

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford**

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell, Commissioner of Education

DATE: June 3, 2015

SUBJECT: End-of-year Presentation by the State Student Advisory Council on Education

Section 10-2a of the Connecticut General Statutes requires the Commissioner of Education to appoint a State Student Advisory Council on Education (SSACE), and ensure that the membership of the SSACE includes male and female students; is racially, ethnically and economically diverse; includes students from each Congressional district in the state; and includes students who have disabilities.

In addition to reviewing student applications for membership on the State Board of Education and recommending five candidates to the Governor, the SSACE annually reviews relevant education policy areas, and makes a presentation to the State Board of Education at the end of the year.

The Council focused its attention in 2014-15 on three topics. Below is a list of the topics and the SSACE representative who will lead the discussion of each:

- Emily Williams will present on the "Start Time for School";
- Taylor Schwab will present on "Community Service"; and
- Peter Russell will present on "Testing."

A copy of the SSACE's PowerPoint presentation is enclosed for your review in preparation for the June 3rd meeting.

SSACE

**End-of-Year Report to the
State Board of Education**

Presented by:

State Student Advisory Council on Education

Topics

1. Ideal start time for CT public high schools
2. Implementing community service learning
3. Current standardized testing possibly

revised

Ideal Start Time for Schools

Question: What is the ideal start time for schools?

Proposal

In order to provide students with opportunities for enhanced success in school as well as increase student safety, **secondary and elementary school start times should be reversed.**

Circadian Rhythms and Biological Teen Sleep Tendencies

Most adolescents, due to cognitive changes during puberty, develop a sleep phase delay-tendency toward later times sleep/wake

Research shows the typical adolescent's natural time to fall asleep may be 11 pm or later

Sleep Deprivation In Teens

87% of high schoolers do not get enough sleep according to National Sleep Foundation

Recommended amount of sleep: 8.5-9.5 hours per night (study by National Sleep Foundation, endorsed by the American Academy of Pediatrics)

Deprivation impairs their ability to be alert, pay attention, solve problems, cope with stress and retain information

Sleep Deprivation and Student Success

Reality, change, result

Brookings Institute economists estimate that when middle and high school start times are delayed student achievement will **increase student future earnings by approximately \$17,500 per student over their lifetimes**

Safety and Sleep Deprivation

Sleep deprivation creates a higher risk for car accidents:

- Drivers age 17-24 are 20% more likely to be involved in a car crash when they slept for 6 or fewer hours (study of 19,000 teen drivers in South Wales, Australia).
- Fayette County, Kentucky: **16.5% decrease in accidents of students** after changing start times while the state overall saw an increase of 7.8%

Transportation

Alternating bus schedule:

- High/middle schools have later route, elementary schools have earlier route

No additional cost necessary in district budgets use same buses for both routes.

Childcare

What is the ideal start time?

High schools should begin between **8:30-9:30 A.M.**

Students at ideal levels of alertness.

Gives opportunity for recommended amount of sleep.

Increases student safety.

Attainable without financial input.

What should happen

Strongly recommend districts around the state to adapt to ideal start times.

Provide a resource within this recommendation with statistics supporting a change in start time.

Community Service Learning Requirement:

According to state legislature, a Connecticut public school can award credit for service learning to high schoolers.

Question: Should we implement community service learning as a graduation requirement and what would make it reasonably achievable?

Community Service Learning

Definition of community service learning:

Actions one undertakes for the benefit of a community and one's personal growth without monetary compensation.

Requirements

State requirement-Minimum # of hours: Minimum 20 hours for four years, or recommended 5 hours per year for all students attending a CT high school.

More is encouraged

State requirement-Maximum # of hours: Maximum 100 hours for four years, or recommended 25 hours per year for all students attending a CT high school.

Required graduation credit is achievable with full completion of the required number of service hours, Graduation held back until community service obligation is fulfilled.

Reaching the Requirements

How high school students can achieve this number:

Clubs/organizations that provide service hours for members; ex., theatre/set Design for student productions, peer tutoring programs
Community Service Opportunity Fair: Invite nonprofit members of the community to represent people and organizations in need of student volunteers

For those who are not able to fulfill their service requirements outside of school, students can meet requirements throughout the school or summer (custodial/janitorial, working in the library, school store, etc.)

Teacher tasks

During a study hall or after school, assist teacher

Reflection

Required Reflection:

Each district may choose between a presentation or a reflection sheet.

Essential Question

How has service influenced your high school experience?

Needs to be done by January 1st of Senior year

Pass/fail evaluation

Who would be collecting this?

