

CASE STUDY

Vernon Public Schools

A multi-year partnership, built in stages. How one Connecticut district equipped, trained, and aligned its people — and measured the gain at every step.

LOCATION

Vernon, CT

PARTNERSHIP

4-Phase Engagement

4

ENGAGEMENT PHASES

94%

WOULD RECOMMEND THE TRAINING

+2.2

AVG KNOWLEDGE GAIN (PTS)

Most districts that invest in reunification send a few leaders to a single briefing and call it preparedness. Vernon took a different path — building readiness in deliberate stages across a multi-year partnership. They put the tools in place with a kit, trained a core team to run it, brought their senior leaders and first-responder partners onto the same plan, and then put their broader staff through a hands-on training series — measuring the gain for every participant, before and after.

WHAT'S INSIDE



The Phased Approach

How Vernon built readiness step by step, from a kit to a trained, aligned team.



What the Numbers Show

Measured before-and-after gains in staff understanding, across every participant.



The Standard Worth Setting

What genuine, measured readiness looks like and how your district can get there.

The Four-Phase Approach

Vernon Public Schools · Case Study

1 Phase 1 — Putting the Tools in Place

Vernon started by purchasing an **on-site reunification kit** — the physical tools a reunification actually requires. The system was in place before any training began, so the district was building capability on top of real equipment, not improvising it later.

2 Phase 2 — Training a Core Team

The Foundation then trained a **small core team** on how to use the kit and run the reunification process. This turned equipment into capability and gave Vernon an internal group that understood the system from the inside — the people who could carry the plan forward between sessions.

3 Phase 3 — Aligning Leadership and Partners

A year later, Vernon brought the Foundation back to brief **senior leaders and the district's response partners — fire, police, and EMS**. The people who would command and support a real reunification got onto the same plan and vocabulary well before any incident, not for the first time during one.

4 Phase 4 — Training the Whole Team

Vernon then rotated its broader staff through a **four-part training series**. Each session was a focused 2.5-hour adaptation of the Foundation's half-day workshop, delivered to about **20–25 staff at a time — roughly a quarter of the assigned team** — so the entire team could be trained hands-on without ever pulling everyone off duty at once. Every participant was measured before and after.

What the Numbers Show

Vernon Public Schools · Case Study

MEASURE	BEFORE	AFTER	CHANGE
Understanding of roles & responsibilities (1–5)	2.2	4.2	+2.0
Understanding of the 4 reunification stations (1–5)	1.9	4.4	+2.5
Instructor prepared & professional (1–10)	—	9.9	—
Importance of reunification training (1–10)	—	9.6	—
Would recommend to a colleague	—	94%	—

36

STAFF SURVEYED

4-Part

HANDS-ON TRAINING SERIES

4.97/5

FUNCTIONAL AREAS RATED
ESSENTIAL

IN THEIR WORDS

"I thought this training was very worthwhile. Thank you."

"Instructor was very knowledgeable."

"I hope we never have to use what we learned, but the training is appreciated."

What Set Them Apart

Vernon Public Schools · Case Study

Why Vernon Stood Out

- Built readiness in deliberate stages over a multi-year partnership: **equip** → **train a core team** → **align leaders and partners** → **train the whole team**
- Brought **fire, police, and EMS** in early, at the leadership brief — not for the first time on exercise day
- Rotated the **whole staff** through hands-on training in manageable groups (~25% at a time) so daily coverage never lapsed
- **Measured every participant** before and after, posting documented gains on every dimension
- Vernon's own staff asked to go **deeper** — to practice at their actual off-site location under realistic pressure, the natural next step

THE STANDARD WORTH SETTING

What Vernon did was unusual not because they trained once, but because they built capability in **deliberate stages** and held it to a **measurable standard**. A district can check a box with a single briefing. Vernon instead asked whether its people were genuinely more ready when they walked out than when they walked in — and proved that they were. That is the difference between a plan on paper and a team building real capability.

Ready to strengthen your reunification capability?

If your district wants to equip, train your team, align your partners, or build toward a live exercise, we are ready to help.

dan@reunification-foundation.org · reunification-foundation.org



**The only organization in the world conducting applied
research on all aspects of school reunification.**

The Reunification Foundation

dan@reunification-foundation.org

reunification-foundation.org

Ready to strengthen your reunification capability?

Contact us to schedule a consultation. We will meet you where you are.