

# Mansfield Board of Education Meeting

January 23, 2014

Council Chambers 7:30 p.m.

**Board Members:** Mark LaPlaca, Chair, Randy Walikonis, Vice-Chair; Martha Kelly, Secretary, Susannah Everett, John Fratiello, Sarah Lacombe, Katherine Paulhus, Jay Rueckl, Carrie Silver-Bernstein

## Agenda

- 7:30 Call to Order  
7:35 Special Presentation  
7:50 Hearing for Visitors  
8:00 Communications  
8:05 Additions to the Present Agenda

### Reports:

- 8:25 Committee Reports: Policy Committee  
9:00 Report of the Superintendent
- Connecticut State Department of Education Technology Investments to Implement Common Core State Standards and Administer Common Core aligned Assessments, Specifically Smarter Balanced Assessments (P. 1)
  - Connecticut Coalition for Justice in Education Funding (CCJEF) (P. 3)
  - 2014-2015 School Calendar (P. 7)
  - Barrows STEM Academy (P. 9)
  - CABE/CAPSS Legislative Agendas (P. 15)
  - Class Size/Enrollment
  - 2014-2015 Proposed Budget – Introduction and Overview

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES: (M)

December 12, 2013 Meeting (P. 39)

### NEW BUSINESS:

#### CONSENT AGENDA: (M) (P. 41)

The following items for the Board of Education January 23, 2014 meeting be approved or received for the record, unless removed by a Board member or the Superintendent of Schools

That the Mansfield Public Schools accepts the retirement of Judy Shay, Reading Language Arts Consultant, effective the end of the 2013-2014 school year.

That the Mansfield Public Schools accepts the retirement of Karen Norton, Physical Education teacher at Mansfield Middle School, effective the end of the 2013-2014 school year.

That the Mansfield Public Schools accepts the resignation of Elizabeth Schwartz, Spanish/ELL teacher at Goodwin School and Mansfield Middle School, effective February 7, 2014.

That the Mansfield Public Schools approves the request for maternity and unpaid childrearing leave effective the end of April, 2014 through the end of the 2013-2014 Jessica Mongeau, Mansfield Middle School math teacher.

That the Mansfield Public Schools approves the request for maternity and unpaid childrearing leave effective May 4, 2014 through the 2014-2015 school year by Kate Harbec, Vinton School Grade 2 teacher.

- 9:50\* Hearing for Visitors  
9:55 Suggestions for Future Agenda

### Adjournment

\* Estimate

## Mansfield Public Schools: Board of Education Goals – 2013-2014

- I) Help each student to be a confident and successful learner through differentiated instruction and support. Monitor student progress to ensure growth.
  - a. Engage and motivate each student.
  - b. Improve the mathematics, reading, science, and writing skills of each student to support college and career readiness.
  - c. Promote the cognitive, social, and emotional development of each student.
  - d. Support the full breadth of the district's programs, systematically review program offerings, and explore expanding programs.
  - e. Provide positive school climate through positive behavior support systems and encouraging character development to ensure student safety, health, physical, and emotional well-being.
  - f. Increase engagement and participation of parents/guardians in the education of their children.
  - g. Encourage the civic engagement of students.
  - h. Align our current Language Arts/ Reading, Science and Mathematics curriculum with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS).
  - i. Integrate current technology into the instructional program to extend student learning of subject matter and appropriate use of technology.
  - j. Explore additional support services for students in need of community and/or health services.
  - k. Ensure all student transitions within and between environments are supported and successful.
  - l. Incorporate curricula that investigate energy use and environmental issues.
- II) Attract, support, and retain qualified, motivated, and diverse professional staff.
  - a. Facilitate and encourage a positive, professional learning community.
  - b. Recognize teacher and staff effort and success regularly.
  - c. Foster a climate of mutual respect at all levels.
  - d. Maintain quality educational programs at multiple sites while adjusting staff levels and resources despite any changes in overall enrollment.
  - e. Support current and future school/district leadership to maintain and surpass current levels of student achievement.
  - f. Implement, with input and collaboration from certified staff, an effective professional development and evaluation program that supports the development of confident student learners and encourages the continued growth of all staff.
  - g. Provide regular opportunities for all staff to share feedback about the effectiveness of the district's programming.
- III) Monitor the District's quality and efficiency of facilities, sufficiency of space, level of security, adequacy of maintenance, and efficiency of student transportation.
  - a. Communicate quarterly with Town Council about ongoing needs for infrastructure, security, and technology.
  - b. In collaboration with the Town Council, develop and implement a long-term plan, supported by voters, to address pre-k-8 building needs.
  - c. Implement the improved school security and technology recommendations as approved by the Board.
- IV) Increase the effectiveness of the Board of Education.
  - a. Invest time and effort in Board members' learning and development.
  - b. Celebrate and acknowledge student achievements at Board meetings and other venues.
  - c. Foster and encourage communication between the Board and the communities it serves.
  - d. Collaborate with community members and organizations that support the District's students; including Mansfield Youth Services Bureau and Mansfield Advocates for Children.
  - e. Examine evidence regarding school readiness and review prekindergarten educational opportunities for Mansfield children.
  - f. Meet regularly with our state legislators.
- V) Plan for long-term fiscal sustainability.
  - a. Advocate for continued Education Cost Sharing which supports current programming and develop a plan to address any change to current funding level.
  - b. Continue to explore partnerships with other groups to maximize program effectiveness while containing costs.
  - c. Investigate alternative revenue, including public and private funding sources and grant opportunities.
  - d. Continue to educate ourselves and the public at large on long-term financial ramifications of balancing board goals and priorities.

### Robert's Rules of Order General Guidelines

As outlined in the MBOE By-Laws, Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the proceedings of the Board unless otherwise provided by the by-laws. Following are some general guidelines from Robert's Rules and the By-Laws that should be followed to ensure efficient meetings and the rights of all members, aid decision-making and allow all to be heard.

1. During any discussion, a member must be recognized by the Chair before speaking.
2. A member will not be allowed to speak a second time until all other members wishing to speak have been allowed to do so.
3. Members should refrain from speaking a second time unless they have a new point to make or need to respond to new information.
4. As a general rule during discussion, comments should be directed through the Chair to the whole Board, rather than to other or individual members. All discussion is with the Board as a whole. Questions of the Superintendent or other non-BOE members making presentations should be directed to that individual.
5. Private conversations can be distracting to those speaking and should be limited.
6. During discussion, the Chair should try to provide equal time to those in favor or against a given topic or motion.
7. A majority is more than half of the votes cast, not a majority of the Board. For example: if only 7 members choose to vote, and the result is 4-3 in favor, the motion is adopted. Members who abstain are "refraining from voting".
8. If discussion on a *motion* is lasting a long time, any member can "move the previous question" or "call the question". They must be recognized by the Chair in order to do so. This is not debatable, and a two-thirds vote is required to pass. If two-thirds vote in favor of ending debate, the Board ends all discussion on a motion and then moves to an immediate vote on that motion.
9. Committee reports that recommend action should be submitted in writing. This allows for clear understanding of recommendations.

## State of Connecticut Competitive Grant for Technology Investment

“The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is seeking proposals to purchase devices and inter-school/inter-district bandwidth associated hardware devices to support the administration of Common Core aligned assessments, specifically the Smarter Balanced assessment system.”

### Mansfield Timeline

Date	Item
July 22, 2013	Grant announced by State of Connecticut.
Late July – Early August 2013	Collaborative team researches/authors grant proposal.
August 12, 2013	Grant submitted to Mansfield Board of Education (followed by submission to State of Connecticut)
November 15, 2013	Grant Awardees Announced
January 9, 2013	Grant Funding Approved by Connecticut Bond Commission
February/March 2013	Receipt of Grant Equipment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 232 Chromebooks (\$56,840)</li><li>• 15 Laptops (\$10,429)</li><li>• 22 Mobile Charging Carts (\$23,606)</li><li>• Contracted Configuration Support (\$4,650)</li><li>• Google Academic Licensing (\$9,300)</li><li>• Wireless &amp; Wired Infrastructure (\$60,479)</li></ul>
Spring 2013	Deployment of Grant Equipment / Professional Development

### What are Chromebooks?

Chromebooks are laptops that use the Chrome operating system software to maximize the benefits of a mobile device for education. Our students and teachers find them to be effective for a number of reasons:

**(1) Facilitates Collaboration:**

Document and project sharing is intuitive and provides for both synchronous and asynchronous groups either based on specialty groupings or class membership (integrates with SIS).

**(2) Educational Software/Hardware:**

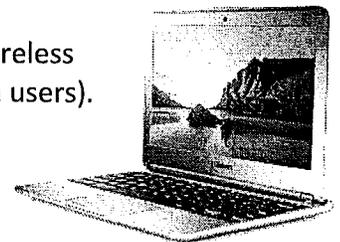
The Apps for Education suite is built-in with both core tools and a large selection of K-12 education specialty apps due to the wide-spread adoption of the device by schools. It typically includes a built-in keyboard, touchpad, multimedia camera, audio speakers, headphone outlet, and 11.6” screen.

**(3) Anytime/Anywhere Learning:**

All work is saved in a secure and school controlled online workspace that students can access in other classrooms or outside of school on any device (computer, iPad, etc.) without additional software costs.

**(4) Time and Cost Efficient:**

Quickly turns on/off, the battery lasts all day, and has a 2.4lb weight with a wireless connection. Multiple students can use the device (can quickly switch between users). \$245 educational pricing.





**Celeste N. Griffin**

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**From:** Dianne deVries <dkdevries\_uk@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, December 06, 2013 11:22 AM  
**To:** Elizabeth Paterson; Matthew W. Hart; MBOE Supt; Mark LaPlaca  
**Subject:** Great news re CCJEF lawsuit  
**Attachments:** News Release, CCJEF v Rell Decision on State's Motion to Dismiss, Dec 5, 2013.pdf;  
Annual Mtg, Preliminary Agenda, Dec 11, 2013.pdf

Greetings, Mansfield friends!

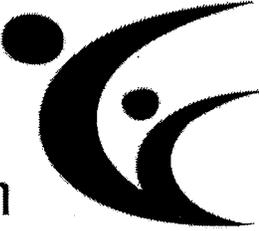
In case you haven't already heard, yesterday the Hartford Superior Court issued its decision on the state's motion to dismiss the CCJEF school finance lawsuit, or alternatively, to at least throw CCJEF out of the case. It was a resounding victory for us all! We won big-time!

Attached is the news release sent out to major newspapers, though only a few seem to grasp the significance of this story or the lawsuit itself. (That's a mixed blessing.) But here's the best of the lot so far: <http://www.courant.com/news/politics/hc-school-lawsuit-1206-20131205,0,7241082.story>, and the full decision is accessible via this article: <http://www.courant.com/news/politics/hc-school-lawsuit-1206-20131205,0,7241082.story> (or our webmaster should have it posted at <http://ccjef.org/> shortly).

Now that we have the court's decision and know with certainty that trial is on the near-term horizon, it's time to seriously dig in and begin carefully laying out what it is that we want and need from the systemic school finance reforms we expect to achieve legislatively as an outcome of this case. That process will take time -- and it requires ALL CCJEF members to be at the table, either directly involved with me and our attorneys in serious number- and policy-intensive deliberations, or serving in an advisory/oversight capacity vetting that work over the coming several months.

This next-steps discussion and other implications of yesterday's very welcome decision will highlight CCJEF's 9th Annual Meeting next Wed, Dec 11 (agenda attached). If you have not yet RSVP'd for this important gathering, please do so now. Final headcount for catering, printing, etc.: noon Mon.

Dianne Kaplan deVries, Ed.D.  
CCJEF Project Director  
(603) 325-5250 m



Connecticut Coalition  
*for Justice in* Education Funding

Contact:

Dianne deVries, (603) 325-5250 (m) / [dianne@ccjef.org](mailto:dianne@ccjef.org)

Thursday, December 5, 2013

## **CCJEF School Finance Lawsuit Moves Forward to Trial Despite State's Objections**

**In a major win for children in Connecticut public schools, a Connecticut trial court judge has rejected the State's attempt to dismiss the lawsuit challenging the adequacy and equity of education provided in Connecticut public schools, and ruled that the constitutionality of the State's education funding system must be determined at trial.**

The opinion sets the stage for students of Connecticut to finally get their day in court, nine years after the case was initially filed. This decision follows the Connecticut Supreme Court's 2010 ruling in the plaintiffs' favor. In the 2010 ruling, the Court found that Connecticut's Constitution guarantees public school students an adequate education.

