



THE BOARD REPORT



2001-02: Issue 3

December 2001

The State Board of Education met on December 5, 2001. Below are highlights of the December meeting.

OUTSTANDING EDUCATORS

Congratulations to the following educators, whom the Board recognized on December 5:

Marian K. Galbraith, 2002 Connecticut Teacher of the Year. Ms. Galbraith is a reading and language arts teacher at West Side Middle School in Groton. Ms. Galbraith will receive national attention as Connecticut's representative in the 2002 National Teacher of the Year Program.

Maureen Ruth Hamilton, a finalist in the 2002 Connecticut Teacher of the Year competition. Ms. Hamilton is an elementary school teacher at Memorial School in Middlefield.

Patricia R. Clark, a finalist in the 2002 Connecticut Teacher of the Year competition. Ms. Clark is a computer technology teacher at Somers Elementary School in Somers.

Pedro A. Gouveia, a finalist in the 2002 Connecticut Teacher of the Year competition. Mr. Gouveia is a Spanish teacher at Madison Middle School in Trumbull.

Michael Field Batcheller, a finalist in the 2002 Connecticut Teacher of the Year competition. Mr. Batcheller is an American history teacher at Greenwich High School in Greenwich.

Ann Marie Cullinan, Connecticut Association of Schools' 2001 Elementary School Principal of the Year/National Distinguished Principal. Ms. Cullinan, Principal of Ralph Carrington Elementary School in Waterbury, was Connecticut's representative in the 2001 National Distinguished Principal Awards Program.

Preston Shaw, Connecticut Association of Schools' 2001 Middle School Principal of the Year. Mr. Shaw, Principal of Griswold Middle School in Jewett City, will serve as Connecticut's representative in the 2001 National Middle School Principal of the Year competition.

David Pearson, Connecticut Association of Schools' 2001 Middle School Assistant Principal of the Year. Mr. Pearson served as Associate Principal of Timothy Edwards Middle School in South Windsor from 1995 to 2001. He has been chosen as principal of the Two Rivers Magnet Middle School, scheduled to open in the fall of 2002.

E. Patricia Llodra, Connecticut Association of Schools' 2001 High School Principal of the Year. Ms. Llodra, Principal of Northwest Regional High School in Winsted, will serve as Connecticut's representative in the 2001 National High School Principal of the Year competition.

Anne Jarvis, Connecticut Association of Schools' 2001 High School Assistant Principal of the Year. Ms. Jarvis is the Assistant Principal of Glastonbury High School in Glastonbury.

Randall H. Collins, Connecticut Association of Public Schools Superintendents' 2002 Superintendent of the Year. Dr. Collins, Superintendent of Schools in Waterford, will serve as Connecticut's representative in the 2002 National Superintendent of the Year competition.

David Title, the Connecticut Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development's Connecticut's 2001 Education Leader of the Year. Mr. Title is the Assistant Superintendent of Schools in Waterford.

State Board of Education Chairman Craig E. Toensing congratulated these individuals and expressed the Board's appreciation for their leadership and commitment to the continuous improvement of public education.

REPORT ON THE OPERATION OF CHARTER SCHOOLS

The Board received a report on the operation of charter schools. State statute requires that the Commissioner provide the Education Committee of the General Assembly with a report containing (1) recommendations for any statutory changes that would facilitate expansion in the number of charter schools; (2) a compilation of school profiles; (3) an assessment of the adequacy of funding for charter schools; and (4) the adequacy and availability of suitable facilities for such schools.

Recommendations contained in the report include:

- ❑ Provide funding for additional charter schools that meet the needs and standards as established by the State Board of Education. Two charter schools that were approved by the State Board of Education in 1999 remain unfunded by the state. These two schools require \$1.4 million to open, based on the \$7000 per pupil grant and the combined enrollment of 200 students. The State Board envisions opening two charter schools every other year.
- ❑ Increase the annual per pupil state grant for charter schools from \$7,000 to \$7,210. This request is made in the Board's midterm budget request for 2002-03.
- ❑ Provide charter schools access to and funding for interdistrict transportation to assist in the reduction of racial, ethnic and economic isolation.
- ❑ Provide additional funds to charter schools located in priority school districts to address the recognized needs of their students.
- ❑ Provide school construction grants for charter schools not yet renewed by the State Board of Education.

