Series: 2000-2001

Circular Letter: C-7

TO:	Superintendents of Schools
FROM:	Theodore S. Sergi, Commissioner of Education
DATE:	August 18, 2000

SUBJECT: Final Summary of 2000 Education Legislation

Circular Letter C-17, dated May 24, 2000, summarized the major education legislation passed by the 2000 General Assembly. Now, we would like to provide you with a more comprehensive summary of the public and special acts which were enacted this year and are of general applicability and interest to school districts.

In reviewing this summary, please keep the following in mind:

- While comprehensive, this document does not describe every public or special act affecting the operation of a school district or provide every detail of the acts that are summarized.
- <u>When specificity is required, the actual statutory language should be reviewed.</u> The public and special acts are available on the Department of Education's website at www.state.ct.us/sde/legal/bills2000.htm. If you have questions about accessing this information or would like a copy of a particular bill, please call Carol Basile at (860) 566-5244.
- The narrative description of each act summarizes either the act as a whole or selected sections. Where a section has been summarized, the section number of the act follows the narrative.
- Many of the acts became effective on July 1, 2000. For those that did not, the effective date is in the parenthesis after the narrative.
- Selected public acts concerning matters under the jurisdiction of state agencies other than the Department of Education have been included for your information. Questions concerning those acts should be directed to the appropriate state agency.

To assist you, I have also included:

- An index to key legislation;
- A chart identifying selected major state education funding affecting local and regional boards of education (Attachment A);
- A table that lists the sections of the Connecticut General Statutes and the public and special acts which have been amended or repealed by the summarized legislation (Attachment B); and
- A cross-reference table that identifies the Senate and House bill numbers for each of the public and special acts summarized (Attachment C).

Please use this circular letter as a supplement to the State Board of Education's <u>Connecticut Education Laws as of January 1, 1999</u> (red book), which does **not** contain the changes to the General Statutes summarized in this letter. Also, please note that the statutory changes made during the 1999 General Assembly Session are not in the education laws book or in this letter, but can be found in Circular Letter C-3 (Series 1999-2000) dated August 17, 1999. That circular letter is available on the department's website at <u>www.state.ct.us/sde</u> under the heading "Commissioner."

If you have any questions about the new legislation, Department of Education staff members are ready and willing to help you. In most cases you will know from past experience whom to consult. However, if you do not know whom to contact or have general questions about this letter, please call Attorney Katherine Nicoletti of the Office of Legal and Governmental Affairs at (860) 566-5244.

TSS:knb Attachments

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• Specifies that if a **teacher** is notified that **termination** is under consideration due to incompetence, the determination of incompetence must be based on evaluation of the teacher using teacher evaluation guidelines established pursuant to Section 10-151b of the Connecticut General Statutes (Sec. 1).

P.A. 00-48 AN ACT CONCERNING SPECIAL EDUCATION

- For **special education students enrolled in state charter schools**, requires that the payments by the school district in which the student resides, to the charter school for the school district's portion of the cost of educating the student, must be made on a quarterly basis (Sec. 1).
- Makes (1) the state's definition of "related services," (2) the state provisions concerning transition services for children requiring special education and (3) special education due process procedures concerning the disclosure of information prior to a hearing conform with federal special education laws and regulations (Secs. 2 4).
- Requires that **surrogate parents** continue to represent a child when the child is no longer eligible for special education but requires or may require services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (Secs. 5 and 6).
- Requires the Commissioner of Education to amend the **surrogate parent regulations** to establish procedures to monitor the effectiveness of a surrogate parent (Sec. 7).
- Requires local and regional boards of education to (1) inform **surrogate parents** at least annually of local board policies concerning student conduct and school discipline and (2) provide an effective means of notifying the surrogate parent of any minor student against whom disciplinary action has been taken (Sec. 8).
- For students requiring special education who attend interdistrict magnet schools, specifies the programmatic and fiscal responsibilities of the magnet school and school district in which the student resides (Sec. 9).
- Specifies that **sheltered workshops or rehabilitation centers** providing education occupational training programs for children requiring special education who are at least 16 years of age must be approved by an appropriate state agency, rather than by the State Board of Education, in

order for a local board of education to be allowed to contract with the workshop or center for such a program (Sec. 10).

P.A. 00-49 AN ACT CONCERNING THE UNIFORM CHILD CUSTODY JURISDICTION AND ENFORCEMENT ACT AND THE OFFICE OF THE CHILD ADVOCATE

• Requires any agency having responsibility for the custody or care of children to provide timely notice to the state's Child Advocate and the chairperson of the child fatality review panel of the **death of a child or a critical incident** involving a child in its custody or care (Sec. 5).

P.A. 00-59 AN ACT CONCERNING CERTIFIED NURSE ASSISTANT TRAINING LEVELS, STANDARDS OF CARE AND CAREER ADVANCEMENT

• Requires the Commissioner of Public Health to revise the **nurse's aides** regulations to require (1) a training program for nurse's aides of not less than 100 hours and (2) that not less than 25 of those hours must include, but not be limited to, specialized training in understanding and responding to challenging behaviors related to physical, psychiatric, psychological, and cognitive disorders (Effective October 1, 2000).

(For further information about this public act, please contact Kay Zarrella, Director of the Department of Public Health's Division of Health Systems Regulation, at (860) 509-7507.)

P.A. 00-65 AN ACT CONCERNING WAGE PAYMENTS TO CERTIFIED EMPLOYEES OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL BOARDS OF EDUCATION

• Allows a local or regional board of education and a recognized or certified exclusive bargaining representative of its certified employees to include in their collective bargaining agreement a **wage payment schedule** that differs from the wage payment schedules required for other employees generally (Effective May 16, 2000).

P.A. 00-69 AN ACT CONCERNING FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND SECURITY IN STATE FACILITIES

• Adds to the **Freedom of Information Act** new provisions concerning **records** the disclosure of which may result in a **safety risk**, including the risk of harm to any person or any state-owned or leased institution or facility (Sec. 3, effective May 16, 2000).

