



THE BOARD REPORT



2000-01: Issue 10

Summer 2001

The following is a summary of the Board's last meeting of the 2000-01 school year held on June 13, 2001, and a few important news items concerning the coming school year.

The Board renewed the charters of six schools for a five-year period ending June 2007. The following schools had their charters renewed:

- ❑ **Bridge Academy**, Bridgeport, serving 175 Grade 9-12 students, with a focus on college preparation;
- ❑ **Common Ground High School** in New Haven, serving 100 Grade 9-12 students in an atmosphere that develops ecological literacy, academic accomplishment and commitment to the community;
- ❑ **Explorations Charter School** in Winsted, which provides 60 Grade 10-12 students with the opportunity to develop a positive attitude toward lifelong learning in an experiential, nontraditional setting;
- ❑ **Integrated Day Charter School** in Norwich, serving 264 kindergarten through Grade 8 students. This charter school focuses on individual research, parental involvement, social curriculum, multiage groupings, personal goal setting and assessment, an extended schedule, and community service projects;
- ❑ **Interdistrict School for Arts and Communication**, New London, serving 96 Grade 6-8 students, with a focus on a multicultural curriculum that nurtures students' artistic talents and communications skills; and
- ❑ **Side By Side Community School** in Norwalk, serving 209 prekindergarten through Grade 8 students in a multiracial learning environment for urban and suburban students that focuses on promoting social justice.

The Board expressed its support for these schools and noted the importance of charter schools in providing parents and students with new opportunities and choices in education.

Bonnie Moran, Chairperson of the State Advisory Council for Special Education, and Richard Thomas, member of the Council, gave an overview of the Council's activities during the past year and summarized key issues on its agenda for the coming year. The Council:

- ❑ recommended to the Commissioner dual certification of regular education teachers after exploring issues of teacher shortages related to the certification regulations to take effect in 2003;
- ❑ explored issues associated with the coordination of services for adjudicated youth; and
- ❑ had discussions with the State Department of Education concerning surrogate parents, gifted and talented education, autism, functional behavioral analysis, preschool special education and literacy beyond Grade 3.

The coming year's plans include an ongoing discussion with the Comprehensive System for Professional Development Council (CSPD) about developing standards for training paraprofessionals; continued collaboration with the Bureau of Special Education and Pupil Services and the Special Education Resource Center about teaching social skills to students with nonverbal learning disabilities; and continuing its focus on the coordination of services for adjudicated youth.

PATRICIA B. LUKE ADMINISTERED OATH OF OFFICE

Newly appointed Board member Patricia B. Luke was administered the Oath of Office for Public Officials at the June 13 meeting. Governor Rowland appointed Mrs. Luke to a four-year term on the Board. Mrs. Luke brings to the Board 35 years of experience in education at the local, state and national levels. Mrs. Luke was a teacher in the public schools and in higher education, and was an elected school board member at the local level. She also worked extensively with local school board members and school administrators while employed by the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education.

The Board received a report on the condition of Connecticut's public school facilities. The report was compiled based on responses to a survey provided by each local or regional board of education. The report contains information on current construction activity, general building conditions and appearance, service systems, dedicated specialty areas, building size and capacity, and long-term facility planning, maintenance and implementation. Survey results from 1998-2000 allow for comparison and show improvements over time. The report also shows that state and local governments in Connecticut continue their commitment to school improvements initiated in the previous decade. More than \$5 billion has been authorized since 1997 under the state's progress payment grant subsidy program. In addition, the report shows that technology (both building infrastructure and educational technology) continues to register the strongest growth. The average age for elementary schools is 49 years, significantly higher than high schools and middle schools, both averaging 39 years. High schools continue to report more and better accommodations for dedicated specialty areas than elementary or middle schools. Elementary schools, many of which serve small student enrollments, were far more likely to report no dedicated space for features such as music or art rooms, gymnasiums and cafeterias. As the enrollment growth spurt of the 1990s moves from elementary and middle grades to secondary grades, excess capacity at the high school level is declining.

The report was forwarded to each district and to the General Assembly.