Judge Kevin Dubay's opinion entirely rejected the defendants' legal arguments that 2012 education reform legislation meant that the Court should dismiss the plaintiffs' case. The defendants argued both that it is too early to evaluate the state's educational reforms, and that the recent reforms fundamentally altered the education system in a way that cured all constitutional deficiencies in plaintiffs' 2005 complaint. In his opinion, Judge Dubay found that the effect of the 2012 legislation on the constitutionality of Connecticut's education system was an issue of fact that would need to be determined by the evidence at trial.

Judge Dubay also rejected the State's attempt to exclude the Connecticut Coalition for Justice in Education Funding from the case. He ruled that CCJEF met all of Connecticut's legal requirements for standing, and thus had the right to bring this lawsuit. His opinion recognized that CCJEF's membership includes parents of Connecticut schoolchildren, who have a clear interest in the adequacy and equity of the state's system of education. CCJEF will remain lead plaintiff in the case, alongside individual parents of some two dozen students from ten communities across the state. Trial is scheduled for July 2014.

Connecticut Coalition  
*for Justice in* Education Funding



**9<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting**

**December 11, 2013**

**Preliminary Agenda**

- 8:30 am Sign-in, continental breakfast, & networking
- 9:00 SHARP! Welcome  
*Herb Rosenthal, President (Newtown)*
- Roll-Call & Introductions of All Members Present
- Business Meeting  
Secretary's Annual Report  
*Marilyn Ondrasik (At-Large, Stratford)*  
Treasurer's Annual Report  
*Merrill Gay (Parent, New Britain)*  
Steering Committee's Proposed Revision of Bylaws  
*Herb Rosenthal*  
Other Business
- 10:15 Break
- 10:30 Litigation: **CCJEF v. Rell**  
*Debevoise & Plimpton*  
*Yale Law School Education Adequacy Clinic,*  
*Introduced by Alex Knopp*
- Research, Advocacy, and Next Steps  
*Dianne Kaplan deVries, CCJEF Project Director*
- 11:45 Wrap-Up
- 12:00 Noon Adjournment

# the **ct** mirror

## State seeks to delay education-funding trial until after election

By Jacqueline Rabe Thomas Wednesday, January 08, 2014

The state is asking that the trial over whether Connecticut is spending enough money on education be pushed back until after the gubernatorial election in the fall.

The trial, scheduled to begin July 1, would be delayed 15 months if a Hartford Superior Court judge grants the request by the state attorney general.

"The stakes in this case are enormous," Associate Attorney General Joseph Rubin writes in his request to delay the trial to October 2015. He emphasizes that the plaintiffs' allegations that the state underfunds education by \$2 billion a year is completely outdated at this point since it relies on a 2005 cost study.

"When the stakes are this high, the defendants, on behalf of the taxpayers in Connecticut, are entitled to know and understand the plaintiffs' case, not as it existed four or more years ago, but as it will actually be presented at trial," Rubin wrote.

The state argues that the plaintiffs — a group of mayors, parents and leaders of teachers' unions — need to update their complaint and experts' reports to reflect the current educational landscape, which warrants delaying the trial. The state's top lawyer in its motion to delay the trial points to recent increases in education spending and new education reform laws that seek to improve the problems school districts face. Over the last three years, the state has increased funding for the Education Cost Sharing grant — the main grant the state gives to districts to cover education-related expenses — by \$101 million, or 2 percent.

Judge Kevin Dubay last month rejected the state's request to throw out the case because of these recent changes, saying the merits of the reforms in improving education are something that need to be resolved during a trial.

But the plaintiffs in the case call the recent changes "minor" and say students have already waited eight years for their day in court.

Since its inception in 2005, the lawsuit has attracted a lot of support, with mayors from Bridgeport, East Hartford, Hartford, New Haven, Windham and Stamford joining forces with the leaders of the state's two teachers' unions to sue the state.

Gov. Dannel P. Malloy, who was mayor of Stamford at the time, also joined the suit.

Since then, 25 parents of children attending school in Bridgeport, Danbury, East Hartford, Hartford, New Britain, New Haven, New London, Plainfield and Windham have also joined the suit.

"Defendants are responsible for delay," attorney Helen V. Cantwell writes on behalf of the plaintiffs. "The interests of justice would be better served by a scheduling order that preserves the July 1, 2014 trial date."

Cantwell points out that their experts can testify about the current condition of the educational funding structure at trial, that the State Department of Education continues to reject their requests for information so they can prepare for trial, and that the state has blown through several deadlines for reporting their expert witnesses.

"Any alleged logistical challenges defendants now claim they face in preparing for a July 2014 trial are a direct result of their own flagrant disregard for the Scheduling Order. Simply put, plaintiffs deserve their day in court," Cantwell writes.

Among the scholastic problems listed in the lawsuit are large class sizes, high dropout rates, students who are not ready academically being promoted to the next grade, low performance on standardized tests and not enough money available to the districts to resolve these problems.

"Once in the school [these factors] increase the chance that these students will become part of the educational underclass," the lawsuit alleges.

The timing of the trial — four months before the gubernatorial election — couldn't be worse for Malloy, as it would shine a light on the question of whether Connecticut under his leadership has done enough to provide an adequate education for every student.

Malloy's education commissioner, Stefan Pryor, Wednesday directed all questions to the Office of the Attorney General.

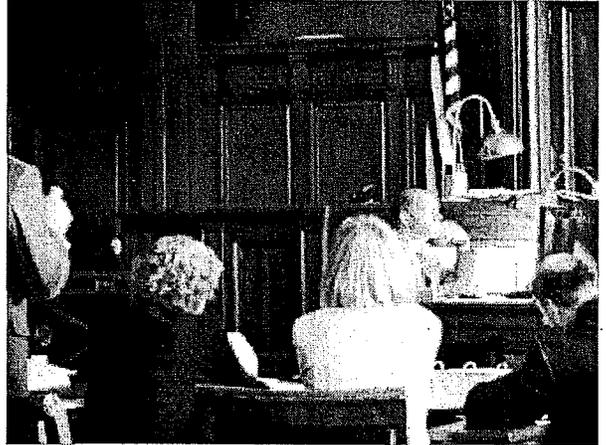
In a prepared statement, a spokeswoman for the office, Jacklyn Falkowski, wrote, "Of primary concern, the plaintiffs rely on expert witnesses whose opinions are based on the educational and funding system as it was years in the past. The state is entitled to know before trial what those experts think of the current state of education and the impacts on it of the Governor's comprehensive education reforms.

"We have no interest in delaying this case for delay's sake, but we do insist that the state's taxpayers are entitled to receive a fair hearing," Falkowski's statement said.

The judge will hear arguments over when the trial should begin next Thursday in Hartford.

###

State's motion to delay the trial.



Superior Court Judge Kevin Dubay hears arguments in September to dismiss the education-funding case. (File photo)

# Mansfield Public Schools

## 2014-2015

**DRAFT**

### Notes

August 14 (3)						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	PD	PD	27	28	29	30
31						

September 14 (21)						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	H	2	3	4	5	6
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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

October 14 (21)						
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19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

November 14 (16)						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
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9	PD	H	12	13	14	15
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23	<del>24</del>	<del>25</del>	<del>26</del>	H	V	29
30						

December 14 (17)						
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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	V	H	V	27
28	V	V	V			

January 15 (19)						
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11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	H	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

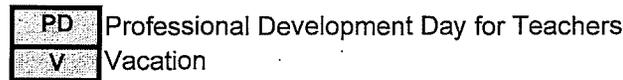
February 15 (18)						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
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March 15 (21)						
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22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

April 15 (16)						
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12	V	V	V	V	V	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

May 15 (20)						
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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	H	26	27	28	29	30
31						

June 15 (16)						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
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7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	<del>22</del>	PD	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				



\*Last day for students includes 5 built-in weather related closings. If these days are not needed, the last school day will be adjusted accordingly. If the district uses all 5 built-in weather days and requires additional days, consideration will be given to Professional Development Days in March, November, and October. Total Instructional Days will not exceed 183.

Adopted by the Mansfield Board of Education on . Also available on line @ <http://www.mansfieldct.gov/MBOE>

<b>August:</b>
25-26: Certified/Non-Certified Staff Prof. Day
27: First Day - Students
<b>September:</b>
1: Labor Day Holiday
<b>October:</b>
13: Columbus Day: No School
14: Certified/Non-Certified Staff Prof. Day
<b>November:</b>
10: Certified Staff Professional Day
11: Veterans' Day: No School
24-26: Early Closing
27-28: Thanksgiving Holiday
<b>December:</b>
24-31: Winter Vacation
<b>January:</b>
1-2: New Year's Holiday & Winter Vacation
19: Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
<b>February:</b>
16: Presidents' Day
17: Vacation Day
<b>March:</b>
16: Certified Staff Professional Day
<b>April:</b>
3: Good Friday Holiday
13-17: Spring Vacation
<b>May:</b>
25: Memorial Day Holiday
<b>June:</b>
22: Last Day for Students (Early Closing)*
23: Certified Staff Professional Day

# 2014-2015 Regional School Calendar

## EASTCONN Region

### Professional Development

August 26, 2014  
 October 14, 2014  
 November 4, 2014  
 January 20, 2015  
 March 16, 2015

### Early Dismissal (1/2 day)

November 26, 2014

### Special Observance Days

September 24, 2014  
 Rosh Hashanah  
 October 3, 2014  
 Yom Kippur  
 November 4, 2014  
 Election Day  
 January 6, 2015  
 Three Kings Day  
 April 3, 2015  
 Passover

TOTAL: 180 Days

August 3	September 21	October 21	November 16
S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	S M T W T F S ① 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 ⑬ ⑭ 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	S M T W T F S 1 2 3 ④ 5 6 7 8 9 10 ⑪ 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 ⑳ ㉑ ㉒ 29 30
December 17	January 18	February 18	March 21
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April 16	May 20	June 9	
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Staff Development Days - No School  
 Holidays or Vacation Periods  
 / Half Days of School

### 2014-2015 Calendar

First Day of School  
 August 27  
 Labor Day  
 September 1  
 Columbus Day  
 October 13  
 Veterans' Day  
 November 11  
 Thanksgiving Break  
 November 27-28  
 Christmas Break  
 December 24-January 2  
 Martin Luther King Jr.  
 January 19  
 Presidents' Day  
 February 16  
 Winter Vacation  
 February 16-17  
 Good Friday  
 April 3  
 Spring Vacation  
 April 13-17  
 Memorial Day  
 May 25  
 Last Day of School  
 June 11

CHARLES H. BARROW STEM ACADEMY  
MANSFIELD STUDENTS  
2013-2014

SCHOOL	MALE/FEMALE	GRADE	CURRENT STATUS	ENROLLED @ STEM as of 1/10/14
<b>Goodwin</b>				
	F	1	Didn't enroll @ STEM attending GW	
<b>Mansfield Middle</b>				
	M	5		Yes
	M	6		Yes
	M	6	Didn't enroll @ STEM Attending MMS	
	M	6	Didn't enroll @ STEM Attending MMS	
<b>Southeast</b>				
	F	K	Returned to SE 10/9/13	
	F	2	Returned to SE 10/9/13	
<b>Vinton</b>				
	F	K		Yes
	F	1	Returned to VN 9/8/13	
	F	2		Yes
	M	2		Yes



**Tracy L. Lambert**  
Chairman of the Board of Education  
*~~~~~*  
**Ana V. Ortiz**  
Superintendent of Schools



**Communications**  
*~~~~~* **Kerry Markey** *~~~~~*  
Communications Officer  
KMarkey@windham.k12.ct.us  
322 Prospect Street  
Willimantic, CT 06226  
860-465-2105

January 7, 2014

Dear Sir or Madam,

Windham's Charles H. Barrows STEM Academy, a regional kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade magnet school, has begun recruiting students for its fall 2014 classes. The educational programming offered at the Barrows Academy may be of great interest to families living in your town. I hope you will consider making the enclosed materials available at your facility and posting the flier provided.

The Barrows STEM Academy offers students a wide-reaching, high-quality education with a rigorous focus on science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). Students in all grades benefit from quality teachers and small class sizes. The Academy's supportive, hands-on learning environment emphasizes critical thinking and effective collaboration as students learn to solve complex, real-world problems.