(For further information about this public act, please contact Eric Turner, Director of Public Education for the Freedom of Information Commission, at (860) 566-5682.)

P.A. 00-92 AN ACT CONCERNING THE DUTIES OF TOWN CLERKS AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ETHICS AGENCIES BY SPECIAL DISTRICTS

Allows any municipality, by vote of its legislative body and subject to the approval of its municipal attorney, to authorize the preparation and printing of materials concerning a referendum proposal or question in addition to the explanatory text if the materials do not advocate the approval or disapproval of the proposal or question (Sec. 15, effective October 1, 2000). (See P.A. 00-1, June Special Session, Sec. 44, below, which changes the effective date to May 26, 2000.)

P.A. 00-97

AN ACT CONCERNING THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION REPORTED TO OR OBTAINED BY THE OFFICE OF PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

• Exempts from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act certain information concerning (1) persons whose death or serious injury is the result of physical restraint or seclusion in certain institutions or facilities and is reported to the Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities and (2) that office's investigation of such death or injury (Effective October 1, 2000).

(For further information about this public act, please contact Eric Turner, Director of Public Education for the Freedom of Information Commission, at (860) 566-5682.)

P.A. 00-98 AN ACT CONCERNING OBSERVANCE OF MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY

• Requires each town to include in each collective bargaining agreement that is executed on or after April 26, 2000, a provision stating that the town's

nonessential town offices will be closed on **Martin Luther King Day**, requires towns that did not close all nonessential offices in observance of Martin Luther King Day on January 17, 2000, to close them on the holiday in the future, and establishes related collective bargaining requirements (Effective April 26, 2000).

P.A. 00-124 AN ACT CONCERNING HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMAS AND VETERANS OF WORLD WAR II

• Allows a local or regional board of education to award a **high school diploma to a veteran of World War II** who (1) left high school prior to graduation in order to serve in the armed forces of the United States, (2) did not receive a diploma as the result of such service and (3) was honorably discharged from, or released under honorable conditions in active service in, the armed forces (Effective May 29, 2000).

P.A. 00-127 AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE BRAILLE LITERACY TASK FORCE

- Establishes a **Braille Literacy Advisory Council** to assess, and report to the General Assembly annually on, the education of visually impaired children including, but not limited to, (1) a review of Braille literacy and the availability of services for such children, (2) an evaluation of learning media assessments, (3) attracting teachers for such children and (4) coordination between the Board of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB) and school districts (Sec. 1, effective May 26, 2000).
- Requires BESB and the Department of Education to report to the General Assembly not later than January 1, 2002, on their efforts concerning the **certification of teachers of the visually impaired** (Sec. 3, effective May 26, 2000).
- Requires BESB to report to the General Assembly and the Braille Literacy Advisory Council not later than January 1, 2002, on (1) **reimbursements** requested by school districts for certain visually impaired children requiring special education and (2) certain **support services** (Sec. 3, effective May 26, 2000).

P.A. 00-133 AN ACT CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN BEING TRANSPORTED TO SCHOOL

• Amends the statute concerning **lawsuits for personal injuries** received by individuals **while being transported to or from school** in vehicles owned,

leased, hired or operated by a town, school district or municipality. The amendment eliminates the defenses of sovereign immunity and that such transportation is state mandated (Effective October 1, 2000).

P.A. 00-134 AN ACT AMENDING STATUTES RELATED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

• Provides that nothing in the **Freedom of Information Act** shall be construed to require disclosure of **records** of standards, procedures, processes, software and codes, not otherwise available to the public, the disclosure of which would compromise the **security or integrity of an information technology system** (Sec. 1, effective October 1, 2000).

(For further information about this public act, please contact Eric Turner, Director of Public Education for the Freedom of Information Commission, at (860) 566-5682.)

P.A. 00-135 AN ACT MAKING TECHNICAL AND OTHER CHANGES TO CERTAIN PUBLIC HEALTH STATUTES

• Exempts from the Department of Public Health's registration and licensing requirements **child day care services** administered by a municipal agency or department and located in a public school building for students enrolled in that school (Sec. 2, effective May 26, 2000).

(For further information about this section, please contact Dick Edmonds, Director of the Department of Public Health's Division of Community Based Regulation, at (860) 509-8022.)

• Establishes an Advisory Commission on Services and Supports for Persons with Developmental Disabilities which includes the Commissioner of Education, or a designee, and is to advise the Commissioner of Mental Retardation (Sec. 19, effective October 1, 2000).

P.A. 00-136 AN ACT CONCERNING THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

• Allows the **Freedom of Information Commission to dismiss an appeal** of a denial by a public agency, without a hearing, if it finds that the public agency has committed a technical violation of the Freedom of Information Act that constitutes a harmless error that does not infringe the appellant's rights under the act (Sec. 6, effective October 1, 2000).

(For further information about this public act, please contact Eric Turner, Director of Public Education for the Freedom of Information Commission, at (860) 566-5682.)

P.A. 00-144 AN ACT INCREASING THE MINIMUM WAGE

• Allows **minors** who have reached the age of 15 to be **employed in retail food stores** on any Saturday during the year. Formerly they could not do this unless school was not in session for at least five consecutive days (Sec. 3, effective October 1, 2000).

P.A. 00-156 AN ACT REQUIRING A CIVICS COURSE FOR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

• Provides that beginning with high school classes graduating in 2004, students must have at least a one-half credit **course on civics and American government** in order to receive a high school diploma. This course is to be part of the credits required in social studies. The total minimum number of credits to graduate has not been increased (Effective October 1, 2000). (See also P.A. 00-187, Sec. 69, below.)

