

Series 2003-2004
Circular Letter: C – 10

**Updated New Information
is in Italics**

TO: Superintendents of Schools
Regional Education Service Center Directors
Charter School Directors, Magnet School Directors

FROM: Theodore S. Sergi, Commissioner of Education

DATE: October 29, 2003

SUBJECT: No Child Left Behind, 2001 for the 2003-04 School Year

This memo and attachments will serve as an update of all previous correspondence regarding implementation of the No Child Left Behind, 2001.

Connecticut's Statewide Consolidated Application for Elementary and Secondary Education Act, reauthorized as No Child Left Behind, 2001 was approved by the United States Department of Education on July 15, 2003. This approval authorized Connecticut's receipt of \$191,625,723 in federal funds to support the five goals of No Child Left Behind, 2001.

The Connecticut State Board of Education adopted the K-12 Statewide Accountability Plan at its June 4, 2003 meeting which was approved by the United States Department of Education on June 9, 2003 and is compliant with the federal law No Child Left Behind, 2001 (NCLB).

Connecticut's plan for meeting the federal requirements for identifying persistently dangerous schools was submitted on June 16, 2003.

In addition, the United States Department of Education has issued a series of non-regulatory guidance and letters which clarifies certain aspects of NCLB.

Highlights of these documents, and their impact on Connecticut's public schools, are summarized under seven categories:

- A. Assessment;
- B. Highly qualified teachers;
- C. Paraprofessionals;
- D. General description of Title programs;
- E. Linguistic assessment of English Language Learners;
- F. Graduation rates; and
- G. Unsafe school choice options.

The federal legislation, regulations, guidance and questions and answers may be found at <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/asst.html#leg>.

Districts are reminded of their responsibilities to:

- ensure that all teachers in core academic areas are or become highly qualified by June, 2006.
- all Title I schoolwide schools and those targeted assistance schools using Title I funds to hire new teachers, can only hire highly qualified teachers' of core academic subjects.
- all paraprofessionals in Title I schools are appropriately credentialed.
- all reporting and parental notification requirements for Title I schools are met annually.
- all students are assessed in 2003-04, including English Language Learners (ELL).
- *Title I Districts develop and implement Parental Involvement Plans.*

Please take the time to review this material with your district/school staff. Thank you. If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Abigail L. Hughes at (860) 713-6800 or by e-mail at abigail.hughes@po.state.ct.us.

A. ASSESSMENT

The new federal legislation, *No Child Left Behind, 2001* (NCLB), contains a number of requirements which directly affect the administration and reporting of Connecticut's state assessments.

1. Annual Testing: NCLB requires annual testing of all students in reading and mathematics in Grades 3 through 8 beginning in 2005-06. In the next 12 years, every state, school district and school has the goal of 100 percent of their students reaching proficiency in reading and mathematics.

2. Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Criteria for 2002-03 and 2003-04:

- Whole school: 65% Proficient in Mathematics
57% Proficient in Reading
- Each Subgroup with at least 40 students: 65% Proficient in Mathematics
57% Proficient in Reading
 - White
 - Black
 - Hispanic
 - Students with Disabilities
 - English Language Learners
 - Economically Disadvantaged
- Additional Academic Indicator
 - Whole school: 70% basic or above in writing or improvement from previous year
- Participation in Standard Test, Out of Level or CMT/CAPT checklists in a school or subgroup with at least 40 students 95% of enrolled students

- In addition, a confidence interval is applied to the test results, which accounts for the inherent measurement inaccuracies of any test and the judgment errors which can occur due to the fluctuation of the test takers from one year to the next. The resulting confidence interval is established at the 99 percent confidence level. Therefore, the final percent proficient used for AYP analysis was based on applying the confidence interval, (which varies across schools depending on the number of students in tested grades), to the actual percent of students proficient in mathematics and reading, thus producing an adjusted rate.
- 2002 CMT results were attributed to the school of instruction during 2001-02. Students were removed from the analysis who had not attended the full 2001-02 school year. Participation rate was calculated based on data obtained from each students' test document. The number of students who took all sections of the standard CMT, Out of Level, or CMT/CAPT Skills Check List were divided by the number of all eligible test takers.