The Board allocated 173 additional seats to the existing state charter schools for the 2001-02 school year, for a total of 2,095 seats in the state's 13 charter schools. The additional seats will allow the schools to add grades to accommodate their current students and replenish lower grades. None of the charters will be using the additional seats to expand class size.

The Board granted continued approval to two of the state's regional educational service centers: the Capitol Region Education Council (CREC) in Hartford and the Eastern Connecticut Regional Educational Service Center (EASTCONN) in Hampton. Both centers were approved for a five-year period ending June 30, 2006. The centers provide several services to local school district, based on the needs of their region. Services include cost-saving endeavors such as regional purchasing of fuel, providing professional development for school system employees, administering interdistrict programs or magnet schools, and assisting with technology needs.

Superintendent Anthony Amato and Hartford Board of Trustees Chairman Thomas Ritter gave a progress report on the Hartford Public School System. The system has realized significant progress over the past two years, Superintendent Amato stated.

Accomplishments include:

- ❑ By 2002, each school will have chosen a theme and will open its doors to the entire city. This will allow parents to choose which educational theme (e.g., world languages, science, fine arts) best meets the needs and interests of their children.
- ❑ Eighty percent of the seats will be open to Hartford students, while twenty percent will be reserved for students from area towns.
- ❑ Decisions in the school system are now data driven. Data is collected every eight weeks to assess student performance; this allows the central office to continuously monitor and support a curriculum and professional development schedule that supports academic achievement.

- ❑ The school system has been involved in the New England Association of Schools and Colleges accreditation process.
- ❑ Laptop computers have been issued to 400 students.

Mr. Amato was also pleased to report on the system's plans to implement "College for All," a program that encourages those students who fall into the middle group to attend two-year colleges and, it is hoped, go on to a four-year college thereafter. Students falling into the lower-third performance group will be encouraged to take some community college courses and to pursue apprenticeship programs while still in high school.

When asked what concerns Mr. Amato has about the Hartford school system, he responded that reading skills, the high dropout rate and the high pregnancy rate are of major concern. Board of Trustees Chairman Ritter added that political instability in Hartford and a high mobility rate are also of concern.

Bilingual Education Program Evaluation Report: 1999-2000

The Board received an annual evaluation of bilingual education programs. Recommendations resulting from the findings of the report follow.

Staff programs with highly qualified professionals:

- ❑ Increase education incentives for entering and completing teacher education programs in bilingual education.
- ❑ Initiate a licensure test preparation program for bilingual education teacher candidates.
- ❑ Institute bilingual education academies to upgrade the skills of all teaching staff, including mainstream teachers, engaged in the education of English-language learners.

Facilitate the full implementation of program modifications required by Section 10-17f, as amended:

- ❑ The Department and local school districts should undertake the development of centralized data management systems that allow districts to monitor student progress toward meeting the English mastery standard within and across districts.
- ❑ Connecticut should appropriate funds to help school districts meet the cost of the annual assessment requirement.
- ❑ The Department should review the annual assessment requirement at the end of the first year of implementation to examine the degree to which it is reasonable and appropriate.
- ❑ The Department should review the impact of the mandated ESL program on high school students with less than 30 months to graduate.
- ❑ Districts should acquire current textbooks in the appropriate instructional language.
- ❑ Districts must provide families with services that will increase their involvement in schools and

help them support their children's efforts to achieve.

- ❑ Instruction should be reviewed to ensure that it is in alignment with district and state curriculum frameworks and CMT/CAPT standards.

Teacher Preparation Program: Southern Connecticut State University

The Board granted full program approval to the undergraduate elementary/special education program at Southern Connecticut State University for the period July 1, 2001, through September 30, 2004. This new program was created collaboratively by the Departments of Elementary Education and Special Education in anticipation of new certification regulations that will take effect July 2003.

Computer Technology Competency Standards for Students

The Board adopted computer technology competency standards for students in prekindergarten through Grade 12, in compliance with Section 10-262p of the Connecticut General Statutes. The standards were developed to assist districts in using technology to help students achieve high academic standards and be able to use information and technology effectively and efficiently. The competency standards mirror or are in alignment with the national technology goals, standards and principles for student learning. Competency standards for prekindergarten through Grade 4, Grades 5-8 and Grades 9-12 are detailed under six categories: (1) basic operations and concepts; (2) social, ethical and human issues; (3) technology productivity tools; (4) technology communications tools; (5) technology research tools; and (6) technology problem-solving and decision-making tools.

