

Philosophy and Beliefs

Children need supportive environments that nurture their social, emotional, physical, and academic development. We know a child has many experiences outside the classroom that help shape who that child will become. To develop a whole child means that we have to go beyond academics. A learning environment that respects the whole child must include a partnership with parents and community members.



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The Learning Compact: A Guide for Parents

SAU 50 has been designated by the New Hampshire Commissioner of Education as a *Follow the Child* SAU. To achieve this designation the four towns that comprise SAU #50: Greenland, New Castle, Newington, and Rye have developed this Learning Compact.

More detailed information can be found
on the SAU website at

www.sau50.org/curriculum_professional_learning.html

What is the Learning Compact?

The Learning Compact commits the whole school community to reflect on and assess the following:

- A personalized education for each child
- The documentation of individual student progress
- A continuous analysis of assessment strategies
- A knowledge of each student as a person
- A shared responsibility for student learning
- A building of relationships and partnerships inside and outside of school
- The promotion of health, fitness, and nutrition
- The belief that adults can learn from students
- The creation of opportunities to raise student aspirations and help each student reach his/her fullest potential.

One clear goal of the Learning Compact is to formulate a partnership with parents so that there is a team of teacher and guardian working with the child to further himself/

herself. Your child's teacher is committed to fostering this partnership.

Two years ago, SAU 50 began piloting the Learning Compact. This personalized education plan deals with all aspects of a child's development and is the best way to help him/her succeed. This child-centered approach to education supports each student's academic, physical, social, and personal development as outlined above.

What can parents and guardians do?

- Parents fill out a *Parent Survey* to give input about their child from their perspective which includes the **Essential Question**: What one goal will enhance your child's ability to reach his/her best?
- The teachers will follow-up with you and your child and together you will formulate a plan to focus on one essential goal for the school year.
- This mutual understanding of the needs of the student will enable the parents, student, and educator to collaborate and coordinate together to further each child's academic, physical, social, and personal development and thus nurture the whole child.
- As the school year progresses, the teacher will check in with you to see how successful the goal is being

accomplished. This partnership will provide a place for dialogue to occur through a variety of correspondence (notes, email, phone conversations, or conferences).

- At the end of the school year you will be able to give input as to how well this process worked for you and your child.

What does the teacher do?

- The teacher gets to know the student as an individual and contemplates what would be the essential goal which would help your child feel the most successful as a learner.
- He/she periodically checks in with the student regarding the progress of attaining the goal.
- He/she collects current information on the child's preferred strategies for learning and his/her interest areas.
- The teacher communicates progress with the parents throughout the year.
- At the end of the year, teachers collaborate, grade level to grade level, one year's teacher to the next year's teacher, discussing the student information form and highlighting teaching strategies that worked well for the student.