

A decorative border of white lightbulbs on a blue background surrounds the entire page. The lightbulbs are arranged in a grid pattern, with some lightbulbs appearing to glow.

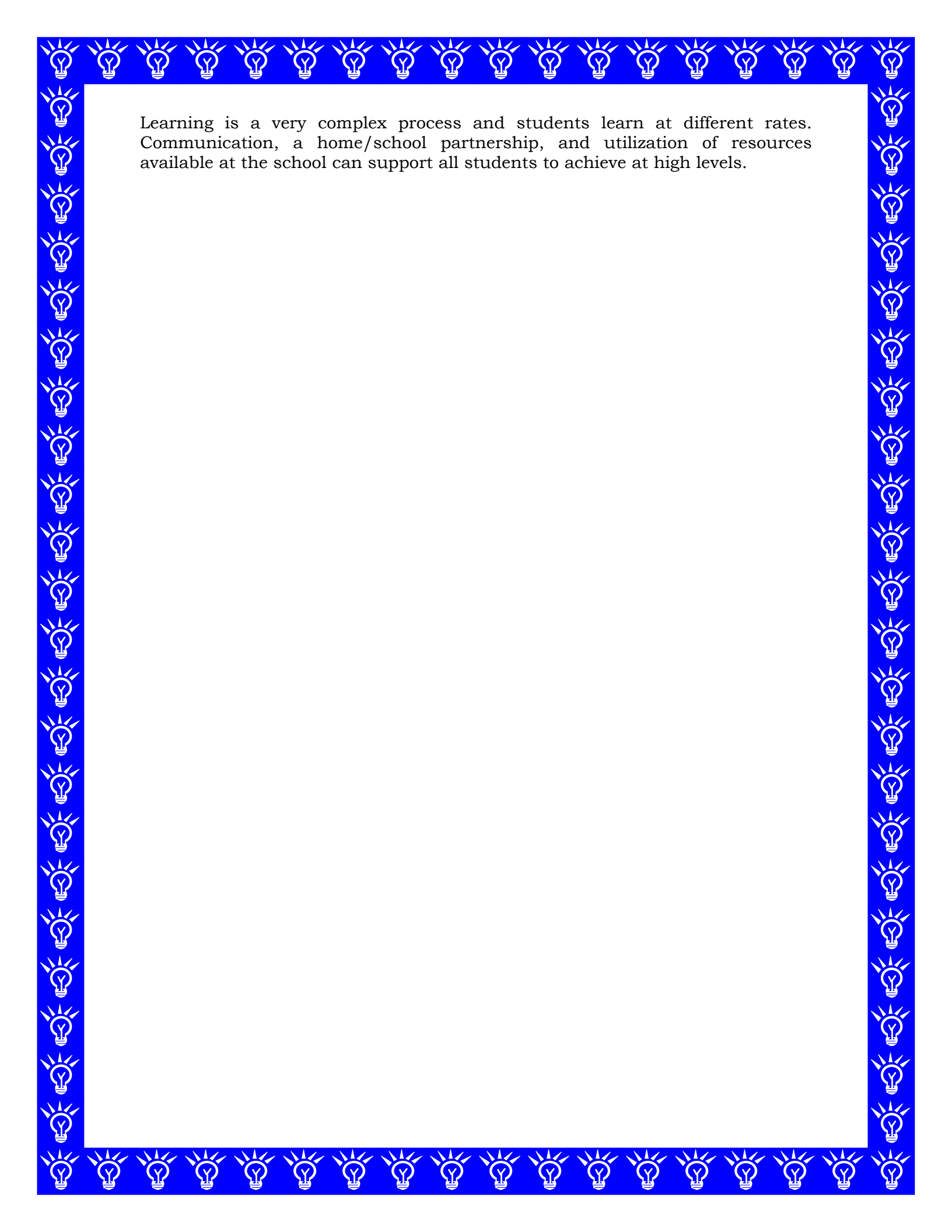
Question of the Week:

What should I do if my child is struggling in school?

Whenever a student appears to be having difficulty learning, the best thing parents can do is start by speaking with the teacher to see if their hunches are accurate. Describe what you are seeing that concerns you and listen to what the teacher has observed as a result of working with your child daily in school. Many times the teacher will have specific ideas of ways home and school can work together to turn the situation around. In every grade, K-8, there are specific benchmarks that have been identified in reading and math and, at the high school, there are also regular summative assessments. Teachers are assessing students regularly to track progress in relation to those benchmarks. Your child's teacher should have current data that looks specifically at your child's performance and will help both of you determine the extent of the problem with greater clarity.

If your child is struggling, academically or otherwise, there are resources available at the school to assist both the teacher and student. Every school in Region 14 has a Student Consultation Team made up of administrators, teachers and specialists who meet on a weekly basis to confer about student issues. Teachers can refer students to the school's team, which then meets with the student's teacher(s), learns of the concerns, and then offers suggestions about strategies they might try in the classroom and/or how they can differentiate instruction. The teacher then implements these strategies and, after an agreed upon period of time, reports back to the group on the student's progress. Usually, the teacher will bring work samples as a way of showing how the student has responded to strategies recommended by the Student Consultation Team. If progress is being made, the teacher will likely be encouraged to continue with the interventions being used. If significant change is not evidenced, the group considers other strategies that may help the student to be more successful.

In addition to Student Consultation Teams, teachers at both Bethlehem Elementary School and Mitchell Elementary School work with each student at his or her independent level every day. Interventions are also provided by math and literacy staff in each building. Woodbury Middle School has introduced Academic Labs this year, giving students the opportunity to receive additional practice and reinforcement of concepts that might be more challenging for them. The middle school has also adjusted the purpose of its homework club; now, all students are welcome to attend after school and a teacher is available to assist them with their assignments. At Nonnewaug High School, academic labs have also been set up in all subject areas to offer students additional support and remediation.



Learning is a very complex process and students learn at different rates. Communication, a home/school partnership, and utilization of resources available at the school can support all students to achieve at high levels.