thanks to the CTF, assisted with the community's response:

**Food 4 Thought:** The Stamford community mobilized to address the food insecurity crisis brought on by the closing of everything from workplaces to restaurants.

**Chronic Absenteeism/ Family and Community Engagement:** Addressing the absence of children from remote school became the priority of the Stamford Public Schools, the City's Youth Services Bureau, and community partners. Stamford Public Education Foundation launched the Here to Help Program to assist families in accessing resources.

**Race, Equity and Inclusion:** The partnership between Stamford Stands Against Racism and Stamford Cradle to Career made possible the launch of the Community Racial Justice Series in the fall of 2020.

While CTF took a pause on meeting throughout the spring and summer of 2020, the VITA Collaborative took the lead on convening community partners on a regular basis to share information during the crisis.



For more information about Stamford Cradle to Career's work, visit our website at [www.stamfordcradletocareer.org](http://www.stamfordcradletocareer.org).

Like us on [Facebook](#), follow us on [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