P.A. 00-157 AN ACT CONCERNING THE MANDATORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AGE

- Provides that effective July 1, 2001, **students must stay in school until age 18**, rather than 16, unless they graduate from high school or their parent or person having control over them personally appears at the school and signs a withdrawal form consenting to their leaving school at age 16 or 17. At the time that the withdrawal form is signed, the school district must provide the parent or other person with information on the educational options available in the school system and in the community (Sec. 1, effective July 1, 2001).
- Amends statutory provisions concerning the following issues, to reflect the change in the **mandatory school attendance age**: state high school diplomas, the obligation of local and regional boards of education to cause each child to attend school, and truants and habitual truants (Secs. 2, 3, 5 and 6, effective July 1, 2001).
- Specifies that the changes in the mandatory school attendance age do not change the requirements for local and regional boards to offer alternative educational opportunities to **expelled students** (Sec. 4, effective July 1, 2001).

• Gives a legal guardian authority to make major decisions concerning a minor's education in addition to such decisions concerning the minor's welfare (Sec. 7, effective July 1, 2001).

P.A. 00-167 AN ACT CONCERNING THE AUTHORIZATION OF BONDS OF THE STATE FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AND OTHER PURPOSES

- Increases the amount of the bond funds authorized to finance school construction projects by \$54 M for 2000-01 (Sec. 60).
- Decreases the amount of the bond funds authorized for **interest subsidy grants** by \$44 M for 2000-01 (Sec. 61). (See also S.A. 00-13, Sec. 69, below, which provides that unexpended funds appropriated for interest payments for 1999-2000 not lapse but continue to be available for such purpose in 2000-01.)

Note: S.A. 00-13 appropriates **additional funds for the school construction** grant program. (See S.A. 00-13, Secs. 35 and 72, below.)

P.A. 00-169 AN ACT REVISING CERTAIN MOTOR VEHICLE LAWS

- Amends the **uniform bus color** standard to conform to the federal standard (Sec. 9, effective October 1, 2000).
- Eliminates the provision that prohibits the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles from establishing and enforcing bus seating requirements based on a **minimum seating width** for each child (Sec. 9, effective October 1, 2000).
- Requires public and private owners of school buses to **retain school bus maintenance records** for two years (Sec. 9, effective October 1, 2000).
- Establishes **penalties for violating Department of Motor Vehicle regulations** governing (1) the inspection, registration, operation and maintenance of school buses and motor vehicles used to transport children requiring special education and (2) the licensing of operators of school buses and such other motor vehicles (Sec. 10, effective October 1, 2000).

(For further information about this public act, please contact Lt. Delbert N. Cornell of the Commercial Vehicle Safety Division of the Department of Motor Vehicles at (860) 528-6565.)

P.A. 00-170 AN ACT CONCERNING REDUCTION OF VARIOUS TAXES AND FEES, SUNSET OF CERTAIN INSURANCE REINVESTMENT FUNDS . . .

• Provides business firms with a tax credit for the donation of new, or used computers not more than two years old, to a local or regional board of education or a public school. The application for such a tax credit is to include, but not be limited to, a written agreement between the business firm and the board of education or school and the agreement is to provide for (1) the acceptance of the computers, (2) an acknowledgement that the computers are in good working condition and (3) a requirement for the business firm to install, set up and provide training to school staff on such computers (Sec. 20, applicable to income years commencing on and after January 1, 2000).

(For further information about this public act, please contact Susan Sherman of the Department of Revenue Services at (860) 297-5693.)

P.A. 00-172 AN ACT REQUIRING THE EVALUATION OF THE COSTS AND BENEFITS OF PROGRAMS SERVING JUVENILE OFFENDERS

• Requires the Chief Court Administrator to enter into an agreement with the Connecticut Policy and Economic Council to (1) evaluate the costs and benefits of programs serving **juvenile offenders** to determine the cost-effectiveness of such programs in reducing recidivism and (2) report to the General Assembly (Effective October 1, 2000).

P.A. 00-174

AN ACT MAKING ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES AND CLARIFICATIONS TO VARIOUS TAX STATUTES . . .

• Exempts from the sales tax the sales of (1) candy, confectionery and nonalcoholic beverages in a student cafeteria or dining hall maintained in a public or private school, to members of such school and (2) food products, meals, candy, confectionery and non-alcoholic beverages in such cafeterias or dining halls to such members using **prepaid meal plan** arrangements (Sec. 9, effective October 1, 2000, for sales made on or after that date).

(For further information about this public act, please contact Taxpayer Services at the Department of Revenue Services at (860) 297-5692 or 1-800-382-9463.)

P.A. 00-177 AN ACT CONCERNING YOUTH IN CRISIS

• Allows (1) the Juvenile Court to assume jurisdiction over a "**youth in crisis**" which is any person 16 to 17 years of age who is beyond parental control, has run away from home, or has four unexcused absences from school in any one month or ten unexcused absences in any school year, (2) superintendents and youth service bureaus, among others, to refer such youths to court and (3) the court's orders to include, but not be limited to, mandating that the youth attend an educational program in the local community (Effective July 1, 2001).

P.A. 00-187 AN ACT CONCERNING EDUCATION AID

New Initiatives, Excluding Technology

- Establishes a \$4 M program to provide grants to local and regional boards of education, except for Hartford, that have one or more schools in need of improvement on the most recent list prepared in accordance with P.A. 99-288. The funds are to be used for costs related to (1) the implementation of improvement plans for the schools, (2) partnership programs between the schools and public libraries and (3) actions necessary for the schools to become accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (Sec. 1, amended by P.A. 00-193, S. 2, below). (See S.A. 00-13, Sec. 35, below, for funding.)
- Specifies that **Hartford** is to use a portion of its ECS supplemental school aid (See S.A. 00-13, Sec. 35, below) to implement improvement plans and partnership programs in its **schools** that have been identified as **in need of improvement** (Sec. 1).
- Requires the Department of Education to identify and make available, to local and regional boards of education with schools in need of improvement, methods and programs that have a demonstrated record of success in improving student performance in such areas as mathematics, reading and writing (Sec. 2).
- Requires the Department of Education to develop and implement a **statewide public school information system** to establish a standardized electronic data collection and reporting protocol. The initial design will focus on student information. A pilot system project is to be initiated by the 2002-03 school year. The system database of student information is not a public record under the Freedom of Information Act (Sec. 8).

