



THE BOARD REPORT



2004-2005: Issue 1

September 8, 2004

The following is a summary of the September 8, 2004, meeting of the State Board of Education.

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION'S PRIORITIES Educational Learning Initiatives for Excellence (ED-LIFE)

Commissioner Sternberg presented "Educational Learning Initiatives for Excellence in the 21st Century," containing new program initiatives for the next state biennial budget. The ideas stemmed from the State Board's discussion at its summer retreat and respond to Governor Rell's challenge to be bold, while being mindful of fiscal realities.

The proposals, responding to four questions, follow:

1. Who are we teaching?

- Expand preschool access in Education Reference Group I (ERG I) communities, serving approximately 1,905 three- and four-year-old children in year one and an additional 1,905 children in year two;
- Provide facilities to serve more preschool children;
- Provide high-quality programs by increasing the skills of preservice and in-service preschool teachers;
- Provide high-quality services, instruction, assessment and evaluation to preschools;
- Stimulate the provision of full-day kindergarten; and
- Provide families in ERG I communities with the necessary services to support the success of their preschool-age children.

Estimated cost:	FY 2005-2006 - \$41,050,000
	FY 2006-2007 - \$59,950,000

2. What and how are we teaching?

- Integrate the use of laptop computers in instruction in all Connecticut high schools (Grade 9 and Grade 10 English and social studies classrooms);
- Provide increased and more rigorous choices for Connecticut high school students;
- Improve curriculum in the priority district schools (materials and professional development); and
- Stimulate sharing of best practices in instruction.

Estimated cost:	FY 2005-2006 - \$12,490,000
	FY 2006-2007 - \$17,500,000

(Priorities, continued on page 2)

Oath of Office:

Callan Walsh and Tori Hendrix

Newly appointed student State Board of Education members Callan Walsh and Tori Hendrix were administered the *Oath of Office of Public Official*. Callan, a senior at Wilton High School, and Tori, a senior at Thomaston High School, were appointed by Governor Rell to serve on the Board for the period July 2004 through June 2005.

Chairman Craig Toensing welcomed Callan and Tori to the Board, noting the importance of hearing students' ideas about ways to improve the quality of public education. This is the seventh year the Connecticut State Board of Education has had students serving on it.

ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS

Commissioner Sternberg reported that 138 of 180 Connecticut high schools (approximately 77 percent) achieved “adequate yearly progress” under the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law, based on performance on the 2004 Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT). Forty-two schools did not make AYP for reasons ranging from achievement in mathematics and reading to participation on one section of the CAPT. The Commissioner noted the dramatic increase in participation over 2003, when 34 of the 81 schools that did not make AYP did so as a result of not reaching the federal 95 percent participation standard. Commissioner Sternberg stated that there were gains in student performance in all subject areas and the percentage reaching goal in all academic areas rose from 26.6 percent last year to 27.7 percent in 2004. Also noteworthy is the fact that scores increased despite an increase in student participation on the tests – approximately 5 percentage points from 2003 to 2004 in each subject area.

Those schools that did not make AYP must make the needed interventions to address their school’s particular situation. Thirty-seven of the 42 schools that did not make AYP have been identified as in need of improvement because they failed to make AYP for at least two consecutive years in the same subject area. Under NCLB, Title I-eligible schools which have been designated as in need of improvement must offer a choice option to the parents of their students to attend another public school in the district which made AYP, or another program (i.e., a school-within-a-school). Non-Title I schools are not required to offer choice, but must develop school improvement plans.

2004 CONNECTICUT DRAFT MATHEMATICS CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

The Board discussed the draft Mathematics Curriculum Framework, which presents a vision for mathematics education that has been developed by a committee of education leaders throughout the state. The framework contains four content domains: algebraic reasoning, numerical and proportional reasoning, geometry and measurement, and working with data – probability and statistics. It contains specific content standards and expected performances at each grade level (pre-kindergarten through Grade 12). The draft framework has been sent to superintendents, principals and mathematics supervisors and teachers for review and feedback, and is posted on the Department’s website. The Mathematics Framework Advisory Council will carefully review all responses prior to resubmitting the framework to the State Board of Education for adoption.

SCIENCE CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

The Board approved the Science Curriculum Framework. This document contains some of the major science concepts, principles and reasoning skills that all students in Connecticut schools can be reasonably expected to learn in order to develop and extend their scientific literacy. It reflects input from classroom teachers, district curriculum developers, science department chairs, corporate scientists throughout the state, informal science education leaders, university professors in teacher preparation programs and in science programs, and national science educators.