If a school does not make Adequate Yearly Progress for 2 consecutive years, it will be identified as a school "in need of improvement" by **August 1, 2004**. For those identified schools which receive Title I money, parents of the students in these schools will need to be offered the option of sending their children to a school within the district for the 2004-05 school year, which has made AYP. All schools identified as "in need of improvement" regardless of Title I funding will be required to develop, within 90 days, a school improvement plan, submitted to this Department.

Although all schools will be subject to the AYP analysis and identification, only those identified schools and districts receiving Title I funds will be subject to a specific set of consequences.

- 3. Achievement:** the achievement results and participation rates will be calculated for the following groups in each school and district:
 - All students in the school or district
 - Economically disadvantaged students
 - Students with disabilities
 - English Language Learners (ELL)
 - White, Black and Hispanic students

Starting Points		
	CMT Elementary/Middle	CAPT High School
Mathematics	65% Proficient	59% Proficient
Reading	57% Proficient	62% Proficient

	CMT				CAPT			
	Reading		Mathematics		Reading		Mathematics	
	AYP Level	Suggested Annual Targets	AYP Level	Suggested Annual Targets	AYP Level	Suggested Annual Targets	AYP Level	Suggested Annual Targets
2002-03	57%	57%	65%	65%	62%	62%	59%	59%
2003-04		60%		67%		65%		62%
2004-05		68%		74%		72%		69%
2005-06	68%	71%	74%	77%	72%	75%	69%	73%
2006-07		75%		80%		78%		76%
2007-08		79%		82%		81%		80%
2008-09	79%	82%	82%	85%	81%	84%	80%	83%
2009-10		85%		89%		88%		87%
2010-11		89%		91%		91%		90%
2011-12	89%	94%	91%	96%	91%	96%	90%	95%
2012-13		98%		99%		99%		98%
2013-14	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Based on the 2001-02 CMT data, the federal baseline is established by the performance of the school where the 20th percentile student is enrolled (65 percent proficient in mathematics and 57 percent proficient in reading). Therefore, each district, school and student subgroup that does not have 65 percent of their students Proficient in mathematics and 57 percent of their students Proficient in reading on the CMT would fall below the established baseline. For CAPT, the target level of performance for mathematics is 59 percent proficient and reading is 62 percent of students at or above the Proficient level. Over time, schools will be required to have an increasing percentage of students in each of the above-mentioned groups (when the groups are of reasonable size) scoring at the Proficient level or higher on the state assessments to meet AYP. By federal law, these percentages must be calculated differently from the traditional way in which CMT and CAPT results have been calculated. **Therefore, the results published in state and district reports will be different than the results published to meet the NCLB accountability requirements.** The differences in the calculation and reporting procedures are summarized in Attachment A-1.

- 4. Participation:** The participation rate requirement is that no less than 95 percent of all students (in each of the above-mentioned groups) take part in the CMT and CAPT or the alternate state assessments: the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist and Out-of-Level (OOL) tests. That means that 95 percent of all students in a school must participate in the testing program. This particularly has implications for assuring the attendance of students during the testing window and providing make-up tests for those students absent from the district's scheduled tests. If a school or district fails to meet the 95 percent student participation standard, it will be identified as not making AYP.

This new participation requirement does not replace Connecticut's established target goals and expectations for the participation of special education students on the standard grade level version of the CMT and CAPT. These target goals and expectations remain as follows:

- At least 80 percent of all special education students will participate in each subtest of the standard grade level version of the CMT/CAPT.
- No more than 15 percent of the special education students will participate in Out of Level (OOL) testing.
- No more than 5 percent of the special education students will participate in the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist.

A proficient standard has been established for the CMT and CAPT Skills Checklist and students achieving that standard will be included as proficient in the AYP analysis. The United States Department of Education sent guidance that for the 2001-02 year only, students who achieve at the proficient level on OLL tests will be included as proficient in the AYP analysis.