 Requires the Commissioner of Education to (1) annually determine subject and geographic areas in which a teacher shortage exists and (2) certify such shortages to the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) which shall develop and administer a program of mortgage assistance to certified teachers who are employed by priority or transitional school districts or who teach in subject matter shortage areas (Secs. 25 and 26).

(For further information about the mortgage assistance program, please contact Lou Bolella, Manager of Residential Mortgage Underwriting at the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority, at (860) 571-4226.)

• Establishes a Commission on Teacher and School Administrator Shortage and Minority Recruitment which is to submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly not later than January 1, 2001 (Sec. 27).

Technology Initiatives

- Establishes a comprehensive, multi-agency initiative concerning educational technology. This legislation includes, but is not limited to (1) the creation of a Commission for Educational Technology (Sec. 33), (2) the elimination of the Joint Committee on Educational Technology (Sec. 74) and (3) requirements that the <u>Department of Education</u>:
 - Administer a \$10 M grant program to assist local and regional boards of education in improving the use of information technology in their schools. The grants may be used for wiring and connectivity, the purchase or lease of computers, and interactive software and the purchase and installation of software filters (Sec. 41, amended by P.A. 00-1, June Special Session, Sec. 18, below). (See P.A. 00-187, Sec. 54, effective June 1, 2000, for funding. There may also be additional funds available from the state surplus.);
 - Establish a competitive grant program to fund innovative teacher training on the integration of technology into the public school curriculum in order to improve student learning (Sec. 43). (\$2.5 M has been transferred to the Department of Education for this program.);
 - 3. Develop kindergarten to grade 12, inclusive, **computer technology competency standards for students** by July 1, 2001 (Sec. 44);
 - Report on or before July 1, 2001, and biennially thereafter, to the General Assembly on the status of educational technology in public schools (Sec. 44);

- 5. Develop and maintain a **centralized website** for educators to share lesson plans, curriculum resources and technology resource opportunities (Sec. 46); and
- 6. Adopt regulations to provide standards for the certification of **computer science teachers** (Sec. 39).
- Provides that the <u>new commission and a number of state agencies</u>, in various collaborative efforts:
 - Develop a five-year plan for the implementation of the Connecticut Education Network to provide state-of-the-art, high-speed, reliable Internet access and video, voice, and data transmissions that electronically link all educational institutions in the state. The plan is to include the establishment of a Connecticut Digital Library and a statewide application for the federal Universal Service Fund (Sec. 35);
 - 2. Provide **technical assistance** to local and regional boards of education and regional vocational-technical schools to expand their educational technology capabilities (Sec. 36);
 - 3. Provide opportunities for boards of education to make educational technology **purchases under state-wide contracts** (Secs. 36 and 41);
 - 4. Develop minimum and model **technology standards for school construction** projects (Sec. 38);
 - 5. Develop, and update biennially, (a) a state-wide standard for **teacher and administrator competency** in the use of technology for instructional purposes and (b) a state-wide plan to assist teachers and administrators to achieve the standard (Sec. 42); and
 - 6. Contract for the development of a **Connecticut Parent Technology Academy** (Sec. 45).
- Requires the Board for State Academic Awards to establish innovative **online teacher and higher education faculty training programs** on the integration of technology in the public school curriculum and courses at public institutions of higher education in order to improve student learning (Sec. 40).

School Readiness Programs

• Expands the number of districts eligible for **school readiness program grants** to (1) districts that were priority school districts in the initial year of application for a school readiness grant, but are not priority school districts at

the end of the five years during which they were eligible for the grant and (2) beginning in 2001-02, transitional school districts (Secs. 4 and 9 - 12, inclusive).

- Defines "**staff qualifications**" for the school readiness program that are effective on and after July 1, 2003 (Sec. 4).
- For the **competitive school readiness grant** program, allows grants to towns with two or more priority schools to exceed \$100,000 (Sec. 4).
- Bases the **school readiness entitlement grants** on the average number of enrolled kindergarten students in the district for the three years prior to the year the grant is to be paid, rather than on the number of enrolled kindergarten students in the year prior to the year the grant is to be paid, and adds a provision that no district shall receive a grant that is less than it received for the prior fiscal year (Sec. 4).
- For one additional year (until June 30, 2001) allows, subject to the Commissioner of Education's approval, the use of **school readiness program grants** to prepare a facility or staff for operating a school readiness program (Sec. 4).
- Requires (1) school readiness councils in priority school districts and school districts with a severe need school to submit operating and capital school readiness needs assessments to the Commissioner of Education and (2) the Commissioner to report to the General Assembly on the assessments and recommend actions to address unmet needs (Sec. 7).

Education Cost Sharing (ECS)

- Increases the **regional bonus** under the ECS formula from \$25 to \$100 per student. However, most of the impact from this change will be limited until the phase-out of the grant cap occurs in 2003-04 (Sec. 13).
- Eliminates a \$6 M increase in **Hartford's ECS grant** for 2000-01 (Sec. 19). (However, Hartford receives \$5.7 M in ECS supplemental school aid in S.A. 00-13, Sec. 35, below. Hartford must use a portion of this \$5.7 M for its schools needing improvement pursuant to P.A. 00-187, Sec. 1, above.)
- Amends the **minimum expenditure requirement (MER)** to remove the provision for increases tied to enrollment growth. The MER still goes down if enrollment declines (Sec. 21).

Note: The Department of Education website has **revised estimates for ECS** (by town and per pupil) and each town's **MER**.