The Barrows STEM Academy is a "green", 83,700-square-foot, state-of-the-art facility located on a beautiful, 25-acre site in rural North Windham. The facility offers the latest technology in its classrooms and library/media center, as well as in its laboratories for oceanography, LEGO<sup>®</sup>/Robotics and distance learning. Outdoor learning spaces include two courtyard ponds to collect rainwater for study, as well as a nature path, vegetable and butterfly gardens and another outdoor classroom.

The Academy will enroll 420 students from Windham and surrounding Northeastern Connecticut towns for the 2014-15 school year. The application period will remain open until Friday, January 31, 2014 at 4:00pm. For more information please contact 860-465-2315 or visit [cbs.windham.k12.ct.us](http://cbs.windham.k12.ct.us).

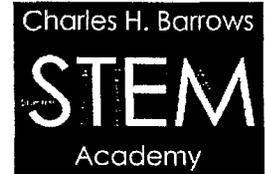
Sincerely,

Kerry Markey  
Communications Officer  
Windham Public Schools



## Strategic Partners Extending Opportunities for Learning

- **Connecticut Science Center**— providing field trips, scientist-in-residence and professional development for teachers
- **University of Connecticut** — providing a resident scholar, professional development for teachers, practicums, research and publishing opportunities
- **EASTCONN** — providing professional development for teachers and management support
- **Local Businesses** — providing field trips, guest speakers, mentorships and special projects



## Charles H. Barrows STEM Academy (Pre-K to Grade 8)

*Preparing Students  
for Success in the  
21st Century Where STEM  
Skills are in Demand.*

## Buildings & Grounds

- 83,700-sq.-ft. school for 600 students, preschool through 8th grade
- Newly constructed "green" facility
- Learning environment designed to support the STEM experience
- Laboratories, classrooms and interiors surround center courtyard for learning
- State-of-the-art technology, equipment and laboratories, including an oceanography lab, a LEGO<sup>®</sup>/robotics lab and a distance-learning lab
- Outdoor spaces include 2 courtyard "ponds" to collect roof rainwater, a nature path and an outdoor "classroom"
- Other outdoor spaces: vegetable garden, butterfly garden, sensory garden, rain garden and tree nursery bio-infiltration swales
- Athletic fields and a playground
- Sited in a beautiful, rural, 25-acre setting in North Windham, CT



# Charles H. Barrows STEM Academy

## About the STEM Academy

Windham's Regional STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Academy is a new preK-8 magnet school in northeastern Connecticut, enrolling 600 students from the Town of Windham and surrounding communities.

## The STEM Experience

Our teaching methods, state-of-the-art technology, laboratories, classrooms and equipment provide students with the tools they need to apply effective, critical thinking skills to any challenge. Hands-on inquiry helps to motivate students as they gain confidence across academic disciplines and develop a broader intellectual and personal understanding of the world around them. Learning becomes more meaningful as personal inquiry stimulates higher-level thinking and students investigate real-world problems in a stimulating and supportive learning environment.



## Educational Features

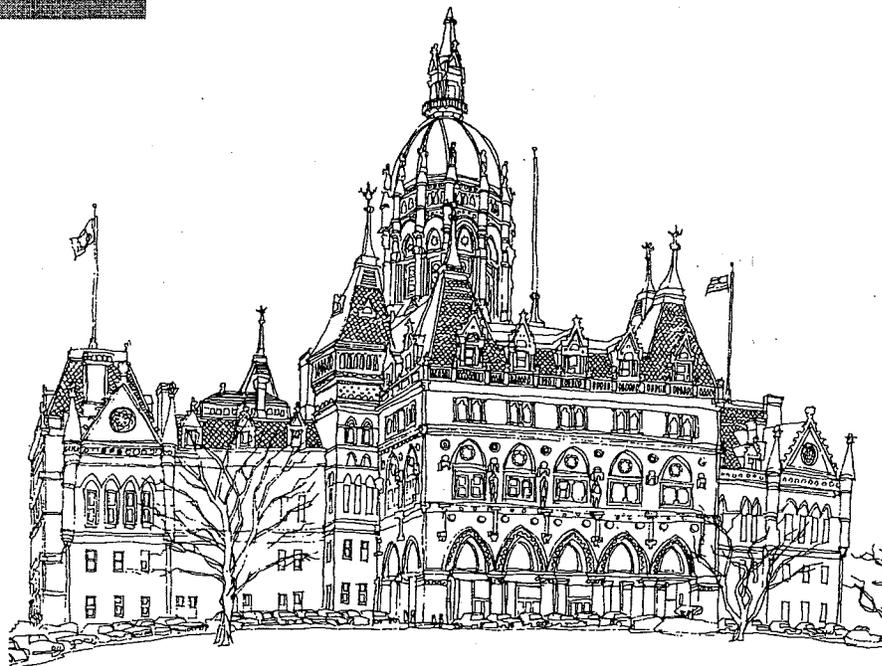
- A rigorous focus on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)
- Students master higher-level thinking skills in a stimulating and supportive learning environment that promotes critical thinking, effective collaboration and the ability to solve complex, real-world problems
- Engineering and science curriculum begins in the earliest grades
- Technology literacy is emphasized through the use of a variety of digital resources, probeware, SMART technology and more
- Students of all ages use laptops and iPads daily; each middle school student is assigned their own iPad
- All students exposed to at least 2 world languages
- Parents as active partners in the learning process
- Learning Compacts with students, parents and teachers agreeing to academic and behavioral expectations

- Small class-sizes across all grades
- Highly qualified teachers, who participate in extensive professional development
- Full-day kindergarten
- Guest scientists from the Connecticut Science Center, local industry and scholars from universities are partners in the educational process
- Live access to experts from across the globe via the Distance Learning Lab
- Opportunities for field trips, internships and service/research projects in partnership with area businesses
- Full range of extracurricular activities, from sports to community-based service projects
- Modeled after other successful STEM schools in Connecticut and other states



**For more information please  
contact (860) 465-2526 or visit  
[cbs.windham.k12.ct.us](http://cbs.windham.k12.ct.us)**

**2014  
WHOLE  
AGENDA**



**The Connecticut Association  
of Boards of Education  
81 Wolcott Hill Road  
Wethersfield, CT 06109  
800-317-0033 or 860-571-7446  
[www.cabe.org](http://www.cabe.org)**

## **Governance**

### **• PUBLIC EDUCATION AS A PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITY •**

CABE believes that all citizens, including board members, the Governor, the Connecticut General Assembly, and the State Board of Education, must make public education a matter of the highest priority of public policy. The state must heed its constitutional mandate to provide a free and appropriate public education for all of Connecticut's children.

### **• LOCAL GOVERNANCE OF PUBLIC EDUCATION •**

CABE believes that local governance of public education through locally elected or appointed community members strengthens the democratic process, provides accountability, and assures strong continuing public support for education.

CABE supports:

- a stronger linkage between local and regional boards of education, magnet schools and charter schools and the State Board of Education.
- greater state flexibility encouraging interdistrict cooperation and regionalism enabling local and regional boards of education to pursue current educational opportunities more expeditiously.

CABE believes that the state and federal governments must recognize the wide differences among America's public school districts, including those that are rural or small, by funding the development of school improvement programs that reflect local needs and characteristics and avoid the "one best model" design.

### **• EDUCATION AS THE FIRST PRIORITY FOR CHILDREN •**

CABE believes that public policy must assist children and their families in maintaining education as the first priority for children amidst the mounting economic and social pressures of society.

CABE supports the maintenance of the state's traditional labor laws protections for children in order to preserve education as a child's first priority and therefore believes it is undesirable to expand legal employment for children of compulsory school age.

### **• CREATING EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE THROUGH ECONOMIC, RACIAL AND ETHNIC INTEGRATION •**

CABE believes that each child must have equal access to effective free, public education and to the services of well-educated and skillful teachers.

CABE supports efforts by the State of Connecticut:

1. to address and solve the issues of social and economic isolation in the areas of housing, transportation, employment, access to health care and social services; and
2. to make the necessary funding available to urban, suburban and rural school districts across the state to develop and sustain integrated educational programs and exchanges that create educational excellence.

CABE urges urban, suburban and rural school districts:

1. to affirm that all children can learn and accept the challenge to educate each child to his/her fullest potential;
2. to enter into interdistrict partnerships which create integrated educational excellence and promote social, cultural, ethnic and racial exchange and interaction among diverse groups;
3. to continue their efforts to increase the recruitment of qualified individuals who reflect this state's diversity to the teaching profession and administration;
4. to make parents as well as the greater community full partners in the education of all children; and
5. to recognize their critical role in creating policies, providing training, and maintaining oversight to ensure that students, regardless of gender, race, creed, national origin, or sexual orientation have equal educational opportunities and are treated equitably in the classroom and in other school settings.

### **• 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY SKILLS •**

CABE urges the state and federal government to support programs and research that focus on problem-solving, creativity, critical thinking, and other high-level 21<sup>st</sup> century skills that are important for success in a global workplace. As such, the state and federal government should support school district capacity to provide the technology and tools necessary to foster innovative learning practices and instructional methods that bridge school and real-world experiences, provide for greater individualization of education, and prepare students for college and/or career.

**• FEDERAL INVOLVEMENT  
IN LOCAL EDUCATION OPERATIONS •**

CABE urges members of Congress and the executive branch to be mindful of the impact of their actions or lack of action upon local boards of education. Enactment of laws, reauthorizations, and regulation has immediate impact upon local operations. Delay or failure to act in response to valid requests for modification of laws or regulations causes material impact upon districts' ability to manage and cause unnecessary additional expense, a major concern in the current budget environment.

**• PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE •**

CABE believes that all public schools should provide a quality education for each student. CABE believes that in meeting local educational needs, locally developed policies and program options which give parents the opportunity to select public schools or programs for their children should be considered among a variety of possible educational strategies. However, CABE opposes federal or state efforts to mandate choice, including efforts to divert or limit funding intended for existing federal and state programs.

Any program allowing parents to choose schools must assure that:

- (A) the plan does not foster racial, social, or economic segregation or segregation of children with disabilities;
- (B) financial and other administrative issues, such as transportation concerns, and the costs for special education and expelled students are addressed;
- (C) the plan is not part of a federal or state voucher or tuition tax credit program to finance non-public education;
- (D) students be required to make at least a one-year commitment to a school of choice to afford stability of school management;
- (E) interdistrict transfers must have the consent of both school districts; and
- (F) urban districts are encouraged to develop programs to attract suburban students.

**• COORDINATION OF SERVICES  
TO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES •**

CABE urges the state, local, and federal government to support interagency partnerships to connect children and families with comprehensive services.

CABE urges all Connecticut school boards to develop a process for structuring voluntary interagency

partnerships. Interagency collaboration for services such as special education, counseling, health, nutrition, family support, juvenile delinquency and other comprehensive services must focus on the total needs of the child.

**• DRUG, TOBACCO  
AND ALCOHOL USE •**

CABE supports efforts on the local, state and federal level to eliminate the inappropriate, unauthorized, illegal use of drugs, tobacco and alcohol and other substances among students, staff, and others in the school environment, and to reduce violence in our communities.

CABE urges all Connecticut school boards:

1. to work cooperatively with public and private service agencies and law enforcement agencies to address the problems of alcohol, tobacco, substance abuse and violence;
2. to work cooperatively with public and private agencies to provide constructive extended school programs that enable students to be supervised and positively engaged during after-school hours.

CABE urges the State of Connecticut:

1. to vigorously enforce the laws concerning the sale, use and possession of illegal drugs and the sale of alcohol and tobacco to minors;
2. to commit adequate resources and create a functioning network of public and private agencies to address the problems of alcohol, tobacco, drug abuse and violence;
3. to allow more flexibility in the design and delivery of programs;
4. to gather baseline data on student drug use and;
5. to commit resources to support constructive extended day programs for appropriate grade levels.

CABE urges the federal government:

1. to aggressively enforce the law in order to halt the flow of illegal drugs into the United States; and
2. to commit adequate federal resources to state and local programs that address the problems of violence and drug, tobacco and alcohol abuse.

**• CLIMATE, CULTURE,  
SAFETY AND SECURITY •**

CABE urges all Connecticut school boards:

1. To address the influence of violence affecting children through school board policies, parent education programs, peer mediation, student assisting teams, and the school district curriculum to maintain an environment that fosters learning and growth.
2. To develop and review safety plans that address prevention, preparedness, mitigation and emergency response and recovery.
3. To develop and maintain such plans in coordination with appropriate local, state and federal agencies.
4. To address environmental, health and safety risks, as well as potential security breaches.