Two Students Appointed to the Board

Governor Rowland announced the appointment of **Jennifer Chudy of Tolland** and **Andrew Gladstein of Trumbull** to the State Board of Education for a one-year term commencing July 1, 2001. Ms. Chudy and Mr. Gladstein, entering their senior year of high school, were selected from a pool of 50 applicants. The State Student Advisory Council on Education screened the applications and interviewed 10 students. The Council recommended five candidates to the Governor for his consideration. The coming school year marks the fourth year Connecticut has had student representation on the State Board of Education.

The Board commended **Jennifer Santiago of New Haven** and **David Agrawal of Vernon**, the Board's 2000-01 student representatives, for their contributions to public education and wished them continued success in college.

The following individuals were recognized by the State Board of Education for their outstanding accomplishments:

- ❑ **2000 General Education Development (GED) Scholar: Gregory LaPrad of South Windsor,** Connecticut's highest scorer on the GED test in 2000; and
- ❑ **2001 Title I Distinguished Graduates: Herminio M. Planas and Michael E. Tripp Sr.** The National Association of State Title I Directors and the U.S. Department of Education recognize as Title I Distinguished graduates individuals who have participated in the Title I program at some time during their elementary or secondary school life and who attest that such services helped them become productive citizens. Mr. Planas graduated in 1990 from Central Magnet High School in Bridgeport and is now a mathematics resource teacher at Elias Howe School in Bridgeport. Mr. Tripp graduated from Crosby High School in Waterbury in 1982 and is now a police officer in the City of Waterbury. He also is the Drill Master of the Berkeley Knights Drill Team and Drum Corp, which he has led to national prominence.

Biennial Organizational Meeting and Schedule of Meetings 2001-02

Janet M. Finneran received unanimous support as Vice Chairperson of the Board. While the Governor appoints the Chairperson of the Board, the Board members elect a Vice Chairperson at their biennial organizational meeting, in accordance with their bylaws.

The Board approved the proposed membership on each of its four subcommittees: Audit and Department Matters; Policy Development; Legislation and Bylaws; and Vocational-Technical School Matters.

As part of its biennial organizational meeting, the Board approved its meeting schedule for 2002. Below are the scheduled meetings of the Board from September 2001 through December 2002.

September 12, 2001	February 6, 2002	August 7, 2002
October 3, 2001	March 6, 2002	September 11, 2002
November 7, 2001	April 3, 2002	October 9, 2002
December 5, 2001	May 1, 2002	November 6, 2002
January 9, 2002	June 12, 2002	December 4, 2002

Meetings are usually held at the State Office Building, 165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford. Visitors are advised to call the Office of the State Board of Education at 860-713-6510 to confirm the date, place and time of meetings.

Correspondence to Board members may be sent to the following address: Office of the State Board of Education, 165 Capitol Avenue, Room 301, Hartford, CT 06106. Telephone: 860-713-6510; Facsimile: 860-713-7002.

Ruben Acosta, Peter Adomeit, Wendella Battey, Nan Birdwhistell, Peter Blum, Susan Boyan, Diane Zaar Cochran, Leeland Cole-Chu, J. Larry Foy, Susan Halperin, William LeMoult, Frank Logue, Albert Murphy, Rocco Orlando, Nancy Peace, Frederick F. Ward, II, M. Jackson Webber and Paul Zolan were reappointed to the Mediation Panel of the State Department of Education for a term ending May 31, 2005. State statutes provide that if collective bargaining negotiations between a board of education and an employee organization do not result in a settlement, the parties may choose from a panel of mediators selected by the State Board of Education, or from outside the panel if mutually agreed by the parties.

Pursuant to Section 10-66j of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Board directed that six and one-quarter percent of funds appropriated to each of the regional educational service centers be used in 2001-02 to provide regional interdistrict activities reducing racial, ethnic and economic isolation, including professional development in educating students from diverse backgrounds and hiring and retraining staff members from diverse backgrounds, support for students participating in OPEN CHOICE, and minority recruitment activities.