5. Reporting: The CMT and CAPT data attributed to the 2001-02 school year will be used as the baseline data for setting the starting point for achievement expectations. In the fall of 2002, you received school and district NCLB Federal Reports (as an appendix to your district and school Strategic School Profile) which showed, for NCLB accountability purposes, the performance and participation rate of your school district's students in mathematics and reading on the 2001 CMT and the 2002 CAPT. Please see Attachment A-3 for an example of this report. There are several differences from the standard CMT and CAPT reports. Of note are the terms used to describe the performance of students according to the achievement levels. On the School and District NCLB Federal Reports, the percentages of students scoring at Basic and above, at Proficient and above, and at Advanced are reported.

On all other state reports for CMT and CAPT, the percentages of students scoring in each of the five levels will be reported: Below Basic, Basic, Proficient, State Goal, and Advanced. Because of the many other differences described in Attachment A-1, the percentages of students across these two types of reports will not be the same.

6. Future Implications of NCLB on CMT and CAPT Administration: A new generation of CMT (CMT -4) will be administered to students beginning in school year 2005-06. This new generation of the CMT coincides with the implementation of NCLB that expands the test to include students in grades 3 through 8, and moves the administration of the CMT to the first two weeks in April. There will be no CMT in the fall of 2005; but April 2006 would be the first spring administration of the CMT. The CAPT administration will move to April beginning in 2003-04. The new generation of CAPT (CAPT -3) will be administered to students in April 2007.

For the CMT, students in grades 3 through 8 will be tested in the areas of mathematics, reading, and writing starting in 2005-06, which begins a new generation of CMT (CMT -4) which will be very similar to the present generation in format, time and content. Science will be added in grade 5 and grade 8 beginning in school year 2007-08. The new generation of CAPT (CAPT -3) will begin in the 2006-07 school year and will be very similar to the present assessment except in Science.

In order to prepare test forms for the CMT -4 piloting of grade 3-8 students will take place in the **spring of 2004**. As in the past, we will need all students to be involved in the piloting, but only on one or two sessions, not the full CMT. Below is a chart with a tentative schedule of CMT Generation 3 and 4 census and pilot testing for school years 2002-03 through 2007-08.

School Year	Fall (September/October)		Spring (April)	
	<i>Census</i>	<i>Pilot</i>	<i>Census</i>	<i>Pilot</i>
2003-04	CMT3, Grades 4, 6 and 8	CMT 3, Grades 4, 6, and 8 (only some districts will pilot)	None	CMT4, Grades 3-8
2004-05	CMT3, Grades 4,6, and 8	None	None	CMT4, Grades 3-8
2005-06	None	None	CMT4, Grades 3-8	CMT4, Grades 3-8
2006-07	None	None	CMT4, Grades 3-8	CMT4, Grades 3-8
2007-08	None	None	CMT4, Grades 3-8	CMT4, Grades 3-8

Attachment A-2 provides a copy of a draft calendar for the administration of the CAPT for the years 2003-04 through 2007-08 and for the CMT years 2004-05 through 2007-08. The testing window will be approximately two weeks in length with the Science Performance Task occurring the month before regular testing. A list of religious and state holidays that occur during the testing window has been included to assist you with scheduling dates within your district. Fixed sessions must be given on the dates indicated, but all other testing may be scheduled at any time during the two - week testing window.

ATTACHMENT A-1
CMT AND NCLB COMPARISON OF METHODS OF REPORTING RESULTS

CMT and NCLB Comparison of Methods of Reporting Results		
Topic	CMT	NCLB
1. In what school are students reported?	The school attended at the time of testing.	The school attended the prior year. Schools serving students below Grade 3 develop own assessment method for math and reading.
2. Are students who are in a school for less than a year included when reporting results for that school?	Yes	No
3. Are grades reported separately?	Yes	No
4. What is the key reporting unit?	Percent at or above Goal (Level 4, including Advanced)	Percent at or above Proficient (Levels III and IV)
5. What size group is reported?	Groups of 10 or more are reported.	Scores will be reported whenever the group result would not reveal an individual student's performance. Only groups of 20 will be included in determining school performance.
6. What levels are reported?	Advanced Goal Proficient Basic Below basic	Advanced Proficient Basic