Interdistrict Programs

- Specifies that the Department of Education may provide for the incremental **expansion of the OPEN Choice program** for the 2000-01 school year for the towns that are required to participate in the program (Sec. 15).
- Increases the amount of the grants for OPEN Choice program transportation so that the state-wide average of such grants does not exceed \$2,100 for each student transported, rather than \$2,000 (Sec. 16).
- Specifies that, for purposes of the state-wide **mastery examinations**, students participating in the OPEN Choice program be considered residents of the school district in which they attend school (Sec. 17).
- Increases the amount of the **funding for state charter schools** from approximately \$6,500 to \$7,000 (Sec. 23).
- Provides one-time supplemental grants to **regional educational service centers** operating one or more **interdistrict magnet schools** (Sec. 73, amended by P.A. 00-192, Sec. 52, below). (See S.A. 00-13, Sec. 35, below, for funding.)

Miscellaneous Program Changes

- Specifies that for a priority school district to receive a grant for summer school and weekend school programs, it must submit a plan for the expenditure of the grant funds and specifies the content of such a plan (Sec. 3).
- Specifies that grants for **lighthouse schools** (1) be awarded, within available appropriations, in each fiscal year after 2000-01 (2) not exceed \$100,000 for any individual school in any one year and (3) may be renewed for two additional years in such lesser amounts as the Department of Education determines are reasonable for purposes of implementing the lighthouse school program at a school (Sec.18).
- Specifies that \$300,000 distributed to **Hartford** in S.A. 00-13, Sec. 82, for one-time surplus revenue sharing must be used for an **operational audit** of the Hartford school district (Sec. 20, amended by P.A. 00-192, Sec. 47, below).
- Allows new applicants to be eligible for **youth service bureau grants** if they meet certain conditions (Sec. 22, effective June 1, 2000).

- Reconfigures the method of calculating grants for regional educational service centers (Sec. 68).
- Provides that beginning with high school classes graduating in 2004, students must have at least a one-half credit **course in civics and American government** in order to receive a high school diploma. This course is to be part of the credits required in social studies. The total minimum number of credits to graduate has not been increased (Sec. 69). (See also P.A. 00-156, above.)

P.A. 00-188

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A CHILDREN'S BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES AND A CHILDREN'S BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COUNCIL

• Establishes a **Children's Behavioral Health Advisory Committee** to the State Advisory Council on Children and Families and a **Children's Behavioral Health Council**. The new advisory committee is to promote and enhance the provision of behavioral health services for all children in the state. The Children's Behavioral Health Council is to advise the appropriate state departments and the General Assembly on the delivery of behavioral health services to children in the state. The Commissioner of Education, or a designee, is a member of both new groups (Sec. 2, effective July 1, 2000, and Sec. 4, effective June 1, 2000).

P.A. 00-190 AN ACT CONCERNING PRIVILEGED COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN A PARENT AND A LICENSED PROFESSIONAL COUNSELOR

• Prohibits an individual licensed by the Department of Public Health as a **professional counselor** from disclosing certain oral and written communications without the consent of the individual who consults the counselor for diagnosis or treatment (Effective October 1, 2000).

P.A. 00-192 AN ACT CONCERNING INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNTS, CORRECTIONAL FACILITY AND JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER PROJECTS...

• Amends Section 54 of P.A. 00-187, above, concerning the source of the appropriation for the **educational technology** grant program (Sec. 46, effective May 26, 2000).

- Amends Section 20 of P.A. 00-187, above, concerning how Hartford is to use \$300,000 of its one-time revenue sharing funds distributed in S.A. 00-13, Sec. 82 (Sec. 47, effective May 26, 2000).
- Specifies that \$2.2 M (of the \$43,632,000 appropriated to the Department of Education for school construction grants) be transferred and used by the Department for school accountability (Sec. 49, effective May 26, 2000). (See S.A. 00-13, below, for further explanation of school accountability funding.)
- Allows any municipality, by vote of its legislative body or board of selectmen, to abate up to 100% of the **property taxes** due, for any assessment year commencing on or after October 1, 2001, with respect to a **new school bus** (Sec. 50).
- Amends Section 73 of P.A. 00-187, above, to reduce the amount of the onetime supplemental grants to regional educational service centers (RESCs) for support services provided by RESCs operating one or more interdistrict magnet schools (Sec. 52, effective May 26, 2000).
- Increases the amount of the **grants** available to school districts operating **vocational agriculture centers** when the number of out-of-district students attending the center was more than 150 students and falls below that amount in subsequent years (Sec. 82).

P.A. 00-193 AN ACT CONCERNING A COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM FOR CERTAIN HIGH SCHOOL PROJECTS AND QUALITY AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

- Requires that the Department of Education establish, within available appropriations, a competitive grant program for local and regional boards of education to apply for **grants for high school projects** involving one or more of the following topics: computers, engineering, mathematics, physics, science or technical construction. However, no funds have been appropriated for this purpose (Sec. 1).
- Amends Section 1 of P.A. 00-187, above, to specify that a plan for the expenditure of grant funds for **schools needing improvement** may include a quality after-school program meeting specified criteria (Sec. 2).

P.A. 00-200 AN ACT CONCERNING VICTIM'S RIGHTS

• Specifies that all state, local and private agencies shall have a duty to cooperate with any investigation conducted by the state's **Office of the Victim Advocate** (Sec. 9, effective October 1, 2000).

