

SERIES: 2000-2001

CIRCULAR LETTER: C-19

TO: Local School Board Members
Superintendents of Schools
School Principals

FROM: Theodore S. Sergi
Commissioner of Education

SUBJECT: Comprehensive Plan for 2001-2005

DATE: March 21, 2001

Enclosed please find the Connecticut State Board of Education's Comprehensive Plan for 2001-2005. This is our state's fifth long-range plan, and it is our best. I believe the vision and direction are actually for the next 10 to 20 years – not just the next five. At the core of the beliefs and actions is the theme of **Greater Expectations**. If we expect our students to achieve more – every one of them – they will. If we expect our teachers and administrators to become more effective every year, they will. And if we expect our state system, districts and schools to change, they will. We are proud of our progress in Connecticut public schools . . . but there is much more to do.

While vision statements and strategic plans provide direction and purpose, I believe it is the actions we take to reject the status quo that move us forward. Please read the section "Working in Partnership," which shows how the State Board and local school districts can work together to achieve the goals of this plan. Now and in coming years, I hope we all will act more boldly – with a greater sense of urgency. I encourage each of us:

- to focus on new efforts to close the achievement gaps at every level, and
- to encourage our best students and others to become teachers and administrators.

As you review this plan, note that at the national, state and local levels, the American public sees improving public schools as the number one priority. Last week I was in Washington, DC, to attend the meeting of the Chief State School Officers. There is a growing agreement between President Bush and Congress to pass major educational legislation this spring. This will undoubtedly change public education as we know it . . . and there is reason to be both excited and concerned about this much greater federal role in education. Excited about the potential for greater federal resources for public education, concerned that there will be new requirements that will limit state and local flexibility. When you analyze President Bush's proposal, "No Child Left Behind," or the Senate or House proposals to date, you find 90 percent agreement in terms of the major issues:

- accountability and flexibility;
- preschool and early reading success;
- extended school hours and technology;
- teacher quality and shortage and class size reduction; and
- facility renovation and construction.

These are areas of great opportunity for each of us, areas in which our leadership can make a positive difference for Connecticut students. Thank you.

TSS:fsm

TO: All State Department of Education Staff

FROM: Theodore S. Sergi
Commissioner of Education

SUBJECT: Comprehensive Plan for 2001-2005

DATE: March 23, 2001

Attached please find the Connecticut State Board of Education's Comprehensive Plan for 2001-2005. This is our state's fifth long-range plan, and it is our best. I believe the vision and direction are actually for the next 10 to 20 years – not just the next five. At the core of the beliefs and actions is the theme of **Greater Expectations**. If we expect our students to achieve more – every one of them – they will. If we expect our teachers and administrators to become more effective every year, they will. And if we expect our state system, districts and schools to change, they will. We are proud of our progress in Connecticut public schools . . . but there is much more to do.

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I expect that each of us in the SDE will use this plan as our guide for all other federal and state plans, goal statements, etc.

This document could not have been completed without a lot of high quality advice from many of you, but very special thanks to Dr. Catherine Fisk, chief writer and architect – and to Marsha Howland and Andrea Wadowski for making it both readable and attractive. Thank you.