CABE urges the state and federal government to provide greater and sustained resources for locally determined programs that are critical to school safety, including school resource officers, school counseling, emergency preparedness and response training and inner agency coordination. CABE also urges greater and sustained resources that expand access to mental health services and support comprehensive wraparound services to schools that include a range of community resources to address safety and intervention.

**• STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND ASSESSMENT •**

CABE urges all Connecticut boards of education to provide strong leadership to raise student achievement, and to create a school climate that fosters academic and personal development.

CABE urges boards of education, the State Board of Education and the General Assembly to recognize the broad range of attributes that contribute to student success, including but not limited to academic achievement, critical thinking, community service and integrity.

CABE urges the state and federal government to provide resources to support high quality professional development for all certified staff.

CABE urges the state to create and fund a system designed to share successful curricula and/or programs enhancing student achievement among school districts using the State Department of Education and Regional Education Service Centers.

CABE urges the state and federal government to provide on-going funding resources and technical assistance to districts to evaluate assessment data and allow greater use of data-driven decision making

in the adjustment of curriculum and instructional practice.

CABE supports efforts to improve student assessment programs that enhance individual student achievement and are part of a planned program for meeting educational objectives. CABE is opposed to a federal testing program.

CABE urges the State Department of Education to provide boards of education with explanatory and instructional materials one full year prior to implementing any new or revised statewide assessments.

CABE urges school boards to affirm their commitment to the improvement of student learning and to:

- Openly evaluate data on student achievement indicators;
- Discuss processes that affect the instructional program;
- Examine the impact of the district's course of study on learning;
- Review/revise district goals to focus on student progress;
- Strive to find methods to remove barriers to learning;
- Inform district staff, students, parents, and the community about student achievement in the schools;
- Promote an excitement for learning.

**• THE LEGISLATIVE – SCHOOL BOARD PARTNERSHIP •**

CABE urges the legislature to operate in a more predictable fashion in consultation with local boards of education, giving full airing to proposals impacting local communities prior to voting on them. CABE urges local school board representatives to provide the legislative representatives with objective assessments of proposed legislation.

**• COMMON CORE STANDARDS •**

CABE is committed to the successful implementation of the Common Core Standards, and strongly urges the state to provide the financial means for all 166 districts in Connecticut to properly integrate the standards in their curricula K-12, together with sufficient professional development resources to ensure success.

**• EDUCATOR EVALUATION AND SUPPORT •**

In light of the substantial changes in the roles and responsibilities of educators created by the new evaluation and support system, CABE urges the Legislature and State Department of Education to provide sufficient time, fiscal and support resources to enable districts to implement this important initiative. CABE urges the Department to continue to review the guidelines based on the experience with implementation.

CABE also urges the State Department of Education and State Legislature to support a strong teacher induction and performance program to improve the retention of new teachers in Connecticut.

**• THE NEW STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION DEFINITION OF "EXCUSED" ABSENCES •**

CABE urges the State Department of Education to allow boards of education to determine what constitutes an excused absence.

**• HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION •**

CABE urges local and regional boards of education:

1. to develop innovative curriculum which emphasizes the acquisition of essential skills for all elementary school students and
2. to develop and maintain creative secondary school programs, and performance standards for at risk students that develop lifelong learners. Such programs should emphasize essential skills combined with work related projects, work study programs, school to career, apprenticeships and other alternative program approaches that stress essential skills and practical applications.

CABE urges state education policy makers to provide the funding and the flexibility necessary for local and regional school systems to address the needs of students such as with appropriate increases in funding for dropout prevention and student retention. CABE urges the retention of the right of school boards to deny programs for individuals pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes 10 233d(e). (Student Expulsion)

**• TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOLS •**

CABE supports a state technical high school system that

- ensure both student academic success, and trade/technology mastery;
- instills a desire for lifelong learning;
- prepares students for post-secondary education, 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.

**• TRUANCY •**

CABE urges the Governor's office, the State Board of Education and the Connecticut General Assembly to support, through technical assistance and funding, early intervention programs developed by local school districts that involve the interagency coordination of services to students who are habitual truants or at risk of becoming truants. LEGISLATIVE MANDATES

CABE urges members of the Legislature to exercise restraint when addressing education issues that impact local operations. Overly prescriptive law or regulation inhibits local capacity to innovate and best serve its public.

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**• STUDENT DISCIPLINE •**

CABE urges districts to establish comprehensive student discipline policies that integrate in school and out of school sanctions with an overall program of progressive student discipline.

**• PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH SPEAKING PROFICIENCY •**

CABE urges:

1. the State Department of Education to encourage locally initiated, innovative alternative approaches to educating limited English speaking students with the specific goal of attaining English proficiency as rapidly as possible; and
2. the state to appropriate adequate funding to assist school boards in providing the most

effective programs which educate limited English proficient students.

• **MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION** •

CABE urges all boards of education to facilitate culturally responsive teaching and supervision that promotes understanding of and respect for the many diverse cultures which strengthen our democratic society.

• **EDUCATION OF YOUNG CHILDREN** •

CABE urges local and regional boards of education to review their kindergarten and readiness programs to assure that such programs are designed to provide each child with learning tasks appropriate to the child's developmental level.

CABE urges boards of education to encourage parents to take advantage of school services for young children.

• **EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION LINKING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT** •

CABE supports:

1. continued efforts by the General Assembly to appropriate sufficient funding to make early care and education programs available to all children in need;
2. joint efforts by the State Department of Education and other public and private child and family service agencies to promote and encourage a wide range of public and private provider preschool programs and services to co exist and prosper statewide;
3. local school board flexibility to design, develop and implement early childhood education programs to increase the likelihood of children's school success and decrease special education costs;
4. state and federal incentive grants, including technical and financial assistance to districts that offer early childhood education programs, full or extended day kindergartens and programs providing for identification of preschool students with special needs; and
5. federal, state and municipal initiatives for private industry, non-profit organizations, public agencies, and school systems, to develop high-quality facilities to provide daytime child care, in addition to those that already exist.

CABE urges local districts to institute programs for parents which can increase their knowledge of

children's social, physical, mental and psychological development, and ultimately increase the likelihood of children's school success. CABE urges the Connecticut General Assembly to provide incentive grants and on-going matching funding for this essential program.

CABE urges preschool providers to explore discipline alternatives to expulsion.

• **PARENT/FAMILY/SCHOOL INVOLVEMENT POLICY** •

CABE urges all Connecticut school boards to develop Parent/Family/School Involvement Policy statements recognizing that a child's education is a responsibility shared by the school and the family. Such statements could include:

- a. Establishing effective two-way communication with all parents, respecting the diversity and differing needs of families.
- b. Developing strategies and programmatic structures at schools to enable parents to participate actively in their children's education.
- c. Providing support and coordination for school staff and parents to implement and sustain appropriate parent involvement from K-12.
- d. Utilizing schools to connect students and families with community resources that provide educational enrichment and support.

• **FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION** •

CABE urges each local school district to develop a curriculum which deals with issues affecting family life, child care and human growth and development, and to involve the community in this process. AIDS awareness and other vital health and social issues should be integrated into existing academic subject areas.

• **LOCAL PROGRAM POLICY DECISIONS** •

CABE supports the local development of specific subject area requirements, course content requirements, and staff and resource requirements that:

1. grow out of local goals and specific local learning objectives;
2. result from local policy decisions regarding program, staffing and resource priorities;
3. result from local policy decisions regarding effective and efficient practices including the use of appropriate technology; and
4. are based upon local student needs.

### • STUDENT TIME ON TASK •

CABE urges all Connecticut school boards to study how available time is used and to explore a variety of options for increasing the amount of time that students are actively engaged in learning.

### • YEAR-ROUND USE OF FACILITIES •

CABE urges local districts to examine the advantages and disadvantages of year-round use of school facilities and restructuring of school calendars.

### • TEACHER TENURE •

CABE urges the state legislature to modify the teacher tenure law to provide for initial tenure after 50 months of teaching, to make tenure renewable on a five year basis, and to provide for the dismissal of teachers who fail to promote student achievement or fail to engage in activities to pursue professional growth and development.

CABE urges the legislature to repeal the portion of 10-151(c) of the General Statutes that entitles teachers who have not attained tenure to a hearing concerning non-renewal, except if the reason for such non-renewal is either elimination of position or loss of position to another teacher, and provides that the local or regional board of education shall rescind a non-renewal decision only if the board finds such decision to be arbitrary and capricious.

CABE urges the state legislature to amend the teacher tenure act to allow school boards the ability to address staff reduction forced by budgetary constraints through modified reduction in staffing. The modification to the present system of tenure would allow local school districts to reduce staffing levels not solely through the current seniority system exclusively, but through a blended reduction throughout the seniority system, such that staffing cuts do not fall entirely upon the most junior educators.

### • GOVERNMENT REGULATION AND DATA ACQUISITION •

CABE urges:

1. the state and federal governments to reduce the number and complexity of regulations directed at education, including the paperwork burden associated with implementing education laws;
2. the State Department of Education to continue existing efforts to simplify its data collection forms, eliminate duplication and unnecessary

data collection and promote appropriate use of data and

3. the state and federal governments focus on data that is needed to improve student performance.

### • FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT •

CABE urges:

1. the establishment of a formalized process, including input from local public agencies, for proposing candidates for membership on the Freedom of Information Commission;
2. the modification of the Connecticut Freedom of Information law to more clearly define the individuals' reasonable expectation of privacy and its balance with the public's right to know.
3. that the Freedom of Information Commission act within the intent of the statutory provisions regarding their jurisdiction.
4. the legislature continue to support release of detailed student performance data to parents and guardians as part of the regular education process while it acts to protect against inappropriate disclosure to others.
5. the legislature act to protect against inappropriate use of content from student data bases.

### • CERTIFIED EDUCATOR SHORTAGES •

CABE urges school boards, higher education institutions, the State Department of Education and the state legislature to take action to expand the pool of qualified educators for Connecticut's public schools, particularly in areas where shortages have been identified. Among the actions to be considered should be expanding the alternate route to certification programs, enhancing professional development opportunities, expanding reciprocity between states, reducing bureaucracy for educators certified in other states, encouraging students at an early age to consider the teaching profession and actively recruiting underrepresented groups.

### • CONNECTICUT STATE TEACHERS' RETIREMENT •

CABE opposes further modifications of state statutes to restrict the definition of "salary" for purposes of calculating teachers' retirement benefits. CABE urges the State of Connecticut to avoid adopting costly changes to the Teacher Retirement Act that shift the burden from the state to the local level and to maintain its responsibility for the Teacher Retirement System.

CABE urges the Teacher's Retirement Board to include performance based pay for purposes of teacher's retirement, in order to preserve more options in compensation systems.

**• PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS •**

CABE supports maintenance of State Board of Education authority over teacher certification standards and teacher preparation program approval.

CABE supports continued action to assure that teacher preparation program standards are raised and that students in teacher preparation programs are required to complete a strong academic program, graduating with an academic major.

**• TEACHER SALARY SYSTEMS •**

CABE supports the development by local and regional boards of education of teacher salary systems that are based upon performance skills and knowledge, competence, and levels of responsibility. CABE supports the maintenance of teacher salaries that are competitive with the salaries of persons of comparable skill, quality, educational background, and professional responsibility.

**• NON PARTISAN BOARDS OF EDUCATION •**

CABE urges the General Assembly to adopt legislation allowing municipalities to create non partisan boards of education.

**• SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT •**

CABE urges boards of education to develop a policy requiring professional development for new and experienced board members.

CABE encourages local school boards to provide for adequate professional development programs for all school board members and candidates, including participation by all members in area, state and national programs and orientation for new school board members. Professional development should include the roles and responsibilities of boards, and skills needed to resolve issues in a nonpartisan manner.

CABE urges boards of education to examine and discuss annually the roles of the board and the

superintendent in order to maintain a strong and effective partnership in the educational process.

**• BOARD OF EDUCATION ETHICS •**

CABE urges boards of education to incorporate codes of ethics and conflict of interest provisions in their Bylaws.

CABE urges the General Assembly to refrain from imposing financial disclosure provisions for volunteer elected officials.

**• BOARD OF EDUCATION SERVICE •**

CABE urges local political parties to seek school board candidates who are committed to student achievement and representative of the entire community.

CABE urges employers to support the civic involvement of their employees who serve as school board members.

**• STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION GUIDELINES •**

CABE urges the State Board of Education to formally adopt regulations when rules are needed to enforce the statutes and to refrain from applying guidelines as regulations or incorporating guidelines by reference into regulations.

CABE urges the Connecticut General Assembly to refrain from circumventing the regulatory development process through legislation requiring adherence to guidelines.

**• IMPACT OF LAWS AND REGULATIONS •**

CABE supports a requirement that a local impact study be conducted before any education laws/policies are enacted by the legislature or regulations are adopted by the Connecticut Department of Education. The proposed laws/policies/regulations shall be subject to a public hearing with the results of the impact study available to the public prior to the scheduled hearing. The local impact study shall include costs and benefits of such law/policy/regulation. Board of education members and school administrators shall have the opportunity to provide input, and such input should be documented.

• **PREVAILING WAGES  
FOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS** •

CABE urges the legislature to raise the dollar threshold for projects subject to the prevailing wage mandate.

• **PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY  
OF CONTRACTORS WORKING ON  
PUBLIC CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS** •

CABE urges the General Assembly to hold contractors accountable for their performance on publicly funded building projects by adopting the Department of Public Works recommendation that maximum retainage on a project be increased from 2.5% to 10% (as it used to be).

• **REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL  
SERVICE CENTER (RESC)  
DUTIES DIRECTED BY THE STATE** •

CABE urges the Legislature to continue to utilize the RESCs for statewide programs but in so doing to fund them adequately and refrain from mandating additional duties for the Regional Education Service Centers which would compromise their governance structure, funding process, or compete with time and resources needed for programs expected by the local districts.

• **DISTRIBUTION OF INFORMATION  
CONCERNING REFERENDA** •

CABE supports the amendment of Section 9-369 of the general statutes to clearly allow prior to a referendum:

- communications to employees or contractors concerning the effect of the proposal
- expenditures of public funds to communicate information to the community concerning the effect of the proposal.

In addition, if the court overturns a decision by the Elections Enforcement Commission in which a violation had been found by the Commission, the Commission shall pay all legal fees, costs and expenses of such person or persons.

• **CHANGES TO THE REFERENDUM  
LAW REGARDING AUTOMATED  
CALLING SYSTEMS** •

CABE urges the legislature to repeal the new restriction on the use of school communication systems to provide the time, date and place of referendums.

## Finance

• **PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR PUBLIC  
EDUCATION** •

In order to insure that public funds are used for public education and to improve public education, CABE urges all citizens and particularly all school board members to:

1. oppose the implementation of voucher systems as methods of financing non public education with public funds; and
2. oppose tax credits for expenditures for tuition or living expenses at private elementary and secondary schools.

• **PUBLIC EDUCATION FUNDING** •

CABE urges the Legislature to take necessary steps to ensure that the primary sources of local district funding are protected from erosion through the development of biennial state budgets which maintain grant funding at least at existing levels and avoid imposition of mandates or state tax shifting which might result in the transfer of state obligations to local property taxes.

• **FUNDING MANDATORY PROGRAMS** •

CABE supports the concept of full state and federal funding on a current basis for any mandated programs. CABE supports the passage of legislation making state mandates on local boards of education unenforceable unless said mandates are fully funded year to year by the state legislature.

• **THE FEDERAL ROLE IN  
PUBLIC ELEMENTARY AND  
SECONDARY EDUCATION** •

CABE urges the federal government to recognize education as a state and local function, while identifying, promoting and supporting the national interest in public education.

CABE supports a program of federal support for elementary and secondary public education that provides increased flexibility and funds that go directly to the local level.

• **THE SCHOOL FINANCE SYSTEM** •

The increased burden of the cost of public education, largely as a result of mandates imposed on public

school systems by state government, requires a more equitable sharing by state and local funding sources. Therefore, state legislation should recognize:

1. the responsibility of the state government to provide an equitable share of total local school expenses;
2. the need for the state to distribute funds on an equitable basis with the primary responsibility for local expenditure determination to remain with the local school board;
3. that local school districts should develop, with state assistance, procedures to ensure fiscal accountability and efficiency and the most effective use of tax dollars;
4. the need to restructure the state spending cap so all federal education funds flow to school districts;
5. the state responsibility to fund court-ordered programs; and
6. the need for financial incentives to foster interdistrict and/or regional interdistrict cooperation.

CABE supports:

1. use of the most current audited data in any school finance formula;
2. continued exploration of more accurate methods of measuring the wealth of each town, the cost of appropriately educating each child including those children who are economically disadvantaged or have other special needs, the costs associated with participation in public school choice programs, magnet schools and charter schools, and the unique cost burdens borne by poor rural and poor urban school districts;
3. monitoring of the effectiveness of school finance programs to ensure that towns spend an appropriate amount for the education of each student in order to provide substantially equal advantages taking into account differences in local costs based on relevant economic and educational factors and on course offerings of special interest in diverse Connecticut communities;
4. state funding for education provided directly to local and regional boards of education;
5. the creation of a more consistent manner of reporting and calculating per pupil expenditure;
6. reducing the cost of special education to LEAs and requiring the State to pay its fair share of the costs directly to boards of education;
7. funding for gifted and talented programs;
8. the differential in the cost of operating a

secondary only regional school district be factored into the ECS Formula and transportation formula and that the MBR be applied separately to schools in K-6 or K-8 districts with designated or regional high schools;

9. full state funding for participation in regional vocational-agricultural programs, including transportation costs;
10. financial incentives for school districts operating full or extended day kindergarten programs, after school and summer remedial programs;
11. adequate support for adult vocational education programs;
12. establishment of grant programs to foster joint activities such as pooled healthcare, transportation, curriculum development, and central services.

#### • BOARD OF EDUCATION BUDGETS •

CABE supports legislation to:

1. provide boards of education the authority to create "Special Revenue Funds" to account for the proceeds of specific revenue sources;
2. allow a board of education surplus of up to 1% of the budget to carry-over to the next fiscal year without requiring approval of the local financial authority.

#### • TAX REFORM •

CABE supports comprehensive tax reform in Connecticut that:

1. is balanced and fair and will produce the revenues necessary to support quality public education and other needed public services;
2. reduces reliance on the local property tax, sales tax or other regressive forms of taxation; and
3. assures that distribution of the tax burden is based upon the ability to pay.

CABE opposes a state legislative cap on local property taxes.

#### • MAGNET SCHOOL, CHOICE AND CHARTER FUNDING •

CABE urges the Connecticut legislature to take timely steps to:

- Identify adequate funding for receiving district participation. Choice has enjoyed its current success largely through the voluntary efforts of participating districts. To mandate participation through the mandate of the

Commissioner of Education would have a severely corrosive and negative effect upon student achievement.

- Develop a charter school funding plan that does not compromise local district financing.
- Provide a comprehensive magnet school funding formula applicable statewide for both host and inter district schools, sending and receiving districts.
- Continue to exempt preschool from the requirement that boards of education pay tuition for non-special education students who choose to attend a magnet school.

#### • ECS GRANTS FOR ALLIANCE DISTRICTS •

CABE urges the Legislature to restore full ECS funding to all districts including Alliance Districts, and create separate grants outside of ECS for Alliance District reform efforts.

#### • UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL •

CABE urges the state and federal government to recognize the importance of universal preschool and provide LEAs with the funding to provide all children ages 3-5 in Connecticut with access to a strong educational foundation.

#### • FUNDING FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS •

CABE urges the Connecticut General Assembly to maintain support for school construction grants.

CABE supports updating the existing formula covering eligible overall square footage per student to take into consideration space needs such as for cafeterias/kitchens, media centers, reduced class sizes, teaching practices, technology.

#### • SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION GRANTS •

CABE urges the Legislature to:

- a. increase the school construction grant percentage for new construction equal to the current percentage for renovation as new; and
- b. eliminate any space standard reduction percentage when factors beyond the control of the district cause lower than projected enrollment.

## Labor Relations

#### • TEACHER NEGOTIATION ACT •

As long as compulsory binding arbitration remains as the dispute resolution process under the Teacher Negotiations Act, CABE supports additional modifications of the Act to allow boards of education to carry out their management responsibilities, including the following:

1. There shall be no presumption by arbitrators in favor of retaining contract provisions or continuing past employment practices.
2. Arbitrators shall give the highest priority to the educational interests of the state as such interests relate to the children of the school district.
3. Arbitrators shall give priority consideration to the public interest and the financial capability of the town or towns in the school district. The consideration of financial capability shall include the town's capability as measured by its history of tax increases, personal income trends, declines in state and federal revenues, and the financial impact of state and federal mandates.
4. Establish a requirement that neutral arbitrators participate in training sessions.

CABE opposes granting teachers and administrators the opportunity to strike.

CABE supports the retention of the teacher evaluation process as a permissive subject of bargaining.

#### • TEACHER TERMINATION HEARINGS •

CABE urges the state legislature to allow the suspension of tenured teachers without pay prior to the completion of the termination hearing process

#### • IMPACT NEGOTIATION •

CABE supports the ability of local school boards to change job descriptions unilaterally without the necessity of negotiating the impact of the changes with individual unions.

#### • UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION •

CABE supports the repeal of federal legislation allowing states to grant unemployment compensation to school district employees during vacations and the summer months.

CABE urges the Connecticut General Assembly to refrain from extending such benefits to school district employees.

CABE supports modification of state statute to specifically provide that notice of intent to layoff at a future point in time, given in compliance with any legal or contractual mandate, shall not give rise to a right to collect unemployment benefits.

**• MANDATED BENEFITS •**

CABE supports the repeal of statutorily mandated duty free lunch periods and sick leave. These issues should be negotiated at the local level.

## Special Education

**• CLARIFICATION AND SIMPLIFICATION OF THE STATE AND FEDERAL SPECIAL EDUCATION LAWS AND REGULATIONS •**

CABE urges the simplification and clarification of state and federal special education laws and regulations in order to more efficiently and effectively deliver special education programs to those students who require them.

**• FEDERAL SPECIAL EDUCATION ISSUES •**

CABE urges the federal government to revise and modify due process for students with disabilities. Specifically, CABE recognizes the need to improve on current due process proceedings to make them more effective and expeditious for the purpose of providing students with disabilities with an appropriate educational program.

CABE supports the following changes to special education law and regulations:

That the issue(s) in dispute at a due process hearing be limited to matters pertaining

- (1) to a proposed IEP;
- (2) to the existing IEP; or
- (3) to any IEP from the current school year or the school year immediately preceding the current year.

That the hearing officer be authorized and/or required to append to his/her final decision and order

a statement detailing the issue on which the respective parties have prevailed, in whole or in part, and summarizing the approximate amount of hearing time spent on each issue.

That the hearing officer should be granted the same powers the Federal Courts have to reduce attorney fees if the parent unreasonably protracted the final resolution of the controversy, if the award unreasonably exceeds the hourly rate prevailing in the community, if the time and legal services furnished were excessive considering the nature of the action, or if the attorney representing the parent did not provide the school with a description of the problem relating to the proposed placement change and a proposed resolution. This should be done to insure a more equitable distribution of the financial responsibilities of the due process procedure.

That boards of education be granted more flexibility in the expulsion of special education students involved in criminal activities. Specifically, the federal government should not block states and local and regional boards of education from applying the same disciplinary standards to all students who commit the most serious offenses. If non-disabled students are expelled for certain actions, schools should be allowed to treat students with disabilities in the same manner.

That clarification of the relationship between Section 504 requirements and IDEA be provided.

That IDEA be amended to alleviate the burden placed on school districts with non-resident private school students eligible for special education identification and services.

**• DCF SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS •**

CABE urges the legislature to provide that the Department of Children and Families pay a percentage of the cost for special education for students attending local school districts.

**• SPECIAL EDUCATION EQUITY, SERVICE AND PLACEMENT RESPONSIBILITY •**

CABE urges the Connecticut General Assembly to:

1. lower the ceiling on local responsibility for special education costs to three times the district's average per pupil expenditure and fully fund this reimbursement grant;

2. limit the funding responsibility of local and regional boards of education for special education placements to the cost of instructional programs with health related service costs and costs exceeding the ceiling absorbed by the state;
3. allow payment of reimbursable special education expenses to pass directly to the school district and in the current year;
4. provide a funding adjustment in situations where special education children move mid-year.

**• LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT •**

CABE encourages the State Department of Education, Higher Education, the Connecticut General Assembly, and each local and regional board of education:

1. To consider the needs of the entire class of students when placement decisions are made.
2. To examine a variety of placement options to insure that each special education student is placed in the least restrictive environment.
3. To provide pre-service and in-service staff development and sufficient resources for all staff to enable them to provide appropriate support to special education students.

