

CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell
Commissioner of Education

DATE: January 3, 2018

SUBJECT: State Board of Education Comprehensive Plan – Goal 2 Update

Executive Summary

Introduction

The Connecticut State Board of Education’s five-year comprehensive plan, *Ensuring Equity and Excellence for All Connecticut Students*, adopted in July 2016, represents the Connecticut State Department of Education’s (CSDE) commitment to Connecticut citizens, communities, and local school districts’ efforts to provide every student in our state an exceptional education in an outstanding school. The aspirational goals of the board’s comprehensive plan are:

1. Ensuring that students’ non-academic needs are met so that they are healthy, happy, and ready to learn.
2. Making sure all students learn what they need to know to succeed in college, career, and life.
3. Giving all students access to great teachers and school leaders.
4. Supporting schools and districts in staying on target with learning goals.

Immediately following the adoption of the Board’s comprehensive plan, the CSDE began extensive planning using a system of performance management focused on achieving defined results. By operationalizing the Board’s aspirational goals into actionable steps, the CSDE will improve the quality of execution and systematically manage, monitor, and deliver on the Board’s five-year comprehensive plan. For each Board goal, the CSDE developed delivery plans that include:

- Up to three strategies that are specific, measurable, ambitious, realistic, and time-limited;
- Specific activities affiliated with each strategy;
- “Delivery chains,” including the specific people and/or organizations necessary to deliver the activities affiliated with the strategies;
- Appropriate metrics with which to evaluate progress toward the goal
- Roles and routines to keep the CSDE focused on achieving the goal
 - Roles include goal owner, strategy lead, delivery plan facilitator
 - Routines include use of the assessment of progress tool, planning meetings, updates to the Commissioner and the State Board of Education

Background on Board Goal 2 and Strategies 1 and 2

Goal #2 of the State Board Comprehensive Plan includes building and sustaining an educational system premised on the core principle that, with the right supports and rich learning opportunities, every student will meet high academic standards. The team identified the following powerful strategies to support schools and districts in improving teaching and learning in Early Literacy and Mathematics:

Strategy 1: Support Early Literacy Success

Description: Through the leveraging of CSDE early literacy initiatives, K-3 teachers in Connecticut Opportunity Districts will be provided specialized professional learning and supports to ensure K-3 students in Connecticut Opportunity Districts receive high-quality, research-based reading instruction.

Definition of success: Teachers in Connecticut Opportunity Districts will use student reading assessment data to drive and deliver culturally responsive, scientifically research-based reading instruction.

Activities:

- Provide technical assistance and training to Connecticut Opportunity District administrators and K-3 teachers in the understanding early literacy standards, valid and reliable reading assessments, and scientifically research-based reading instruction.
- Support Connecticut Opportunity Districts’ systemic early literacy improvement efforts by helping them build the structures, schedules, and routines necessary to sustain effective literacy practices over time.

Impact: By implementing this strategy in Opportunity Districts there will be an increase in the average percentage of growth target achieved for third grade English Learners; third grade English language arts (ELA) index value; and third grade students with disabilities ELA index value.

Metric: Early Literacy Yearly Targets

<u>Determine a Target:</u>		
<i>By when?</i>		
1.a. Overall Grade 3 ELA: By 2021, the third grade ELA performance index value for students in Connecticut Opportunity Districts will increase from 57.3 (2017) to 70.0.		
1.b. Students with Disabilities: By 2021, the ELA performance index value for third grade students with disabilities in Connecticut Opportunity Districts will increase from 50.2 (2017) to 66.2.		
1.c. English Language Proficiency (ELP)*: By 2021, the average percentage of growth target achieved in literacy for English Learners (Grades 1-3 combined) in Connecticut Opportunity Districts will increase from 65.0% (2017) to 75.8%.		
<i>Identify any sub-targets.</i>		
Overall Grade 3 ELA: 2017 57.3 2018 60.3 2019 63.3 2020 66.3 2021 70.0	Students with Disabilities: 2017 50.2 2018 54.2 2019 58.2 2020 62.2 2021 66.2	English Language Proficiency (ELP): 2017 65.0% 2018 67.7% 2019 70.4% 2020 73.1% 2021 75.8%
*Actual baseline data and English Language Proficiency growth results will be available winter 2018.		

Strategy 2: Support High-Quality Mathematics Curriculum and Instruction

Description: Evidence-based practices for mathematics instruction will be identified in order to support high-quality math curriculum and instruction at the district and school level.

Definition of Success: In Connecticut’s Opportunity Districts, Connecticut Core Standards – Mathematics (CCS-M)-aligned curricula is implemented with fidelity using appropriate materials. Teachers responsible for mathematics instruction will have a deep understanding of mathematical content and pedagogical strategies to meet the needs of all students.

Activities:

- Support, guidance, training, and resources for Opportunity Districts to aid in the development of deep knowledge of the content standards and effective use of the practice standards to implement CCS-M with fidelity.

- Guidance to Opportunity Districts on the implementation of appropriate evidence-based practices to support high quality mathematics instruction.

Impact: Implementing this strategy will increase the Average Percentage of Growth Target Achieved for Opportunity Districts. Overtime, the expectation is that the overall percent of students scoring at levels 3 and 4 on state mandated testing will also increase.