P.A. 00-204 AN ACT CONCERNING CHANGES TO MISCELLANEOUS EDUCATION AND HIGHER EDUCATION STATUTES

- Specifies that the State Board of Education's long-range plan of priorities and goals for the **regional vocational-technical school system** (RVTSS) must include a summary of activities related to capital improvements and equipment (Sec. 1).
- Requires the State Board of Education to (1) maintain a rolling five-year **capital improvement plan** for the RVTSS as part of its rolling five-year capital equipment plan and (2) submit these plans annually to the General Assembly (Sec. 2).
- Requires the Department of Education to provide **in-service training programs** for the teachers, administrators, and pupil personnel employed in the **RVTSS** who hold the initial educator, provisional educator or professional educator certificate (Sec. 3).
- Specifies that the **bond funds authorized for the RVTSS** for 1999-2000 and 2000-01 for alterations and improvements to buildings and grounds may be used for tools and supplies necessary to implement updated curricula (Sec. 4, effective June 1, 2000, and Sec. 5, effective July 1, 2000).
- Permits the Chief Court Administrator to establish a **pilot program for the resolution of special education administrative contested cases** by judge trial referees or senior judges (Sec. 6, effective June 1, 2000).
- For the 2000-01 school year, the **Hartford** school district must implement a pilot **two-way language program** in two schools. The program must provide instruction in each language for 50% of the instructional time during each day of the program. The Department of Education must evaluate the effectiveness of the program and report to the General Assembly on the results of its evaluation (Sec. 8, effective June 1, 2000).
- Provides that included with the lists of names submitted under the **Teacher Negotiation Act** to the Governor for appointment to the Department of Education's **arbitration panel** there is to be a report from the State Board of Education (1) certifying that the process conducted for soliciting applicants to

the panel made adequate outreach to minority communities and (2) documenting that the number and make-up of minority applicants considered reflect the state's racial and ethnic diversity (Sec. 9, effective June 1, 2000).

P.A. 00-216 AN ACT CONCERNING EXPENDITURES FOR THE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

- Specifies that the purpose of the **Tobacco and Health Trust Fund** is to create a continuing significant source of funds to (1) support and encourage development of programs to reduce tobacco abuse through prevention, education and cessation programs, (2) support and encourage development of programs to reduce substance abuse and (3) develop and implement programs to meet the unmet physical and mental health needs in the state (Sec. 15, effective June 1, 2000).
- Requires the Commissioner of Public Health and the Commissioner of Mental Health and Addiction Services to develop, and submit to the General Assembly, a **tobacco abuse reduction and health plan** (Sec. 16, effective June 1, 2000).

P.A. 00-220 AN ACT CONCERNING REVISIONS TO THE EDUCATION STATUTES

Boards of Education

- Specifies procedures and a timetable for the **transfer of student records** when a student enrolls in a new school district (Secs. 1 and 19).
- Makes the deadline for local and regional boards of education to report to regional educational service centers (RESCs) on their efforts to reduce racial, ethnic, and economic isolation earlier by changing it from October 1 to July 1 and moves the reporting deadline for RESCs to report to the Commissioner of Education from December 1 to October 1 (Sec. 11).
- Allows **crisis response drills** to be substituted for fire drills once every three months (Sec. 12).

Interdistrict Programs

- Specifies that the grants for **transportation** costs for students participating in the **OPEN Choice** program be based on the number of students transported on September 1 of each year (Sec. 19).
- Requires the Department of Education to ensure that all **interdistrict** educational programs and activities receiving state funding are conducted in a manner that promotes a diverse learning environment and allows the Department to establish reasonable enrollment priorities to encourage such

P.A. 00-220 (Continued)

programs to have racially, ethnically and economically diverse student populations (Sec. 34).

• Specifies the maximum amount that an **interdistrict magnet school** program established prior to January 1, 1993, and serving two school districts is eligible to receive for operating expenses (Sec. 17).

Educators

- Specifies that the State Board of Education has the burden of establishing the reason for the **revocation of an educator certificate** by a preponderance of the evidence (Sec. 7).
- Specifies that the written **notice** of the date, time and place of the **arbitration hearing** be sent to a school district's fiscal authority by registered mail, return receipt requested (Sec. 9).
- Amends the statutes concerning the **abuse of a child by a school employee** so that they (1) include school employees who hold permits and authorizations issued by the State Board of Education (not just certificates) and (2) apply to such employees whether or not they are employed in positions requiring a certificate, permit or authorization (Sec. 30).
- Expands the categories of **crimes committed by a school employee**, or person holding a certificate, permit or authorization, which the State's Attorney must report (to superintendents and the Commissioner of Education) to include reporting of convictions of injury or risk of injury to, or impairing the morals of, children (a class C felony) (Sec. 30).
- Prohibits the State Board of Education from issuing **educator certificates** to individuals convicted of certain enumerated crimes until at least five years after the person has completed serving the sentence for the conviction (Sec. 41).

Special Education

- Changes the qualifications of one of the members of the **Advisory Council** for **Special Education** and staggers the members' terms (Sec. 6).
- Allows state and local educational agencies, under certain conditions, to loan, lease or transfer an **assistive device** used by a student with a disability to the student, the parent of the student, or any other public or private nonprofit agency providing services to or on behalf of individuals with disabilities (Sec. 35).

P.A. 00-220 (Continued)

 Requires town treasurers to credit state funds for special education excess costs to the local or regional board of education within 30 days after receiving documentation from the board of education indicating the amount of the special education expenditures incurred in excess of the board of education's budgeted estimate of such expenditures (Sec. 40).

Priority School Districts

- Allows priority school districts to use general improvements to school buildings grants for the installation of **video surveillance devices** (Sec. 15).
- Allows priority school districts to use **extended school building hours grants** for programs in buildings that are not public school buildings, provided the board of education is able to demonstrate to the Commissioner of Education that (1) the facility in which the program will be run can adequately support the academic goals of the program and (2) a plan is in place to provide adequate academic instruction (Secs. 16 and 23).

School Construction

- Redefines the **renovation projects** that are eligible for school construction grant reimbursement (Sec. 20).
- Requires the Department of Education to conduct a **limited scope audit** of a school building project if it has not completed an audit of the project during the five-year period from the date the district filed a notice of project completion (Sec. 22).
- Provides that the Department shall not make any adjustment to a school construction grant based on the result of an audit finding that a **change order** was not publicly bid (Sec. 22).
- Provides that the Commissioner of Education treat **roof replacement projects** like code and emergency projects by (1) exempting them from having to be included on the school construction priority list and (2) permitting the Commissioner's approval at any time (Sec. 32).
- Provides for the reimbursement of the **pro rata costs for roof replacement** projects when a school roof is at least 15 years old, but less than 20 years old, and it cannot be determined by a registered architect or engineer that the roof was improperly designed or constructed (Sec. 33).