**• SPECIAL EDUCATION DUE PROCESS •**

CABE urges the Legislature to:

1. Review the method for selection and qualification of due process hearing officers with a view toward increasing the level of professionalism and impartiality.
2. Increase available funding to attract qualified candidates and adequately compensate them for their service.
3. Provide for appellate review of due process decisions.
4. Provide that the burden of proof be on the party challenging the placement.

## Certification

**• PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT •**

The improvement of instruction relies heavily on the continued or increased competency of existing staff members, especially in periods of stable or declining enrollments. Therefore, CABE supports:

1. local and regional boards of education developing high quality professional development programs for school district staff, alone or in cooperation with other school boards, agencies, or institutions;
2. teacher preparation institutions and universities upgrading and expanding professional development programs and graduate programs for teachers and administrators; and
3. the maintenance of high quality, rigorous programs to improve professional practice by all professional development providers.

**• ALTERNATE ROUTES TO TEACHER AND ADMINISTRATOR CERTIFICATION •**

CABE supports the alternate route to teacher and administrator certification, which increases flexibility in the manner in which academically able college graduates, including professionals seeking mid career change, may enter the teaching force.

**• CERTIFICATION RECIPROCITY •**

CABE urges the Commissioner of Education to establish a committee to review certification reciprocity for certified candidates possessing appropriate certification from other states.

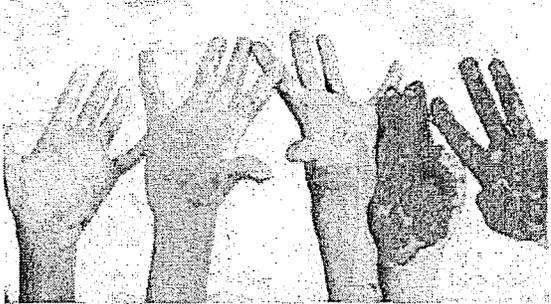
*Since 1938, CAFE has been the collective voice of more than 1,300 board of education members across the State. As CAFE has grown, so has our prominence as leaders in shaping public education programs - helping Connecticut prepare for the increasingly competitive 21st century.*

*The following positions reflect the commitment of board of education members to promote public participation through local lay control of public education, to promote equal opportunity and a high quality education for all Connecticut's public school children and increase public awareness of education issues.*



*The distinctive line drawing of the Capitol building which appears on the cover was graciously donated to CAFE by the late Richard Welling, a talented Hartford artist. The artwork is a particularly appropriate piece for our 2014 Whole Agenda. We are delighted to be able to feature a work by this very talented artist.*

# CAPSS Public Policy Agenda



# 2014

Approved by the CAPSS board of directors of NWEA





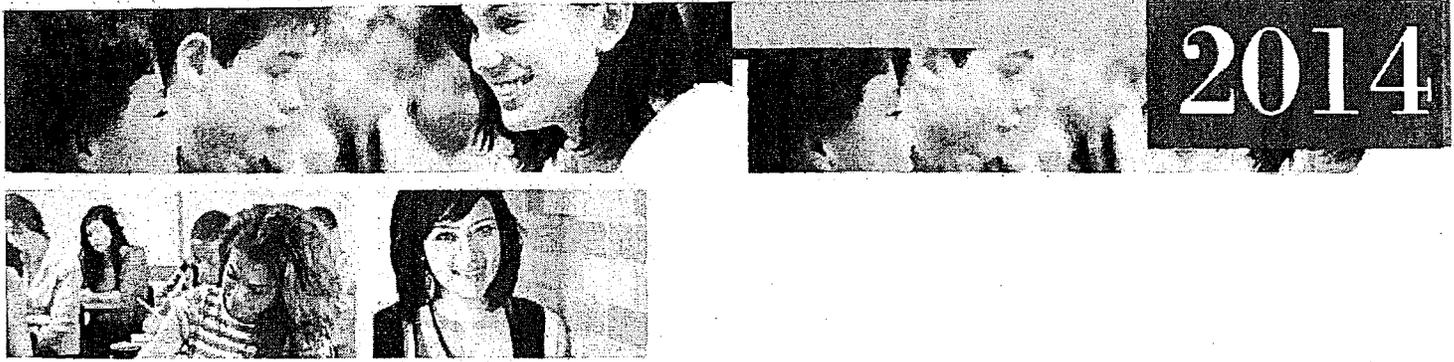
### Minimum Budget Requirement

Presently a municipality may reduce its Minimum Budget Requirement (MBR) by \$3,000 per student drop in enrollment. This is much more than what a district saves for each individual student drop in enrollment.

In addition, districts that pay tuition to other districts for high school students are subjected to an MBR calculation formula that is not reflective of the actual costs to those districts.

**CAPSS, therefore, proposes the following**

- **That the amount by which a municipality may reduce its MBR per student drop in enrollment be the amount that a district actually saves per student drop in enrollment.**
- **Districts paying tuition to any school outside the local public schools shall have the cost of tuition and the cost of transportation to those schools outside the local public schools included in the MBR calculation; specifically, the current fiscal year costs for tuition and transportation for District students attending schools outside the local public schools shall be compared to the immediate past fiscal year costs for tuition and transportation for District students attending schools outside the local public schools. This calculation will determine if a decrease or an increase in MBR is required for the new fiscal year.**



## Magnet Schools

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Over a number of years, many magnet schools have been established across CT. Some of these schools have been put in place as part of the settlement to which the State agreed in the Scheff vs. O'Neill litigation. Other schools have been established for various reasons in just about every region of the state.

The development of these schools, however, should have been part of a well thought out state wide strategy for improving schooling in CT, a strategy that would align magnet schools with all of the other efforts being made especially by local school districts. Absent such a plan, the following has occurred.

- The funding system for magnet schools varies from one region of the state to the other.
- The financial burden for magnet school tuition for some districts in the state is onerous.
- The sustainability of effective magnet schools is not being sufficiently addressed
- The potential for magnet schools to personalize learning for students and thus to be a component of the statewide effort in this regard to improve schooling state wide is not being realized.
- The responsibility for paying the tuition for children who are enrolled in pre-school magnet schools has been a matter of controversy.

Because of this, a considerable amount of state funds has been expended for magnet schools and maximum benefit has not been realized from this expenditure.

Accordingly, the establishment of magnet schools absent a well thought out strategy for employing magnet schools as one of the components for improving schooling in general cannot be defended.

### **CAPSS, therefore, proposes:**

- **That the CSDE develop with meaningful participation by all relevant parties a state wide plan for magnet schools and that this plan include at least the following.**
  - **A strategy for making magnet schools one of the means for improving student achievement in CT.**
  - **A uniform and equitable system statewide for funding magnet schools, a system that does not impose an onerous burden on local school districts.**
  - **A strategy for insuring the long range sustainability of effective magnet schools.**
- **That any new magnet school application with enrollment from multiple districts be required to include in the application to the CSDE an accompanying ten year financial plan that projects costs, revenue streams and anticipated financial impact on sending districts.**
- **That the State of CT be responsible for paying the tuition for children who are enrolled in pre-school magnet schools with the proviso that the State charge parents for a portion of the tuition on a sliding scale based on the income of the parents.**



## State Budget

The biannual state budget that was adopted in 2013 authorizes increases in state funding for education for 2013-14 and 2014-15. Nevertheless, there are the following potential budget related occurrences:

- It may be that projections will surface to the effect that the state will end fiscal year (FY) 2014 with a deficit and therefore, rescissions will have to be enacted. Reductions in 2013-14 education funding appropriations may be considered.
- It may be that projections for the FY 2015 budget may predict a deficit unless adjustments are made. Reductions in 2014-15 education funding appropriations may be considered.

Should rescissions or reductions negatively impact state funding for public education the result will be a negative impact on the quality of educational programming for students state wide.

**It is the CAPSS position, therefore, that any rescissions or reductions that are made in the State budget in FY 2014 and FY 2015 not include any reduction in expenditures for public education.**

## Special Education

Children with special educational needs need to have those needs accommodated in an effective manner in public schools. School districts across CT make a major effort in this regard all the time. Those efforts, however, are hindered by two factors, one financial and the other regulatory.

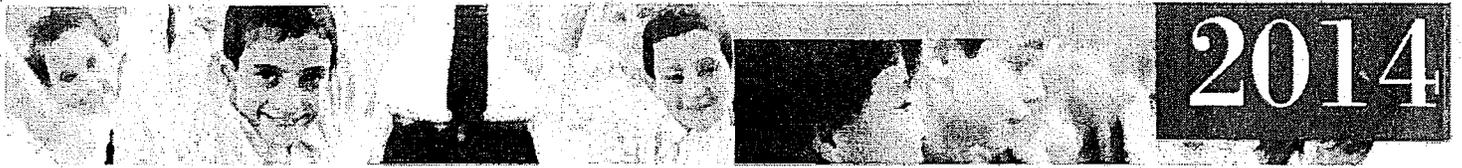
The financial factor is inadequate financial support for special education programs from both the federal and state levels. The federal government which mandates provision of effective programs for children with special needs has never met its own goal to cover 40% of the cost of meeting this mandate country wide. The state government eliminated a number of years ago a general special education grant to local districts and underfunds the only remaining special education grant which is designed to provide financial relief to districts that incur excessively expensive program placements for some children with special needs.

The regulatory factor is the automatic placement on local school districts of the burden of proof in all cases in which parents and district staff do not agree on an appropriate program for a child and that, therefore, are submitted to due process. This occurs regardless of which party brings the matter to due process. As a result, whenever a parent brings a case to due process, a district has to predict its chances of prevailing in the case when despite the fact that it is the defendant, the district has been assigned the burden of proof. When a district judges that it might not be able to meet this legal burden, it most often agrees to a program that is more programmatically than the one to which the child is entitled and that is more expensive as well. Accordingly, funds are spent needlessly on children with special needs and this compromises the ability of districts to provide adequate educational programs to children without special needs.

It should be noted that the United States Supreme Court has ruled that the burden of proof in special education due process can be assigned to the party that brings the matter to due process and that CT is one of a small minority of states in the country that does not assign the burden to that party.

**CAPSS, therefore, proposes:**

- **That the funding cap on the Special Education Excess Cost Grant be removed and that the State meet its obligation to cover all of the excess costs incurred as a result of special education program placements.**
- **That the burden of proof in special education due process be assigned to the party that brings the matter to due process.**



## Alliance District Funds

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To varying extents, Alliance Districts face the challenge presented when the local municipality does not provide sufficient funds for the basic operation of the school system at the same time that the districts have to use the Alliance District Grant to implement strategies aimed at increasing student achievement. When there aren't sufficient funds to maintain basic school system operations such as maintaining class size, student achievement is impacted negatively and that impact operates against any positive impact that might accrue from the use of Alliance District funds.

This situation is a symptom of the fact that the CT system for funding public education is in need of systemic reform.

**CAPSS, therefore, proposes:**

- **That the State Government initiate an effort to develop and implement an education funding system that is based on the funds required to provide for every child in the state the educational program that each child needs.**
- **That while this new system is being developed:**
  - **Municipalities whose school systems receive an increase in Alliance District Funds be required to match in the local appropriation for the school system the Alliance District Fund dollar increase.**
  - **Municipalities that receive Alliance District Funds be prohibited from assigning to school system budgets functions that have been included in the local municipality's budget.**
  - **Municipalities be prohibited from using Alliance District funds to supplant locally provided financial support for public schools.**

## Stability of School System Leadership

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The people of CT expect their public education system to address the achievement gap between the state's children who live in poverty and those who do not and the achievement gap between the state's highest performing students and their counterparts internationally. For these problems to be addressed successfully, a transformation of the public education system to a personalized learning structure has to be initiated and completed. For such a transformation to take place at the local district level, there has to be stability of leadership at that level.

It is difficult to maintain stability of leadership when a local board of education is prohibited by law from contracting with a superintendent of schools for more than three years. All the research on institutional change indicates that it takes at least five years to bring about sustainable systemic change. When there is no guarantee that the person who is responsible for leading the change will be there for more than three years, the change process is compromised.

**CAPSS, therefore, proposes that the statutory limit on superintendents' contracts be removed and that local boards of education be given the local control that they need to arrive at superintendent contract lengths that are most suited to the needs of the local school district.**



## Personalized Learning

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CAPSS, by virtue of the Board of Directors approval of the recommendations contained in the CAPSS Educational Transformation Report, is committed to working towards the adoption of a personalized learning system in the state. This work has been done in many ways, some of which have implications for a legislative agenda.