Metric: Mathematics Yearly Targets

<u>Determine a Target:</u>	
<i>By when?</i>	
Overall Mathematics Grades 4-8: By June of 2021, there will be an increase in the average percentage of growth target achieved in mathematics for grades 4-8 combined from 61.7% (2017) to 73.5% by 2021 as measured by the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment.	
<i>Identify any sub-targets.</i>	
Overall Mathematics:	
2017: 61.7%	
2018: 64.6%	
2019: 67.6%	
2020: 70.5%	
2021: 73.5%	

Goal Progress Update

Using a progress assessment framework and rubric to evaluate the likelihood of success on Goal #2, the goal leader and strategy leads rated each strategy for (1) quality of planning; (2) capacity to drive progress; and (3) evidence of implementation progress. The following *Assessment Framework* shows the summary rating for progress on Goal #2 at the time of the Commissioner’s Stock Take meeting that occurred on December 7, 2017.

Assessment Framework Rating Template for Goal #2: High Expectations for Every Student					
Area of Focus	Ratings			Overall likelihood of success	Summary rationale
	Quality of planning	Capacity	Evidence of progress		
Support Early Literacy Success					All milestones identified for the 2016-17 year have been delivered, including but not limited to: professional learning (e.g., ReadConn, Dyslexia, English Learners), Connecticut K-3 Intensive Reading Strategy, and literacy improvement supports in six (6) State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) districts.
Support High-quality Mathematics Curriculum and Instruction					All milestones identified for the 2016-17 year have been delivered, including but not limited to: the release of the Commissioner’s Council on Mathematics Report, content and standards professional learning, and launch of the Commissioner’s Summer Math Challenge.
Overall likelihood of achieving our goal					The milestones for 2016-17 were achieved for both strategies. Thus, based on year one, confidence remains high that we will achieve our goal. Although FY18 budget constraints may impact the milestones as originally identified work is already underway to determine alternatives to these milestones.

As seen in the *Assessment Framework Rating Template*, Goal #2 had a clear and fully executed plan for the 2016-2017 school year. Strategies were well-supported for maximum impact on student growth targets. All of the 2016-17 goal milestones were achieved, including but not limited to:

- Blended K-3 literacy professional learning opportunities (ReadConn) were provided for 417 teachers and administrators;
- Connecticut K-3 Intensive Reading Strategy was implemented in 64 schools;
 - The Alliance District Expansion Project impacted 7,042 K-3 students
 - Three (3) district models were established in Windham, Norwalk, and Waterbury impacting 1,114 students
 - Face-to-face early literacy professional learning was provided to 43 teachers
 - Early literacy strategic planning supports were provided to 205 teachers and 41 literacy leaders/administrators
- Professional learning regarding the incorporation of instructional strategies for students with Dyslexia was provided to 4,272 individuals through face-to-face sessions, live webinars and online modules;
- Literacy improvement efforts were supported in six (6) State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) districts including 24 district technical assistance visits;
- Professional learning regarding English Learner (EL) instruction was provided to over 600 EL service providers, TESOL/Bilingual administrators, coaches, and other district staff through face-to-face sessions, professional meetings, and live webinars;
- A total of 347 pre-service and in-service teachers completed the online State of Connecticut English Language Proficiency (CELP) Standards training modules;
- EL, literacy and mathematics resources were updated on CSDE websites;
- On November 2, 2016, the Commissioner's Council on Mathematics Report was released;
- Mathematics content and standards training was provided to individuals across Connecticut, including an 80-hour Intel course in mathematics content for 25 K-8 teachers;
- Face-to-face professional learning was provided to 107 teachers and administrators on the Instructional Material Evaluation Tool (IMET) to determine whether current district instructional materials are aligned to the Connecticut Core Standards-Mathematics; and
- The first Commissioner's Summer Math Challenge occurred with 12,490 students registering.

Significant work occurred during the 2016-17 year that led to an increase in teacher and administrator knowledge, time and resources. Full implementation during the 2017-18 school year remains a concern. The plan for supporting Goal #2 in the 2017-18 school year must be redesigned to represent the current reality of limited resources and the impact the lack of finances may have on the effective implementation of these strategies.

Next Steps

Feedback was received during the December 7, 2017, Stock Take meeting that occurred with Commissioner Wentzell. The next update to the State Board of Education on Goal #2 will be in August 2018. Between now and then, the following actions are planned:

- Modify and implement the milestones outlined in the strategy profiles;
- Recruit greater number of classroom teachers to mathematics professional learning opportunities;
- Continue exploration into additional cost free opportunities to build capacity and understanding;
- Continue to have strategy leads participate in cross-divisional team meetings and provide technical assistance to support Opportunity Districts;
- Increase the number of participants in federally-funded early literacy professional learning opportunities designed to support the education of students with exceptionalities and ELs;

- Create a technical proposal for Commissioner Wentzell regarding online learning management platforms to host CSDE learning modules related to strategies, thus creating a cost effective means of delivering professional learning; and
- Meet biweekly with strategy leads and other involved staff to monitor the implementation process, progress toward the targets and sub-targets for each strategy, making changes as necessary.

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