Other Business

The Board took the following action at its June 13 meeting:

- ❑ Approved an application for \$1.4 million from the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) for the **Early Childhood Educator Professional Development Grant**. The State Department of Education, in partnership with several other partners, would use these funds to promote high-quality professional development programs to improve the knowledge and skills of early childhood educators who work in urban or rural high-poverty communities.
- ❑ Approved an application for \$12.5 million from USDE for the **Reading Excellence Grant**. Grant monies would support 10 grants to competing eligible applicants for early literacy programs (kindergarten through Grade 3) over a two-year period.
- ❑ Approved the 2001-02 noncompetitive application entitled **School Health Programs to Prevent Serious Health Problems and Improve Educational Outcomes** for submission to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Connecticut, in its fifth year of a five-year funding period, will use these funds (\$240,000) to strengthen health education initiatives designed to prevent HIV infection and other sexually transmitted diseases.
- ❑ Reviewed a summary report on the Department's **2000 Affirmative Action Plan**. The report summarizes the Department's success in providing opportunities to increase employment of qualified persons from protected ethnic and racial groups, women and persons with disabilities. The full report was submitted to the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities for review and analysis.
- ❑ Adopted the **Statement of Commitment to Equal Employment Opportunity**. In the statement, the Board maintains its commitment to the concept and practice of equal employment opportunity for all persons, regardless of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age or disabling condition.
- ❑ Adopted the **Annual Audit Plan** for the period July 1, 2001, through June 30, 2002. The plan details the Office of Internal Audit's workplan for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2002. The office spends considerable time on the areas of school construction and other grants, especially the Education Cost Sharing Grant.

Regional Vocational-Technical School Matters

School Construction Projects: The Board approved Phase III of the Vocational-Technical School System's (VTSS) Long-range Comprehensive Strategic Education Physical Master Plan. Construction projects at W.F. Kaynor Regional Vocational-Technical School in Waterbury and E.C. Goodwin Regional Vocational-Technical School in New Britain were submitted for funding under the Department's Fiscal Year 2002 School Construction Grant. The General Assembly approved these projects during its recent session. Also approved retroactive to June 2000 was a project at Howell Cheney Regional Vocational-Technical School in Manchester, as required by its inclusion on the 2001 legislative priority list.

Early Child Care Career Program: The Board authorized the establishment of an Early Child Care Career Program at Bullard Havens Regional Vocational-Technical School in Bridgeport for the period September 2001 through August 2006. This program was identified as being compatible with the mission of the RVTSS and is consistent with labor market trends. The program is still in the design

phase, and various options are being considered for the field experience (e.g., off-site placement in existing child-care centers, contracting with an experienced provider who would operate a child-care center on campus, etc.)

Congratulations!

The Board passed a resolution in recognition of **John Finnemore, Ed Engstrom** and **Josh Chapman**, who completed their freshman year at Platt Regional Vocational-Technical School in Milford. These students took first place in the statewide Stock Market Game sponsored by the Securities Industry Foundation for Economic Education.

Also honored at the June meeting was **Rebecca A. Snide**, a junior at Grasso Regional Vocational-Technical School in Groton, who was awarded a \$2500 scholarship by the Discover Card Tribute Award Scholarship Program. Scholarships are awarded to high school juniors who have demonstrated excellence in three of four areas: special talents, leadership, obstacles overcome and community service.

CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

(effective July 1, 2001)

<p style="text-align: center;">ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE</p> <p>Address: 165 Capitol Ave. 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 Public Information, 860-713-6526.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Craig E. Toensing, Chairperson</i> <i>Janet M. Finneran, Vice Chairperson</i> <i>Amparo Adib-Samii</i> <i>Jennifer E. Chudy</i> <i>Donald J. Coolican</i> <i>Andrew Gladstein</i> <i>Patricia B. Luke</i> <i>Terri L. Masters</i> <i>Timothy J. McDonald</i> <i>Allan B. Taylor</i> <i>Annika L. Warren</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Theodore S. Sergi, Secretary</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Valerie Lewis, ex officio</i></p>
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NOTE: The September meeting of the State Board of Education will be held on September 12, 2001. The meeting will begin at 9:30 a.m. in Room 307 of the State Office Building, 165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT.

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

