

Schools

# Southington School Administrator Visits With Young Students To Encourage Them

Southington's assistant superintendent of schools last week visited elementary school classrooms as part of a program with STEPS.

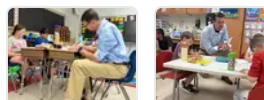


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Southington Assistant Superintendent Frank Pepe squeezes into a fifth-grade classroom chair to work with students on their STEPS ABC End-of-Year Memory Book. (STEPS)



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SOUTHINGTON, CT — A top school administrator last week left the office for the classroom to work with a local education agency to encourage young pupils to dedicate themselves to wellness and education.

[Southington's Town-wide Effort to Promote Success \(STEPS\)](#) was on hand to join Southington Assistant Superintendent Frank Pepe in visiting classrooms to participate in an activity from the STEPS ABC End-of-Year Memory Book.

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Pepe visited two district classrooms on T  
"Classroom Charter"—a set of shared ag

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beginning of the year outlining how they want to feel in their learning environment.

In Kate Colonero's fifth-grade class at [Derynoski Elementary School](#), students each selected a word from their charter that they felt was most meaningful.

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They then presented persuasive arguments to their classmates explaining why their chosen word — such as "safe," "respected," "happy," "confident," or "calm," was the most important.

In Stacy Buonanni's kindergarten class at [Oshana Elementary School](#), students gathered on the carpet to review their own charter, which included words like "loved," "cheered on," "excited," "proud," "brave," and "safe."



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The children were invited to draw pictures showing one of those feelings in action.

Pepe observed as students used crayons and colored pencils to bring their chosen words to life with creativity and heart.

The Classroom Charters are a core component of the STEPS ABC curriculum, which was implemented in grades K–5 during the 2024–25 school year.

Designed to strengthen protective factors in Southington youth, STEPS ABC provides weekly lessons focused on developing social and emotional regulation skills.

This initiative was made possible through a partnership with the Southington Education Foundation and funded by a grant from the Bradley H. Barnes and Leila U. Barnes Memorial Trust at the Main Street Community Foundation.

[For more information on STEPS, click on this link.](#)

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