Leave up to local district on how they should collect it

Proof

Proof of service hours can include:

A letter

Formal email with letterhead

A form

Signature from supervisor

Number of hours

Phone Number

Example of a Record

Connecticut Board of Education
High School Service Record

Name _____

Agency	Date(s) of Service	Number of Hours	Supervisor Signature

Benefits

Skill building

- Problem-solving, planning abilities, working in teams

Sense of community...“morale boost”

Promotes higher self-esteem

More effective communications

Positive effects on student achievement tests and homework completion

Increase in personal and social responsibility

Teens who volunteer are 50% less likely to abuse alcohol, cigarettes, drugs, become pregnant, or engage in other destructive activities.

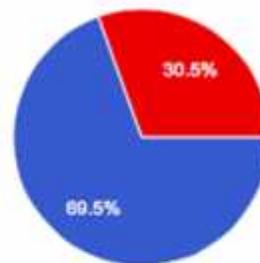
Survey Results

A survey of 213 people (parents, students, and faculty) gathered some data on Community Service Learning within Connecticut communities.

Which of the following roles apply to you?



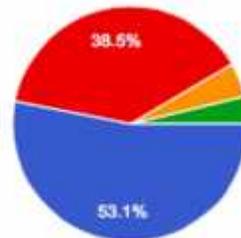
Does your school have a Community Service Learning requirement?



Yes	148	69.5%
No	65	30.5%

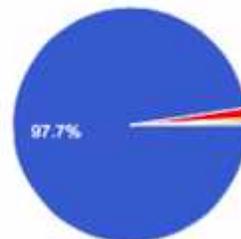
Survey Results

Community Service Learning is a beneficial opportunity for students.



Strongly Agree	113	53.1%
Agree	82	38.5%
Disagree	10	4.7%
Strongly Disagree	8	3.8%

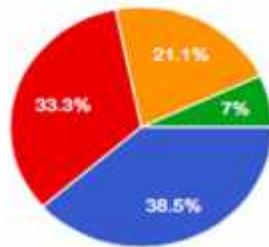
What term best describes your school?



Public	208	97.7%
Private	3	1.4%
Technical	1	0.5%
Magnet	1	0.5%
Charter	0	0%
Homeschool/Online	0	0%

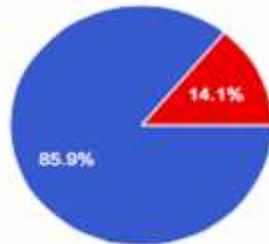
Survey Results

Community Service Learning should be required for graduation of all Connecticut high school students.



Strongly Agree	82	38.5%
Agree	71	33.3%
Disagree	45	21.1%
Strongly Disagree	15	7%

Do you (or your student) participate in community service?



Yes	183	85.9%
No	30	14.1%

Conclusion:

The State Student Advisory Council on Education strongly recommends that the CT Board of Education require students in Connecticut Public Schools to complete Community Service Learning throughout their high school career as a graduation requirement.

CT Standardized Testing

Question: How can we relieve the testing burden on CT high school students?

Present Problems

Poor testing window (juniors have PSATs, SATs, APs, midterms, and finals)

Irrelevant for college admissions

Disrupts learning

Schools may not have the technological resources to run the test

Both students and teachers have not taken the pilot applications seriously

Immediate accountability is frustrating to districts

No time limit is unfeasible for many districts

The Ideal Solution

“Menu option” testing

- Incorporating the SAT, ACT, PSAT, and AP exams for SBAC exemptions
- Discourages “teaching towards the test”

Currently unfeasible - requires legislative reform at the federal level

The Great Compromise

The SAT (or ACT) in lieu of SBAC

School Day Administration

Administrations of the SAT or ACT, mandatory for all students

Three testing windows:

- First semester 11th grade
- Second semester 11th grade
- First semester 12th grade
- This provides “make-ups” for students who did not pass the first time, similar to CAPT

Once you pass, you're done

SAT vs ACT

SAT

More widely used in CT
Explicitly aligned to
Common Core
Freely available online
test prep through Khan
Academy

ACT

Pre-existing science
component
<http://www.studypoint.com/ed/act-vs-sat/>

Benefits

Allows students to use scores towards college admissions applications, making for a multipurpose test

Facilitates comparison between schools, districts and states

Quick reporting to students, teachers, administrators and SDE officials for rapid adjustment and accountability

Allows students to test closer to when they are ready

Uses a nationally proven test provider with brand and respect

Conclusion

Pursue the compromise

- Open up the test to bidding between the ACT and ETS/College Board

Work towards “the ideal” through legislative initiative at the state and federal level

Fix “the present”