Topic	CMT	NCLB
7. What denominator is used in calculating performance?	The denominator is the number of valid test scores. It does not include students who take OOL tests or the Skills Checklist, or students who are absent, exempt, use special modifications, leave a test blank, or whose Direct Assessment of Writing tests are unable to be scored.	The denominator for performance levels is all students, except students who were absent and did not take a make-up test.
8. How are performance levels determined for students based on the test taken?	Students taking the standard CMT will be placed in a level based on the score earned. Those taking OOL and Skills Checklist are not put into levels with students taking the grade level test. OOL students are given OOL individual reports with level information. Students who are absent, exempt, use special modifications, leave a test blank, or whose Direct Assessment of Writing tests are unable to be scored are not put into levels.	Students taking the standard CMT will be placed in a level based on the score earned. Those taking OOL, use special modifications, leave the test blank, or are unable to be scored will be placed in below basic. Students judged proficient on the skills checklist will be counted as proficient.
9. Are scale scores reported?	Scale scores are reported for those students taking the standard CMT. Scale scores are not reported for those taking the Skills Checklist or for those students who are absent, exempt, use special modifications, or leave a test blank, or whose Direct Assessment of Writing tests are unable to be scored. OOL students have scale scores reported on OOL reports but not on grade level reports.	No
Topic	CMT	NCLB
10. Is non-scorable a reported category?	Non-scorable is reported for the Direct	Non-scorable students are automatically put

	Assessment of Writing test only, as applicable. In that case, a student does not receive total Writing scale score.	in the below basic level for Writing.
11. How are “Void” students handled?	Students are no longer reported as Voids. When a student becomes ill or cheats on any subtest (these are the only two situations when a Void was previously given), students must be administered a breach form of the test. That student is given the score earned on that breach form.	VOIDs are not reported. When a student becomes ill or cheats on any subtest, they must be given a breach form of the test. That student is given the score earned on that breach form.
12. How are Limited English Proficient (LEP) students reported?	LEP students are reported as a group.	LEP students are reported as a group.
13. How are special education students who take Out of Level tests reported?	These students are reported as taking OOL tests on the standard rosters and are not reported with scale scores on levels. On the OOL roster, they are reported with scores and levels. OOL students are not included in the denominator when calculating performance on the standard test.	Students taking OOL tests are automatically reported in the below basic level.
14. How are special education students who take the Skills Checklist reported?	These students are reported as taking the Skills Checklist on the standard rosters and are not reported with scale scores or levels. Skills Checklist students are not included in denominators when calculating performance on the standard test.	Students judged proficient on the Skills Checklist (limited to 1% of all students) are reported as proficient.

Topic	CMT	NCLB
15. How are students reported who are present but leave a test blank?	These students are not given scores and are reported as leaving a test blank. These students are not included in denominators when calculating performance on the standard test.	These students are not given scores. These students are included in the denominator for participation and performance levels.
16. How are students who are absent from the test reported?	These students are not given scores and are reported as absent. These students are not included in denominators when calculating performance on the standard test.	These students are reported as absent and are not given scores. These students are included in the denominator for participation but NOT for performance levels.
17. How are LEP students who are exempt reported?	These students are not given scores and are reported as exempt. These students are not included in denominators when calculating performance on the standard test.	LEP students are no longer exempt from the state tests.
18. What students are considered participants and how is participation reported?	Participation rates are calculated using total enrollment as the denominator. The percent of total enrollment in each category is provided: standard, OOL, Skills Checklist, exempt, absent, and No Valid Score (includes students who leave a test blank, students who use special modifications, and students whose Direct Assessment of Writing tests are unable to be scored.)	One participation rate is calculated. Students who take standard, OOL, Skills Checklist, and students who use special modifications, who leave a test blank, or whose Direct Assessment of Writing tests are unable to be scored are included as participants. Absent students are not included as participants. The denominator includes all students.