Presently, there are two efforts that fall into this category. They are the following.

1. The Joint CSDE/CAPSS/CABE/CAS/CEA/AFT-CT Committee that is developing a plan to implement personalized learning in CT.
2. The CSDE Work Group on which CAPSS is represented and which will develop guidelines to be followed by districts that want to replace Carnegie Unit based graduation requirements with mastery based requirements in order to get CSDE permission to make the transition.

There may well emerge from one or both of these groups recommendations for actions by the legislature.

**It is CAPSS' position, therefore, to support any proposals that emerge from either of these two efforts and with which the CAPSS Board of Directors agrees.**

## Early Childhood Education

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CAPSS, by virtue of the Board of Directors approval of the recommendations contained in the CAPSS Educational Transformation Project Report, has endorsed the proposition that formal schooling for all children should begin when they are three years old. For this reason, CAPSS has supported for the past two years proposals to expand the number of children in CT who are enrolled in pre-school programs. In addition, CAPSS supported the establishment of a Department of Early Childhood at the state level.

**Based on this history, CAPSS takes the following positions.**

- **The number of children enrolled in pre-school programs in CT should increase every year until every child in the state who is either three or four years of age is enrolled in a high quality educational program.**
- **The State needs to provide for the Department/Office of Early Childhood sufficient funds for it to meet its statutory responsibilities.**
- **That a fair and reliable quality rating system for early childhood programs be developed and implemented.**

## Use of State Test Results in the Evaluation of Principals and Teachers

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CT's public school systems have begun implementing a new principal and teacher support and evaluation system which specifies growth in student achievement multiply assessed as the most significant factor in the process of rating the performance of principals and teachers. The system further specifies that in the case of all principals and of teachers who teach subjects that are assessed by the state's student testing system, 22.5% of a principal's or teacher's evaluation must be based on the results of state tests.

In school year 2013-14, the vast majority of CT's school districts have opted to administer the practice phase of the Smarter Balance Assessment Consortium's (SBAC) instead of the CT Mastery Tests (CMT) and the Language Arts and Mathematics components of the CT Academic Performance (CAPT). These districts have made this decision primarily because the SBAC aligns well with the Common Core of State Standards that are being implemented in every CT district while the CMT and CAPT do not align well with the Common Core.

Since 2013-14 will be the first year during which these districts will be implementing this assessment system, there is no state test data available for these districts to use for the purpose of setting student learning objectives for principals and teachers. Accordingly, the CT State Board of Education (CSBE) has requested a waiver from the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) so that individual school districts can have the option in school year 2013-14 of not using state test results for evaluation purposes.

The CSBE has not asked for a waiver from the requirement that 45% of a principal's or teacher's evaluation be based on growth in student achievement multiply measured. The waiver request simply gives districts the option of not using in school year 2013-14 state test results as one of the multiple measures of growth in student achievement.

As things stand, then, districts will have to use state test results for evaluation purposes in school year 2014-15. This requirement is severely problematic, however, for the following reasons.

- Those districts that have chosen to implement SBAC in 2013-14 will not get the SBAC results until late in the fall or early winter of 2014. So, results will not be available early in 2014-15 when professional staff in the districts need to set student learning objectives for the school year.
- Those districts that are implementing CMT and CAPT in 2013-14 will have no state test results baseline data on which to set student learning objectives because those districts will not be implementing CMT and CAPT in 2014-15.

**CAPSS, therefore, proposes that school districts be given in school year 2014-15 the option of not using state test results for evaluation purposes.**

## Mandate Relief

Over many years, the state government has imposed on local school districts many mandates. Some of those mandates are directly related to the mission of public education and many of them are not. All of those that are not directly related to the mission of the public schools have constituted a considerable mission creep that has diverted staff time and financial resources from efforts to accomplish the basic mission of the public schools. Some of those that are directly related to the schools' mission have been so crafted as to cause the allocation of more staff time and financial resources than are necessary to meet the basic mission of the schools.

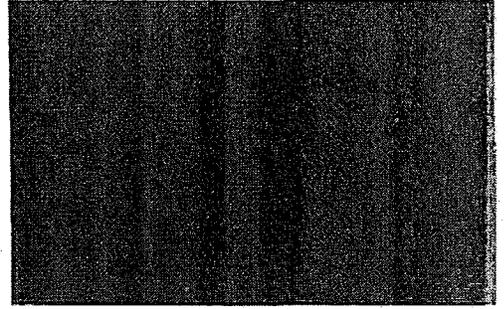
In addition to all of this, the mandates in many cases are integrated with other mandates so that there now exists a complex structure of mandates. This makes consideration of relief from just one mandate almost impossible to be done without considering the impact of that relief upon the implementation of other mandates. In other words, mandates have been imposed for the most part without the benefit of analysis of the systemic impact of each mandate individually and of the entire mandate structure as a whole.

Finally, in no instances has the state government allocated sufficient state funds to cover the entire cost of any state imposed mandate. Accordingly, at least partially unfunded mandates have become the norm.

All of this now constitutes a major impediment for local school districts as they strive to transform themselves to become what they need to be in order to meet the expectation that every child will leave public education prepared to continue learning what they need to know and be able to do to lead decent and productive lives and to be effective citizens in a democracy.

**CAPSS, therefore, supports all efforts by any of the branches of state government to undertake a comprehensive study of the mandate structure that has been imposed on local school district with a view towards identifying and eliminating any mandates that are significant hindrances to the efforts of local districts to improve and transform themselves.**

**CAPSS also strongly urges the state government to refrain from imposing any additional mandates upon local school districts until the present mandate structure has been studied and reformed.**



[www.CTHe4Ed.com](http://www.CTHe4Ed.com)

[www.CAPSS.org](http://www.CAPSS.org)

[www.CTStateInnovates.com](http://www.CTStateInnovates.com)



## **State education leaders set targets for change**

**By EILEEN FITZGERALD**

**News-Times**

The state's educational leaders have released an agenda for the upcoming legislative session that calls for a uniform approach with magnet school programs, more state funding for special education and relief from state mandates.

The Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents annually highlights issues it wants state lawmakers to address. This year, the group has proposed 10 areas to maintain the momentum created by changes to the state's educational system in the last two years.

"We start with a comprehensive agenda," Joseph Cirusuolo, executive director of the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents, said Tuesday. "We have made some progress on a couple of the issues already."

The group, made up of public school superintendents, assistant superintendents and other educational leaders across the state, helps shape discussions on education policy.

The agenda undergoes several months of scrutiny by school leaders before it is finalized, said Elizabeth Feser, superintendent of Milford Public Schools and president of the association.

"This is taken seriously," she said. "This document that is shared with the governor and legislators says, 'Here is what we, as leaders in education across the state, feel are critical issues.'" Even before the General Assembly session starts, the association is talking to legislators about changing funding for magnet schools, and urging the state not to use student test scores as part of the newly created teacher evaluations for the next two years.

The General Assembly has a shorter session this year — February to May — because it is an even-numbered year, so Randall Collins, the group's staff associate for public policy, said it may preclude all the topics from being aired thoroughly.

But, he said, the topics are most superintendents' areas of concern, like the magnet schools, which were developed to promote and increase student diversity in schools.

"The concern we are hearing is the need to have equitable funding in all the regions of the state," Collins said. "The other thing is that there is no statewide plan for developing them."

Danbury has one of the magnet schools. "I'm hoping this (initiative) will lead to more equity," Danbury Superintendent Sal Pascarella said. "We want to keep up the incentive and support for the districts that are sending their kids. We're proud of the opportunity we provide." Districts and the state share the cost of students who leave their home school to attend a regional magnet program, but the programs could decline if they become more costly.

Bethel Superintendent Kevin Smith said he is hopeful the state will agree to fully fund the Special Education Excess Cost Grant, a perennial sore spot for local districts. "Last year, we had \$900,000 in excess costs and the state reimbursed us \$600,000, so we had to absorb \$300,000. That's a big deal for us," Smith said.

The superintendents' group also will advocate changing the procedure when parents don't agree with schools on a program for a child with special needs. Now, the burden rests on the school to prove a program is suitable, but the proposal would be to assign the burden of proof to the party challenging that determination.

Another significant concern relates to the Alliance District Funds, which are given to the state's 30 poorest districts. The group wants municipalities to stop districts from using Alliance District funds to supplant local funding. Pascarella said he's been lucky in that Danbury Mayor Mark Boughton and the city have ensured the grant comes to the district in addition to city funds, but he knows not all cities have done that.



**DRAFT**

**Mansfield Board of Education**

**December 12, 2013**

**Minutes**

**Attendees:** Mark LaPlaca, Chair, Randy Walikonis, Vice-Chair; Susannah Everett, John Fratiello, Sarah Lacombe, Jay Rueckl, Carrie Silver-Bernstein

**Absent:** Martha Kelly, Katherine Paulhus

The meeting was called to order at 7:32pm by Mr. LaPlaca.

**SPECIAL PRESENTATION:** Reid Cartier, second grade student at Southeast School, discussed his plans to raise funds to build a "buddy bench" for students to use during recess.

Mrs. Paulhus arrived at 7:36pm.

Mrs. Kelly arrived at 7:40pm.

**HEARING FOR VISITORS:** Mr. Ed Wazer asked the Board to allow his home school child to participate in after school activity.

**COMMUNICATIONS:** Email from Gary Bent regarding use of iPads in schools. Communications regarding MBOE Policy regarding resident students not attending public schools.

**ADDITIONS TO THE PRESENT AGENDA:** Motion by Mr. Fratiello, seconded by Mrs. Paulhus, to add to the agenda discussion of resident students not attending public school policy request. Vote: Unanimous in favor.

**Southeast School PTO:** Cyndi Wells and Erin Christopher, Co-Presidents, reported on activities the group participates in to support programs at Southeast School.

**Policy regarding resident students not attending public school:** Motion by Mr. Rueckl, seconded by Ms. Silver-Bernstein to refer review of the policy to the MBOE Policy Committee. Vote: Unanimous in favor.

**Committee Reports:**

**Goodwin Bequest Committee:** Mrs. Kelly reported the Committee met on December 2, 2013 and funded the 8<sup>th</sup> grade trip to the Capitol.

**Committee Assignments:** Mr. LaPlaca distributed Committee Assignments for 2014.

**Certified Staff Appreciation:** The Board discussed ways to show staff appreciation during this year of new initiatives.

**Volunteer Recognition Ceremony:** The Board discussed ways to show appreciation of school volunteers. The principals shared recognition that is held in the schools. Mr. LaPlaca will approach Mansfield Youth Service Bureau about their volunteer recognition program.

**REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT:**

- **MMS Greenhouse:** Nora Dickinson, 5th grade science teacher, provided an update on the new Mansfield Middle School Greenhouse and the ways it is enhancing education for students.
- **Common Core State Standards:** Judy Shay, Reading/Language Arts Consultant reviewed the Great Books professional development provided for certified staff and how it supports CCSS and English Language Arts in Mansfield.
- **Salad at MMS:** Mr. Baruzzi provided an update on the December Salad Bar Special Price at the middle school.
- **Student Guardian Update:** Mr. Baruzzi reported that the district has been unable to implement this program to date due to a legal interpretation by the Tolland County States Attorney.
- **Legislative Breakfast:** Mr. Baruzzi attended the EASTCONN University Region Superintendents' Association meeting with area legislators.
- **Security Grant:** The State of Connecticut has notified the district that the S Grant has been awarded for the amount of \$182,798.00 (State Funding: \$133,828.00 and Local Match: \$48,970.00).
- **School Performance Index:** Mr. Baruzzi reported the CSDE released school and district performance reports for all Connecticut Schools. The district's target was achieved.
- **Class Size/Enrollment:** There were no significant changes to class size or enrollment in November.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

- Motion by Mr. Walikonis, seconded by Mrs. Lacombe, to approve the minutes of the November 14, 2013 Meeting with one typo edited. Vote: Unanimous in favor with Mr. Rueckl in abstention.

NEW BUSINESS: None

HEARING FOR VISITORS: None

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE AGENDA: None

Motion by Mr. Rueckl, seconded by Mr. Fratiello, to adjourn at 9:55pm. Vote Unanimous in favor.