P.A. 00-220 (Continued)

Family Resource Centers

• Provides that (1) **family resource centers** (FRCs) established on and after July 1, 2000, must be located in public elementary schools unless the Commissioner of Education waives that requirement and (2) FRC school readiness programs must comply with the standards for programs receiving state school readiness grants (Sec. 2).

Department of Education

- Eliminates some of the Department of Education's reporting requirements concerning the **extended school building hours program** (Sec. 18).
- Requires the Department of Education to report by January 1, 2001, to the General Assembly on the activities undertaken by local and regional boards of education to counteract **aggressive behavior among students** (Sec. 31).
- Makes **technical changes** to the education statutes, including the repeal of obsolete provisions (Secs. 3 5, 8, 10, 13, 14, 21, and 42).

P.A. 00-222 AN ACT CONCERNING THE PROPERTY TAX ON MOTOR VEHICLES AND LOCAL SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS

• Allows a municipality, by ordinance, to establish a **local scholarship fund** to provide financial assistance for postsecondary education for residents of the municipality and authorizes the redesign of municipal motor vehicle property tax bills for taxpayers to check off amounts to donate to the local scholarship fund (Effective October 1, 2000).

P.A. 00-226 AN ACT CONCERNING ATHLETIC TRAINERS AND PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANTS

 Requires persons practicing athletic training to be licensed by the Commissioner of Public Health (Secs. 1 – 11, inclusive, and 19, effective the later of October 1, 2000, or on the date notice is published in the Connecticut Law Journal indicating that the licensing of athletic trainers is being implemented by the Commissioner of Public Health).

(For further information about this public act, please contact Kay Zarrella, Director of the Department of Public Health's Division of Health Systems Regulation, at (860) 509-7507.)



S.A. 00-10 AN ACT CONCERNING AUTHORIZATION OF STATE GRANT COMMITMENTS FOR SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECTS

- Authorizes the Commissioner of Education to enter into grant commitments for **school construction projects**. The estimated total cost of the projects authorized is approximately \$1.5 B (Sec. 1, effective May 16, 2000).
- Enacts special provisions for individual school construction projects (Secs. 2 22, inclusive, effective May 16, 2000).

S.A. 00-13 AN ACT MAKING DEFICIENCY APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2000

- Amends the Department of Education's budget for 2000-01, including, but not limited to, the addition of 6 new positions to support the growth in RVTS student enrollment (Sec. 1) and in Sec. 35 (effective May 5, 2000) makes the following new appropriations:
 - 1. **School construction grants**: \$43,632,000. P.A. 00-192, Sec. 49, above, specifies that \$2.2 M from this appropriation is to be used by the Department for school accountability as described below;
 - 2. **School accountability**: \$2.8 M in addition to \$2.2 M appropriated in P.A. 00-192, Sec. 49, above, for a total of \$5 M:

\$4 M of this total of \$5 M is for grants to **schools in need of improvement** pursuant to Section 1 of P.A. 00-187; and

\$1 M is added to the appropriation for grants to priority school districts for **summer school and week-end school programs** for a total appropriation of \$3.7 M for 2000-01 (See S.A. 00-13, Sec. 1, above);

3. ECS Hartford Supplemental School Aid: \$5.7 M (See also P.A. 00-187, Sec. 1, above, which specifies that Hartford is to use a portion of this to implement improvement plans and partnership programs in its schools that have been identified as in need of improvement); and

- 4. One-time supplemental grants for **interdistrict magnet schools**: \$5 M (See P.A. 00-192, Sec. 52, above, for how these funds are to be distributed).
- Specifies that the unexpended funds appropriated to the Office of Policy and Management for **one-time local capital improvement programs grants** for 1999-2000 shall not lapse but shall continue to be available for expenditure for such purpose during 2000-01. These funds may be used for equipment leasing and acquisition including, but not limited to, **computers and computer software** for public schools (Sec. 16).
- Specifies that unexpended funds appropriated for **school construction interest payments** for 1999-2000 not lapse but continue to be available for expenditure for that purpose in 2000-01 (Sec. 69).
- Of the **unappropriated surplus** for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2000, (1) \$10 M is to be appropriated to the Department of Information Technology for **school wiring** and (2) the balance to the Department of Education for **avoiding the issuance of debt for school construction grants** (Sec. 72).
- Distributes **one-time surplus revenue sharing** (a total of \$34 M) to each town in the state which, I have been advised, is in part to assist towns with the costs related to the provision of special education (Sec. 82, effective May 5, 2000).

The attached chart (Attachment A) entitled "Selected Major State Education Funding Affecting Local and Regional Boards of Education" shows state funding for major programs affecting school districts. The funding for these programs is authorized in various public and special acts described in this circular letter.

JUNE SPECIAL SESSION

JUNE SPECIAL SESSION, P.A. 00-1 AN ACT IMPLEMENTING AND MAKING TECHNICAL REVISIONS TO THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2001

- Makes **funds** available **for specific programs** in named towns (Secs. 6, 7 and 16, effective June 21, 2000).
- Amends the formula for the **education technology grants** enacted in P.A. 00-187, Sec. 41, above (Sec. 18).
- Amends the membership of the **Head Start Advisory Committee** to add that two members may be Head Start directors who are school readiness coordinators (Sec. 32, effective June 21, 2000).
- Changes the effective date of Section 15 of P.A. 00-92 concerning the authorization of the preparation and printing of materials concerning a **referendum proposal or question** from October 1, 2000, to May 26, 2000 (Sec. 44, effective June 21, 2000).

