



# *Educational Grants Office*

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February 10, 2016  
To Whom It May Concern,

I've have the pleasure of working with UCONN's CommPACT Community Schools Collaborative staff and through the partnership with West Side Middle School in Waterbury. The Parent Resource Room at West Side was funded through CommPACT and in addition to being an awesome, updated, welcoming environment for West Side, it is the site for district's parent activities and workshops and the central meeting place for our monthly staff meetings.

During the 2014-2015 school year, I met the Director and Family and Community Engagement Specialist at the state-run Friday Café's and learned more of their work throughout the State of Connecticut. I observed their "engagement" with staff and parents from each district and watched them work to improve the lives of individuals and create leaders. It is comforting to know that the CommPACT has its focus on families and communities throughout CT and that they show up for meetings in the identified districts and support state and national initiatives on Family and Community Engagement. I know we in Waterbury rely heavily on their support for the Annual Parent Conference for parents, families and parent leaders. Their support was also evident when I was asked to join the UCONN CommPACT leadership, staff and a group of committed parents for the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) Family and Community Engagement Conference in June, 2015. The Conference was an unforgettable experience of workshops, presenters and attendees with a national focus on one topic: student success through the windows of families and communities. I was able to return to Waterbury with a renewed commitment to family involvement and armed with the how to engage families from so many experts. I am looking forward to the journey with the CommPACT.

Sincerely,  
*Linda Riddick Barron*