Respectfully submitted,  
Celeste Griffin, Board Clerk

# Mansfield Public Schools Reading and Language Arts

134 Warrenville Road ▪ Mansfield Center, CT 06250 ▪ 860-423-1195

2013 DEC 20 PM 12:11

December 20, 2013

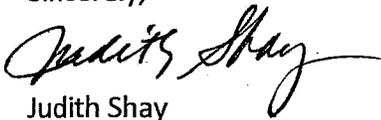
Dear Fred,

I am writing to inform you that I have made the difficult decision to retire at the end of the 2013-2014 school year. I am also submitting this letter as my application for early retirement benefits, according to the Side Letter on Early Retirement in the teacher contract between the Mansfield Board of Education and the Mansfield Education Association.

It has been a privilege to work in Mansfield. Throughout my career, I have had the opportunity to serve the district in a variety of positions. Each role has been rewarding and has allowed me to grow professionally and personally. I have appreciated the support you have given to me for many years. I have also appreciated the support from the Mansfield staff and the Mansfield Board of Education. It has been an honor to be a member of the Mansfield Public Schools.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Judith Shay

12/20/2013

Mr. Fred Baruzzi

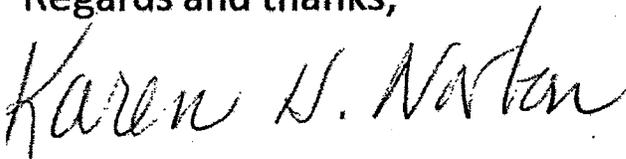
Mr. Thanh V. Nguyen

Gentlemen,

As stipulated in our contract for "early retirement", I am writing to inform you that I will be retiring at the end of the 2013-2014 school year. Never in a million years, did I think I would spend more than 38 years at one school. However, the time has raced by, and I am very proud to be a part of this school and the wonderful Physical Education Program that has developed over the years. I am hopeful that the Board and Administrators will continue to support the need for students to have quality and frequent Physical Education classes at Mansfield Middle School.

I am giving you advance notice that I will not be participating in the "Retirement" festivities at the end of the year. I have always been very uncomfortable in large social settings. I am, literally, going to ride off into the sunset!

Regards and thanks,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen H. Norton".

Karen H. Norton

Frederick Baruzzi, Superintendent  
Mansfield Public Schools  
4 South Eagleville Road  
Storrs, CT 06268

2014 JAN 16 PM 3:54

January 17, 2014

Dear Mr. Baruzzi,

Please accept my resignation from the position of Spanish/ESL teacher at Goodwin Elementary and Mansfield Middle School. My anticipated last day will be Friday, February 7, 2014.

The decision to leave is a difficult one. However, the time has come for me to move on to other educational endeavors.

I would like to thank the students, teachers, administrators and Board members for having given me the opportunity to pursue my career in an outstanding school system. In particular, your mentoring has encouraged me to expand my horizons in the education field. I am most appreciative of your support.

I have every intention of doing whatever is necessary to make an efficient and effective transition for the students of Mansfield.

I wish you all the best.

Yours Respectfully,

Beth Schwartz

Cc: Michele Beers, Celeste Griffin,

Debra Adamczyk, Thanh Nguyen, Candace Morell

2013 DEC 23 PM 2:10

December 10, 2013

Office of the Superintendent  
4 South Eagleville Road  
Storrs, CT 06268

Dear Mr. Baruzzi,

I am writing to inform you that my husband and I are expecting a child in late April 2014. Based upon the advice of my physician, I intend to use the maternity leave as outlined in Article 11, E 2 of the Mea/Board of Education contract when the baby arrives.

My doctors have given me a range of possible due dates between April 28<sup>th</sup> and May 2<sup>nd</sup>. However, due to the unpredictable nature of childbirth, it is impossible for me to give an exact date that I plan to start my leave. It is my intention to continue to work as long as possible.

In addition, I request an unpaid Childrearing leave as outlined in Article 11, J, for the remainder of the school year.

Thank you for your consideration of this request, and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

  
Jessica Mongeau  
MMS

Cc: Thanh Nguyen, principal

2014 JAN 14 AM 10:51

January 14, 2014

Office of the Superintendent  
4 South Eagleville Road  
Storrs, CT 06268

Dear Mr. Baruzzi,

I am writing to inform you that my husband and I are expecting a child in May of 2014. Based upon the advice of my physician, I intend to use the maternity leave as outlined in Article 11, E 2 of the Mea/Board of Education contract, starting May 5, 2014.

In addition, I request an unpaid Childrearing leave as outlined in Article 11, J, for the 2014-2015 school year.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,



Katherine M. Harbec

Cc: Dr. J. Palmer  
Personnel Assistant



**For  
Information  
Only**



# MANFIELD K-12 STRING FLING

Wednesday January 15, 2014  
Mansfield Middle School Auditorium

## COMBINED GROUP

America the Beautiful  
Bow Song

Ward

## SUZUKI VIOLINS and \*CELLOS

\*Twinkle Variation  
Twinkle Variation  
\*French Folk Song  
Lightly Row  
\*Andantino  
Minuet 3  
Chorus from Judas Maccabaeus  
\*Long, Long Ago  
The Witches Dance  
\*Minuet 1

Folk Song  
Folk Song  
Folk Song  
Folk Song  
Suzuki  
J.S. Bach  
Handel  
Bayley  
Paganini  
J.S. Bach

## COMBINED GROUP

Concerto in D Minor for Two Violins, 1st mvt., with cello continuo

J.S. Bach

## MANFIELD MIDDLE SCHOOL ORCHESTRA

Allegro (from Concerto for Two Trumpets)  
Cripple Creek/Angeline the Baker

Vivaldi  
Traditional

## E.O.SMITH ORCHESTRA

Baltic Dance

Kirt Mosier

## EVERYBODY! (Tutti)

The Hunter's Chorus  
Allegro  
May Song  
Go Tell Aunt Rhody  
Song of the Wind  
Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star and Variations

Weber  
Suzuki  
Folk Song  
Folk Song  
Folk Song  
Folk Song/Suzuki

## DIRECTORS:

*Suzuki Cello - Sondra Boyer*

*Suzuki Violin - Barbara Vaughan*

*MMS String Orchestra - Michael Carbonneau*

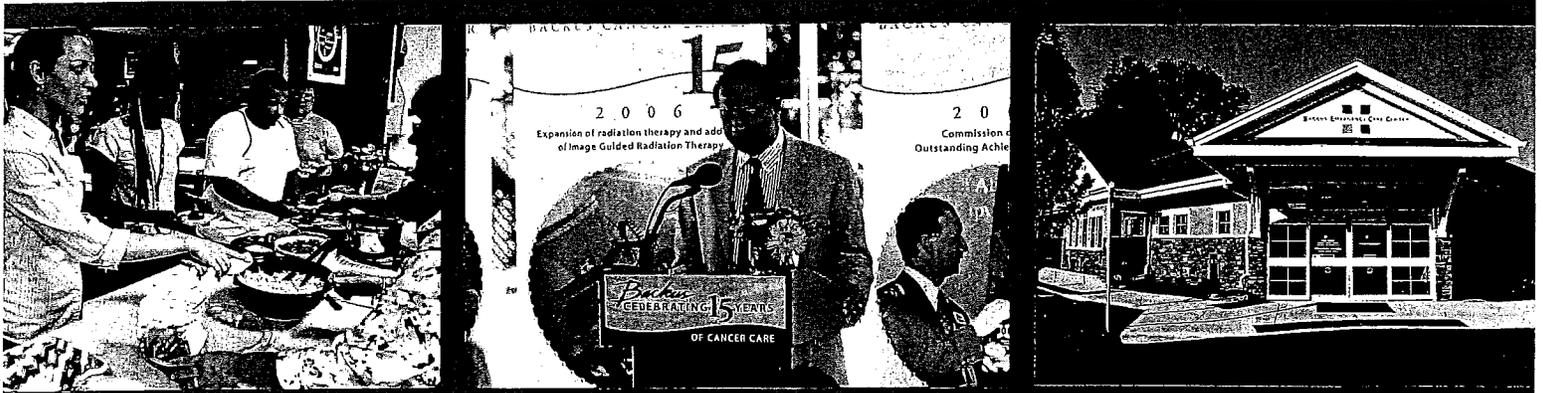
*EOSmith String Orchestra - Scott Chaurette*

*With special thanks to our piano accompanist, Annette Shapiro*



# Healthy

## CONNECTIONS



# 2013

*was a historic year as two community hospitals partnered to create the healthcare delivery system of the future*



A guide to better health from

Backus Hospital

A Hartford HealthCare Partner



Windham Hospital

A Hartford HealthCare Partner

**Backus Health Centers expansion:** The Backus Health Centers experienced significant growth. Two new centers were opened, one in Norwichtown and one in North Stonington. The Colchester and Montville Backus Health Centers also became the first physician groups in Connecticut to receive the National Committee for Quality Assurance Patient-Centered Medical Home Recognition.

**Gastric bypass surgery added:** The Backus Weight Loss Center added gastric bypass as another option for patients seeking weight loss. The center started performing LAP-BAND procedures in 2010 and added bypass to round out the continuum of care for bariatric patients.

**Quality improvements:** More than 1,800 employees and 200 medical staff members participated in "Safety Starts with Me" training sessions, as part of a statewide high-reliability organization initiative. Daily safety huddles were implemented, and antibiotic stewardship and congestive heart failure protocols were created.

Backus also saw quality and patient safety improvements in all key publicly reported metrics and was one of a few Connecticut hospitals not cited for excess patient readmissions.

**Population health management:**

- Completion of a community health needs assessment.

- Expansion of Rx for Health program, which involves physicians writing prescriptions to farmer's markets for children and families at-risk for obesity.



- Healthy Eating Advocate Training (HEAT) to create sustainable community education about nutrition.

- Healthy Community pilot program in village of Baltic (in the town of Sprague) to create sustainable, measurable health improvements among a defined population.

**Milestones:**

- The Plainfield Backus Emergency Care Center celebrated its one-year anniversary in July, and helped improve access to emergency services in southern Windham and northern New London counties. The facility is on a pace to see more than 17,000 patients in its first year.

- The Backus Cancer Center celebrated its 15th anniversary in June. The center has experienced significant achievements including advancement in radiation therapy, numerous quality designations, patient navigation, and most recently an affiliation with Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center through Hartford HealthCare.

**Philanthropy:** With the support of a \$300,000 community campaign, Backus was able to purchase the new CareVan, a mobile health van that provides preventative health care including screenings, primary care and health education in the community, when and where it's needed most.



**The Boutique at Backus:** In June, Backus opened the Boutique, which offers education, resources and merchandise for cancer patients. The Boutique was made possible through a lead gift from the Backus Auxiliary, The Backus Cancer Survivors Fund and the Laura Beth Seder Memorial Golf Tournament.

HealthCare Medical Group primary care services, and endocrinology and Clinical Laboratory Partners.

**Women's health:** The hospital continued its expansion of women's health services opening the Center for Women's Health in Hebron in April. The Center at 21 Liberty Drive houses an OB/GYN practice, imaging and Clinical Laboratory Partners.

**Neurology technology:** The hospital implemented Hartford HealthCare's Telehealth Network, giving stroke patients and the ED instant access to top neurologists and latest technology. At the core of the new service is a computer on wheels equipped with a high-definition camera remotely connecting the patient with a Telehealth neurologist who assists with the exam and provides specialized evaluations.

**Minding the kids:** Windham Hospital, the state Department of Children and Families, local police and school officials have formed a community task force to help ensure best practice for recognizing and reporting child abuse. In addition,

the nurse director of the ED has helped develop protocols for recognition of abuse in children who present at the Windham ED and other hospital EDs throughout the state.

**Awards and recognition:** Several hospital departments received national recognition in 2013. The hospital's Radiology Department, Center for Sleep Medicine and Echocardiography all received national accreditation renewals for continued excellence.

**Great to donate:** Windham Hospital was recognized by LifeChoice Donor Services for its outreach for organ and tissue donation and registration. The hospital was one of only nine hospitals in the state and 322 nationwide that earned the distinction.

**Healthy kids:** A gift of \$28,000 from the SMB Charitable Foundation has allowed hospital dietitians, school nurses, physical education and health teachers to create a



school-based nutrition/exercise program for fifth and sixth graders at the Captain Nathan Hale Middle School in Coventry and the Mansfield Middle School in Mansfield. Students learn about healthy eating habits, make and sample healthy snacks, and participate in fun after-school physical activity. The program began in the fall of 2013.