JUNE SPECIAL SESSION, P.A. 00-2 AN ACT CONCERNING PROGRAMS AND MODIFICATIONS NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT THE BUDGET RELATIVE TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

- Requires the Commissioner of Social Services and the Commissioner of Children and Families to develop and administer an integrated behavioral health service delivery system for children and youth with serious emotional disturbances who meet certain criteria (Secs. 3 – 7, inclusive).
- Expands the uses of the Department of Social Service grants that are paid to municipalities, boards of education and child care providers to encourage the use of **school facilities for child day care services** before and after school (Sec. 23).

ATTACHMENT A

Selected Major State Education Funding Affecting Local and Regional Boards of Education

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Major programs affecting local and regional boards of education	FY 1998-1999 Actual Expenditure	FY 1999-2000 Actual Expenditure	FY 2000-2001 Appropriated Budget
Education Equalization Grants (ECS)	1,299,137,635	1,347,876,789	1,388,000,000
Excess Cost - Student Based	42,362,456	46,763,109	49,000,000
Transportation of School Children	41,242,852	42,800,371	45,200,000
School Construction Grants (General Fund only)	-	-	41,432,000
Early Childhood Program	21,779,921	36,126,942	40,081,335
Magnet Schools	15,774,601	19,244,357	36,733,600
Early Reading Success (READ First)	19,780,294	20,356,796	22,274,370
Priority School Districts	19,000,000	20,336,250	20,057,500
Adult Education	15,900,772	15,133,012	17,920,000
Charter Schools	9,600,500	11,309,368	14,000,000
Interdistrict Cooperation	11,053,915	14,428,637	11,953,020
Excess Cost - District Based Equity	11,500,000	11,500,000	11,500,000
School Wiring	-	-	10,000,000
Open Choice Program and Project Concern - Receiving District School Accountability (Summer & Weekend School	3,139,989	5,450,000	8,275,000
Programs)	-	300,000	7,700,000
Family Resource Centers	6,032,500	6,000,000	6,082,500
ECS Hartford Supplemental School Aid	-	-	5,700,000
Non-Public School Transportation	4,425,849	4,512,907	4,775,000
Health Services - Non-Public Schools	3,272,139	3,441,371	3,590,000
Regional Education Services	2,882,384	3,147,384	3,297,384
Keeping School Buildings Open	2,993,365	3,262,075	3,187,882
School Library Books	2,998,120	3,165,530	3,147,000
Head Start Services	3,100,000	3,063,721	3,100,000
Youth Service Bureaus	2,753,731	2,784,556	2,925,555
Vocational Agriculture	2,621,700	2,621,700	2,816,700
Omnibus Education Grants State Supported Schools	2,708,874	2,687,792	2,754,000
Transitional School Districts	3,000,000	2,500,000	2,500,000
Education Technology - Training Initiative	-	-	2,500,000
Bilingual Education	2,252,000	2,252,000	2,252,000
Head Start Enhancement	2,000,000	1,999,998	2,000,000
Interest Subsidy Debt Avoidance Grants	-	53,093,049	1,906,951
School Breakfast Program	1,561,908	1,561,006	1,559,805
Student Achievement Grant	1,000,000	1,500,000	1,500,000
Lighthouse Schools	300,000	600,000	300,000
Primary Mental Health	264,600	294,000	294,000
Young Parents Program	259,080	259,080	259,080
School to Work Opportunities	246,653	250,000	250,000
Celebration of Excellence	75,000	25,000	25,000
School Building Grant ISP	575,092	11,004	4,160
Medicaid Coordination	6,353,834	-	
Middle School Math & Science Mastery Pilot	-	200,000	
Agency Grand Total	1,561,949,764	1,690,857,804	1,780,853,842

ATTACHMENT B

TABLE OF AMENDED AND REPEALEDSTATUTES AND PUBLIC ACTS - 2000

Statute	Public Act
1-206 (b)(4)	00-136, S. 6, 10
1-210	00-69, S. 3, 4
1-210 (b)	00-134, S. 1
4d-30 (1)	00-187, S. 47, 75
4d-47	00-187, S. 48, 75
4d-48	00-187, S. 49, 75
9-369b (a)	00-92, S. 15
10-4e Rd.	00-187, S. 74, 75
10-4h (a)	00-187, S. 50, 75
10-4o (a)	00-220, S. 2, 43
10-5 (a)	00-157, S. 2, 8
10-16n (c)	00-1 JSS, S. 32, 46
10-160	00-187, S. 10, 75
10-16p	00-187, S. 4, 75
10-16r (a), (b)	00-187, S. 11, 75
10-17f (a)	00-220, S. 3, 43
10-17g	00-220, S. 4, 43
10-19o (a)	00-187, S. 22, 75
10-66j	00-187, S. 68, 75
10-66bb (i)	00-220, S. 5, 43
10-66ee (c)	00-48, S. 1,12;
	00-187, S. 23, 75
10-75 (c)	00-192, S. 82, 102
10-76a (9)	00-48, S. 2, 12
10-76d (a)(7)	00-48, S. 3, 12
10-76d (d)	00-48, S. 10, 12
10-76d (e)(4)	00-48, S. 11, 12
10-76g (b)	00-220, S. 40, 43
10-76h (c)(2)	00-48, S. 4, 12
10-76i (a)	00-220, S. 6, 43
10-94f (2)	00-48, S. 5, 12
10-94g (a)	00-48, S. 6, 12
10-94j	00-48, S. 7, 12
10-95i (a)	00-204, S. 1, 13
10-95i (d)	00-204, S. 2, 13
10-145b (m)	00-220, S. 7, 43
10-145d (e) (added)	00-187, S. 39, 75
10-151 (d)	00-13, S. 1, 2
10-151b (b)	00-220, S. 8, 43
10-153f (a)	00-204, S. 9, 13

Statute	Public Act
10-153f (c)(2)	00-220, S. 9, 43
10-183b	00-187, S. 63, 75
10-183g (g)	00-187, S. 67, 75
10-183j (c)	00-187, S. 64, 75
10-183n (b)	00-187, S. 65, 75
10-183t	00-187, S. 59, 75
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