**ATTACHMENT A-2
CALENDAR OF TEST ADMINISTRATION
PENDING STATE LEGISLATION**

CAPT Calendar 2004-08					
	Spring 2004	Spring 2005	Spring 2006	Spring 2007	Spring 2008
Science Performance Task	<i>February 23 to March 26</i>	February 28 to March 31	February 27 to March 31		
CAPT Administration	<i>March 29 to April 16</i>	April 1 to April 15	April 3 to April 13	April 2 to April 13	April 1 to April 11
Interdisciplinary Writing 1	<i>March 30</i>	April 5	April 4	April 5	April 1
Response to Literature	<i>April 1</i>	April 6	April 5	April 10	April 2
Interdisciplinary Writing 2	<i>April 2</i>	April 7	April 6	April 11	April 3

CMT Calendar 2004-08					
	Fall 2003	Fall 2004	Spring 2006	Spring 2007	Spring 2008
<i>CMT Administration</i>	September 17-October 3	September 15 – October 1	April 3 to April 13	April 2 to April 13	April 1 to April 11
Direct Assessment of Writing	September 18	September 21	April 4	April 5	April 1
Science Performance Task	NA	NA	NA	NA	February 25 to March 28

HOLIDAYS OCCURRING DURING THE TESTING WINDOW

	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>
Passover	April 6-7	NA	April 13-17	April 3-4	NA
Good Friday	April 9	NA	April 14	April 6	NA
Rosh Hashanah	Sept. 16-17	NA	NA	NA	NA
Yom Kippur	Sept. 25	NA	NA	NA	NA
Sukkot	Sept. 30- Oct. 1	NA	NA	NA	NA

ATTACHMENT A-3
DISTRICT AND SCHOOL REPORT CARD FORMAT

Go to: http://www.csde.state.ct.us/public/der/schools/nclb_reports.htm

(On your mouse, right click on link above, then left click on "open hyperlink")

B. HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS

1. Definitions

- a. The term "highly qualified teacher" only applies to those who teach the core academic subjects of English, mathematics, reading/language arts, sciences, world languages, arts (includes music), history, geography, civics and government, and economics. These subjects would include the following Connecticut certification endorsements:
- All early childhood;
 - All elementary;
 - Middle School 4-8 and Middle School in the content areas identified above;
 - All secondary in content areas identified above;
 - All world languages;
 - Art;
 - Music;
 - Remedial Reading and Remedial Language Arts;
 - Bilingual Education, teaching in the content areas identified above;
 - TESOL, teaching in the content areas identified above;
 - Special Education, teaching in the content areas identified above;
 - Reading/Language Arts Consultant who teaches reading; and
 - Gifted and Talented teaching in the content areas identified above.
- b. "A highly qualified teacher holds full state certification as a teacher (including *participation* in or certification through alternative routes) or has passed a state teacher licensing exam and holds state certification." *In Connecticut, the Temporary 90-day Certificate, the Durational Shortage Area Permit (DSAP), Temporary Minor Assignment Permit and Temporary Authorization for Early Childhood Permit are now recognized as alternative routes to certification.*
- c. Those teachers new to the profession (no public school teaching experience), who are teaching core academic subjects, must
- Hold at least a bachelor's degree; **and**
 - At the elementary level, demonstrate by passing a state test on subject knowledge and teaching skills in reading/language arts, writing, mathematics and other areas of the basic elementary school curriculum (in Connecticut, this is PRAXIS I in reading, writing and mathematics and PRAXIS II elementary tests);
 - At the middle and high school levels, demonstrate a high level of competency by: passing a state test in each academic subject in which the teacher teaches (Middle School PRAXIS or PRAXIS II or the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages [ACTFL]); or have successfully completed, in each academic subject in which the teacher teaches an undergraduate major or a graduate degree or coursework equivalent to an undergraduate major or advanced certification or credentials.
- d. By the end of school year 2005-06, those teachers not new to the profession and teaching core academic subjects must:
- Hold at least a bachelor's degree; **and**
 - Meet the applicable requirements in the paragraph above; **or**
 - Another alternative is based on the teacher's demonstration of competence in all the core academic subjects taught based on a "high, objective, uniform state standard of evaluation." Since your district teacher evaluation system is based on the Connecticut

teacher evaluation and professional development guidelines, and was reviewed and critiqued using the Department's Peer Review process in 2001, and the evaluation includes subject matter knowledge assessment, then this standard has been met (pending the United States Department of Education approval). Districts would particularly need to evaluate the subject matter competence, based on the *Common Core of Teaching*, using both the: 1) foundational skills and competencies; and 2) the discipline-based professional standards, of teachers *teaching core academic subjects* who are working under a 1-8, pre-K-8, 4-8 middle school, TESOL, Bilingual or Special Education endorsement.