Charter schools began in Connecticut as a school reform strategy, providing families another option to consider in choosing schools that best meet the needs and interests of their children. Results of parent surveys indicate that the philosophy of the charter school, high quality of instruction and the safety of their child were key factors in deciding to enroll their child in a particular charter school. There are currently 13 state charter schools operating in Connecticut, serving 2,095 students from 76 school districts. Of these, four are elementary schools, six are middle schools and three are high schools.

PRESENTATION OF CHARTERS

The Board presented plaques to six charter schools whose charters were renewed through June 2007. Present to receive their charters were the directors and board chairs of Bridge Academy in Bridgeport, Common Ground High School in New Haven, Explorations Charter School in Winsted, Integrated Day Charter School in Norwich, Integrated School for Arts and Communications (ISAAC) in New London and Side by Side Charter School in Norwalk.

FALL HIRING REPORT

The Board reviewed the 2001 Fall Hiring Report and other information about changes in staffing patterns over time. Following are some highlights of the report.

- ❑ The total number of teaching positions in Connecticut has increased by more than 7,000 since 1987.
- ❑ The percentage of teaching positions needing to be filled annually has increased from nearly 7 percent to 10 percent.
- ❑ Districts in Education Reference Group (ERG) I had the greatest number of vacancies on October 1, 18.6 percent, compared to an average of 4.4 percent across the other ERGs.
- ❑ Special education, music, and speech and language pathology were cited as the greatest shortage areas for 2001-02.
- ❑ A report recently published by the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents states that 121 school districts identified unfilled positions on August 27, 2001, the opening day of school in most districts. Most of the unfilled positions were in special education and world languages.

- The number of Durational Shortage Area Permits (DSAPs) issued and reissued to districts has increased from 35 in 1997-98 to 484 in 2000-01. As of November 21, 2001, 664 DSAPs have been issued for the 2001-02 school year. In order to receive a DSAP, a district must demonstrate its inability to find a qualified certified teacher and present a candidate who has passed Praxis I, has at least 12 semester hours of credit in the area to be taught and has enrolled in a teacher preparation or alternative route to certification program.

Three factors were considered in assessing future trends and needs: the projected number of students attending Connecticut public schools; the age of the current teaching staff; and the number of teachers certified each year. Almost 40 percent of Connecticut's 48,750 certified educators (as of October 1, 2000) are age 50 or older. In the past three years, almost 1,500 teachers have retired each year. The mean age of those retiring was 60, with 30.1 years of experience.

The report described several initiatives currently in place to attract and retain educators (e.g., an Internet application and placement program, CT REAP; Minority Teacher Incentive Grants; housing and mortgage assistance; alternate routes to certification; public relations efforts; Beginning Educator Support and Training Program; etc.). However, Connecticut has been experiencing difficulty in finding qualified certified teachers in certain subject areas and in urban school districts and districts providing lower annual salaries and benefits. Often, new teachers are not certified in the subject areas of need. The report concluded that Connecticut must focus on establishing or strengthening programs that attract high school students, college students who have not yet selected a career, recent graduates, out-of-state candidates, retirees and non-educators. There is also a need to retain a higher proportion of new teacher candidates and retain new teachers through improved support and mentoring.

THE BOARD'S ADOPTION OF THE PRAXIS I PRE-PROFESSIONAL SKILLS TEST (PPST)

The Board adopted the Praxis I Pre-professional Skills Test (PPST) in reading, writing and mathematics as the required competency examination for entry into a State Board of Education-approved teacher preparation program or for Connecticut certification. Effective January 1, 2002, the Praxis I computer-based test currently used as a requirement for Connecticut certification will be discontinued by the Educational Testing Service. The Board adopted passing standards for the PPST, offered as a computer-based test as well as a paper-and-pencil test. The PPST test standards will be reviewed after one year of data has been obtained and, as with other certification assessments, the standards will be monitored. Waivers will be granted to individuals who have met established scores on the Scholastic Assessment Test, American College Test or the Prueba de Aptitude Academica examination.