Although the new framework introduces concepts from the life, physical and earth sciences in each grade level (pre-kindergarten through Grade 12), schools may choose to design yearly courses that focus on one science discipline at a time, allowing flexibility to accommodate students’ needs and financial resources. The new frameworks place more emphasis on understanding scientific concepts and developing abilities of inquiry; learning subject matter disciplines in the context of inquiry, technology, personal and social perspectives, and history and nature of science; studying fundamental science concepts; and collecting and using evidence to build explanations. The frameworks will be disseminated statewide.

ORGANIZATIONAL PLAN FOR STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The Board approved a revised organizational plan for the State Department of Education, wherein the staff members overseeing the research, evaluation and accountability functions will serve as a unit in the Bureau of Student Assessment. Over the next few months, Commissioner Sternberg will examine the organization of the functions of the financial and personnel side of the Department and will propose any further changes to the Board by January 2005.

SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY (SCSU) EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS

The Board granted full program approval for the period October 1, 2004, through September 30, 2009, to the SCSU initial and advanced programs preparing educators. An interim report on assessment and clinical/field work experience for candidates in secondary programs must be submitted by the university no later than June 1, 2006.

**WESTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY (WCSU)
EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS**

The Board granted full program approval for the period October 1, 2004, through September 30, 2009, to the WCSU initial and advanced programs preparing educators. An interim report on assessment must be submitted by the university by June 1, 2007.

**ADVANCED ALTERNATIVE PREPARATION FOR LITERACY SPECIALIST IN
READING/LANGUAGE ARTS CERTIFICATION**

The Board granted approval to the Advanced Alternative Preparation for Literacy Specialist in Reading/Language Arts Certification for the period October 1, 2004, through September 30, 2007. Said program will (1) address the ongoing shortage of certified reading specialists/consultants; (2) address the increasing demand for special expertise related to instruction, supervision and diagnosis of reading in all grades; and (3) support the NCLB requirement that each state establish high standards for reading and the expectation that all students meet such standards by 2014.

AMENDMENT TO REGULATIONS CONCERNING SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Board amended Sections 10-76a-1, 10-76a-2, 10-76d-8, 10-76h-3 and 10-76h-7 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies concerning the provision of special education and special education due process hearings to conform with statutory amendments adopted by the General Assembly in 2003. These amendments conform with the following provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): definition of categories of disabilities; elimination of the state requirement that issues must be raised at a planning and placement team meeting before such issues are presented at a hearing; elimination of the state requirement which allowed school districts to use the due process procedures to override the refusal of parental consent for the child's initial receipt of special education services; inclusion of language to clarify that if the initial placement offered is a private facility, the district may not use the due process procedures to override the refusal of parental consent for the placement; and allowance for the presentation of additional evidence to the court in an appeal of a special education impartial hearing decision.

The regulations will be submitted to the Office of the Attorney General and, if approved, to the Regulations Review Committee of the General Assembly. They will take effect upon filing with the Secretary of State.

**IMPARTIAL HEARING BOARD FOR
SPECIAL EDUCATION DUE PROCESS HEARINGS**

The Board appointed the following individuals to serve on the Impartial Hearing Board for Due Process Hearings for a four-year term beginning September 13, 2004: Mary H.B Gelfman, Deborah Kearns, Heather Rodin and Justino Rosado. In accordance with Section 10-76h(c) of the Connecticut General Statutes, the impartial hearing officer or hearing board is responsible for confirming, modifying or rejecting the identification, evaluation or educational placement of or the provision of a free appropriate public education to a child or pupil requiring, or who may require, special education and related services.

**REVIEW COMMITTEE FOR THE APPROVAL OF
CONNECTICUT EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS**

The Board appointed the following individuals to serve on the Review Committee for the Approval of Connecticut Educator Preparation Programs for the period October 1, 2004, through September 30, 2007: JoEllen Belter, David Erwin, A. Bates Lyons and James Ritchie. The Review Committee, based on various reports submitted by the higher education institution and the visiting team, makes recommendations to the Commissioner of Education concerning the accreditation of the educator preparation program.

APPLICATION FOR FUNDS: GENERAL SUPERVISION ENHANCEMENT GRANT

The Board approved the Department's application for funds (\$409,000) for the IDEA General Supervision Enhancement Grant." Funds would be used to enhance Connecticut's system of alternate assessment of students with disabilities, consistent with the requirements of IDEA and NCLB.

**MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT WITH THE
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

The Board approved a Memorandum of Agreement between the Connecticut State Department of Education and the Department of Social Services to carry out specific recommendations contained in the Office of Policy and Management Report on Child Safety and Crisis Response in Connecticut. The Board will use \$150,000 in federal funds to support activities designed to strengthen and coordinate crisis preparedness in schools.

EVALUATING THE VALIDITY OF TEACHER LICENSURE DECISIONS

The Board approved a proposal for Connecticut’s participation in a study being conducted by researchers at the University of Michigan, University of California-Berkeley, and Stanford University, funded by a grant to the University of Michigan from the United States Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences. Researchers will work with the State Department of Education and selected districts to address research questions about the relationship between completed portfolios and other indicators of preparation to teach and student achievement.

REVOCATION OF EDUCATOR CERTIFICATE

By recorded roll call, the Board voted unanimously to accept and adopt the findings of fact and conclusions of law contained in the Investigation Report In the Matter of Betty J. Sternberg, Commissioner of Education, and Esteban Sebourne, Certificate Holder, and thereby revoked the teaching certificate of Esteban Sebourne.

CONNECTICUT TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL SYSTEM (CTHSS)

MISSION STATEMENT

The Board adopted a revised mission statement for the technical high schools in Connecticut, which includes a change in name to the “Connecticut Technical High School System.” Formerly called the Regional Vocational-Technical School System, the new name more accurately reflects the mission and vision of the system. The new mission statement is as follows:

The mission of the Connecticut Technical High School System is to provide a unique and rigorous high school learning environment that ensures student academic success, trade technology mastery and instills a zest for lifelong learning; prepares students for post-secondary education, including apprenticeships, and immediate productive employment; and responds to employers’ and industries’ current and emerging and changing global workforce needs and expectations through business/school partnerships.

POLICY FOR ADMISSION IN THE CTHSS

A study of the relationship between the admissions criteria and performance in the CTHSS revealed that the strongest predictors of academic success in the CTHSS are the reading raw scores on the Grade 8 CMT, the middle school grades and middle school attendance. The least valid predictor was the personal interview.

The policy was revised to reflect these findings. In addition to discontinuing the use of a personal interview, the following will be used to determine eligibility and acceptance into the CTHSS:

- the student’s ability to score at or above basic on the Grade 8 CMT in mathematics and reading;
- the student’s completion of Grade 8 with no serious disciplinary incidents; and
- successful completion of the Grade 9 exploratory program.

**POLICY ON GRADE WEIGHTING FOR
CLASS RANK**

The Board revised its Policy on Grade Weighting for Class Rank to include weighted credit for Advanced Placement Courses (multiply course grade by 1.3) and honor courses (multiply course grade by 1.15).

**PRINCIPAL/ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
EVALUATION PROCESS**

The Board adopted an evaluation system for principals and assistant principals that reflects the Standards for School leaders and is performance based. The overall rating is based on successful completion of objectives that reflect the system’s mission and goals; successful completion of job responsibilities as identified in the job description; and any additional accomplishments identified in an end-of-the-year self-evaluation.

CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

(effective July 1, 2004)

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE	STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS
<p>Address: 165 Capitol Avenue Room 301 Hartford, CT 06106</p> <p>Telephone: (860) 713-6510</p> <p>Facsimile: (860) 713-7002</p> <p>E-Mail: pamela.bergin@po.state.ct.us</p> <p>To obtain a copy of a report considered by the Board, please contact the Office of Communications, 860-713-6526.</p>	<p><i>Craig E. Toensing, Chairperson</i> <i>Janet M. Finneran, Vice Chairperson</i> <i>Donald J. Coolican</i> <i>Tori Hendrix</i> <i>Patricia B. Luke</i> <i>Terri L. Masters</i> <i>Timothy J. McDonald</i> <i>Allan B. Taylor</i> <i>Callan Walsh</i> <i>Annika L. Warren</i></p> <p><i>Betty J. Sternberg, Secretary</i></p> <p><i>Valerie Lewis, ex officio</i></p>

NOTE: The Board will meet on October 6, 2004. The meeting will begin at 12:00 noon at Choate-Rosemary Hall, Carl C. Icahn Center for Science, Getz Auditorium, Wallingford, CT 06492

The Board Report is published monthly and is posted on the Department's Internet site (<http://www.state.ct.us/sde>). It provides a summary of matters considered by the State Board of Education at its regular monthly meetings. The Department welcomes comments and suggestions concerning the format and content of *The Board Report*. Please submit your comments to Pamela V. Bergin, Office of the State Board of Education, 165 Capitol Avenue, Room 301, Hartford, CT 06106, or pamela.bergin@po.state.ct.us.