- e. "A teacher is not highly qualified if certification requirements were waived on an emergency, temporary or provisional basis." Based on Connecticut's certification rules, teachers teaching the core academic subjects working under the following certificates/permits are not highly qualified according to the federal definitions:
- Nonrenewable Interim Initial Education Certificate;
 - Nonrenewable Interim Provisional Education Certificate;
 - Interim Initial Education Certificate;
 - Interim Provisional Education Certificate;
 - Substitute Teacher Authorization-Long Term; and
 - Any certified teacher not teaching in his/her endorsement area. (Certification regulations require teachers to teach only in their endorsement area(s) unless a temporary authorization for minor assignment has been requested and approved.)

2. Requirements for Newly Hired Teachers in Title I Schools

For all newly hired teachers in Title I schools and programs:

- A local educational agency (LEA) must ensure that all teachers hired after the first day of the 2002-2003 school year to teach core academic subjects in a school or program supported with Title I funds are highly qualified.
- This includes teachers teaching core academic subjects in a "targeted assistance school" who are paid with Title I funds or all teachers teaching core academic subjects in a Title I "schoolwide" program school, regardless of funding.
- Therefore, those Title I schools with schoolwide programs, can only hire teachers of core academic subjects who are highly qualified. By federal definition, Connecticut's bilingual, TESOL and Special Education teachers who hold full Connecticut Certification and are the sole provider of instruction in any of the core academic subject areas are not highly qualified unless they have passed subject area tests for each subject taught (PRAXIS or ACTFL) or have subject area coursework equivalent to a major in each content area taught.

3. Requirements for Current Teachers in All Schools

For all teachers of core academic subjects:

- Not later than the end of the 2005-06 school year, each state that receives Title I funds must ensure that all teachers in the state who teach core academic subjects are highly qualified. This includes all public school districts and all public schools regardless of receipt of ESEA federal funds.

These requirements also apply to teachers employed by an LEA using Title I funds who provide services to private school students in the core academic subjects.

4. State Requirements To Ensure that All Teachers Are Highly Qualified

A State Plan must be developed to ensure that all teachers in the state teaching in core academic subjects are highly qualified by the end of the 2005-06 school year. The State Plan must establish annual, measurable objectives for each LEA and school that include, at a minimum, an annual increase in the percentage of teachers highly qualified and that these teachers are receiving high quality, job-embedded professional development. The ultimate goal of meeting federal expectations is that 100 percent of all teachers teaching in core academic subjects are highly qualified by the end of the 2005-2006 school year and beyond. An LEA that receives Title I funds is responsible for developing an action plan to annually increase the percentage of highly qualified teachers.

5. Verification of Compliance: Effective for the 2002-03 school year, and annually thereafter, the principals of each Title I school (targeted assistance or schoolwide program) must provide an annual written attestation of compliance with these requirements. Specifically, the attestation must assess compliance with the highly qualified teachers in core academic areas requirements for: newly-hired teachers in Title I schools hired after the first day of the 2002-03 school year; and for all existing teachers by the end of the 2005-06 school year. Copies of the attestation should be maintained at each Title I school and at each school district's office and be made available to the general public upon request. (Please see the attached Sample B-1).

6. Notification of Parents: Effective 2002-03 School Year and Annually

a. Parental Requests: Parents of each student attending any school receiving Title I funds shall be notified at the beginning of each school year, that they may request, and the district will provide, in a timely manner, information regarding the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers. (Please see the attached Sample B-2).

The information must include, at a minimum:

- if the teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
- if the teacher is teaching under an interim certificate, a durational shortage area permit, a minor assignment, or as a substitute teacher;
- the baccalaureate degree major and any other graduate certification degree held by the teacher; and the field of discipline of the certification or degree;
- and information on whether the student is provided services by a paraprofessional and, if so, their qualifications.