AMERICAN COUNCIL ON THE TEACHING OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES WRITING PROFICIENCY TEST

A passing standard of "intermediate high" on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Writing Proficiency Test was approved as the requirement for certification in Spanish, Grades 7-12. This standard will take effect February 1, 2002. The ACTFL writing proficiency test assesses candidates' functional writing ability in Spanish. The ACTFL rating scale includes four levels of language performance: superior, advanced, intermediate, and novice. Each major level is divided into three sublevels. The testing requirements for Spanish 7-12 now include the ACTFL oral proficiency inventory (approved November 7, 2001) and the writing proficiency test (effective February 1, 2002). The Department will monitor the ACTFL writing test results to ensure that the appropriate standard has been set.

MANCHESTER'S PLAN TO CORRECT RACIAL IMBALANCE

The Board approved a plan to correct racial imbalance in the Washington School in Manchester. The plan calls for the expansion of the capacity of Washington School by moving a Head Start Program to another school and adding two portable classrooms. In order to attract students from other Manchester districts, Washington School will feature an all-day kindergarten program, before- and after-school programs, summer school opportunities, expanded technology, and a curriculum that focuses on literacy, inquiry and technology-integrated instruction.

REGIONAL PLAN FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION: WATERFORD/NEW LONDON EARLY CHILDHOOD MAGNET SCHOOL

The Board approved a long-term Regional Plan for Special Education submitted by the Waterford Board of Education and to be administered by LEARN. The plan provides programs and services for students with special needs who are between the ages of 2 and 5. Classrooms, office space, treatment rooms, etc. will be constructed at the Waterford/New London Early Childhood Magnet School, which already has been approved for funding. It is scheduled for completion in August 2003, and will enroll students from Waterford and New London.

VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL SCHOOL MATTERS

The following matters pertaining to the Regional Vocational-Technical School System (RVTSS) were considered by the State Board of Education on December 5, 2001.

Admissions Study: In response to legislation requiring the RVTSS to study the relationship between admission scores and performance in the RVTSS, the State Department of Education prepared the first of five reports. The report describes the design for the study, and includes enrollment in the RVTSS by class, the format and content of the initial database to be used, and the measures used to predict success.

Strategic School Profile District Analysis: In compliance with Section 10-220c of the Connecticut General Statutes, the RVTSS presented the State Board of Education with its analysis of the 2000-01 Strategic School Profile. Highlights of the report include the following:

- ❑ 15.3 percent increase in enrollment from five years ago;
- ❑ 3 percent increase in minority staff members from five years ago;
- ❑ hours of instruction that exceed the state average;
- ❑ reductions in class size and the number of dropouts;
- ❑ fewer students per computer than the statewide average;
- ❑ more graduates attending two- and four-year colleges;
- ❑ more graduates employed in fields related to their training; and
- ❑ more students awarded the Connecticut Career Certificate.

Annual Plan 2001-02: The Board adopted the Annual Plan for the RVTSS, which was prepared to measure the success of specific activities designed to meet each goal. Each goal supports one of the eight "critical school practices" – teaching and learning; school culture; technology; leadership; professional development; fiscal and facilities; assessment; and accountability. Periodic updates on the system's progress will be provided to the State Board of Education. A final report will be prepared after all data have been collected at the end of the school year.

Reauthorization of Trades: The following trade programs were approved through January 2007: automotive mechanics; aviation mechanics, airframe and power; carpentry; culinary arts; fashion technology; heating, ventilation and air conditioning; and dental laboratory technician.

CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE	STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS
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THE NEXT MEETING OF THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION IS SCHEDULED FOR WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 9, 2002, AT 9:30 A.M.

The meeting will be held in Room 307 of the State Office Building, 165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut. Visitors are advised to call the Office of Board Matters (860-713-6510) to confirm the meeting date and time.

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 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