(Please see the attached Sample B-3 form for your use at your discretion—but, you must meet the requirements above.)

B. Parental Right to Know: A school district receiving Title I funds must provide to each individual parent whose children are attending a Title I school:

- Information on the level of achievement of their child on the CMT or CAPT (Individual Student Reports for CMT or CAPT [provided by State Testing Contractor] given to parents fulfills this requirement); and
- Timely notice that their child has been assigned or has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified. (Please see the attached Sample B-4.)

SAMPLE B-1 VERIFICATION OF TITLE I COMPLIANCE

WITH P.L. 107-110, SECTION 1119 - QUALIFICATION FOR TEACHERS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS

LEA:		Town Code:	
Name of School:		School Code:	
Address:			

I, _____ do hereby attest that _____,
 (name of principal) (name of school)

located in _____ and operating either a targeted assistance or schoolwide
 (district/town)

Title I program, is in compliance with the requirements of Section 1119 - Qualifications for Teachers and Paraprofessionals of No Child Left Behind of 2001, Public Law 107-110, as follows:

- compliance with the highly qualified teachers in core academic areas requirements for:
 - newly-hired teachers in Title I schools hired after the first day of the 2002-03 school year; and
 - for all existing teachers by the end of the 2005-06 school year.
- compliance with the paraprofessional requirements for:
 - newly hired paraprofessional, as of 1/8/02
 - existing paraprofessional by 1/8/06;
 - all paraprofessionals holding a high school diploma or equivalent; and
 - paraprofessional duties.

Copies of this attestation shall be maintained at this school and at the main office of the school district

and shall be available to any member of the general public on request.

 (signature of principal)

 (Date)

**SAMPLE B-2
PARENTS RIGHT TO KNOW
REGARDING TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS**

DATE

INSIDE ADDRESS (Line 1)
INSIDE ADDRESS (Line 2)
INSIDE ADDRESS (Line 3)

Dear Parent:

In fulfillment of new federal legislation, *No Child Left Behind of 2001*, we are required to inform you that you have the right to request and receive timely information on the professional qualifications of your child's classroom teachers.

This would include information on the following:

- Whether the teacher has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which state qualification or licensing have been waived;
- The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline or the certification or degree; and
- Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

If you wish to receive this information please call your principal, _____ at _____.

Sincerely,

AUTHOR
TITLE

XXX: xxx

**SAMPLE B-3
PARENTAL NOTICE REGARDING TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS**

DISTRICT: _____ **SCHOOL YEAR:** _____

SCHOOL: _____

TEACHER NAME: _____

CERTIFICATION STATUS:

- Full state certification for grade level and subject taught.*
- 90-Day Temporary Certification*
- Durational Shortage Area Permit: (minimum of a Bachelor's degree, 12 semester hours of credit in subject taught, passed basic skills test; must complete all certification requirements within three years).*
- Minor Assignment: Holds full certification in a different-but often related-subject and may teach no more than two periods a day in non-certified subject (holds state certification in another subject, minimum of 12 semester hours of credit in subject taught; must complete all certification requirements within two years).*
- Limited Extended Authorization for Early Childhood: (minimum of 10 months teaching experience under Early Childhood certificate [nursery to Grade 3]; may teach in Grades 4-6, minimum 12 semester hours of credit in elementary education; must complete all certification requirements within two years).*
- Non-Renewable Interim Certificate: Valid one year (meets all certification requirements except for state tests).
- Interim Certificate: Valid one year, renewable one year (meets all certification requirements except for required course in special education).
- Holds Connecticut certification but not for grade level or subject taught.
- Long-Term Substitute Permit: Valid for one year (holds a bachelor's degree and has 12 semester hours of credit in the subject taught).
- Regular Substitute Teacher: May not teach in the same classroom more than 40 days (holds a Bachelor's degree).

*These teaching certificates or permits are considered "highly qualified" under No Child Left Behind.

DEGREES HELD: Baccalaureate degree major: _____

Graduate degrees: _____
(identify field of discipline) _____

PARAPROFESSIONAL:
(Please check ~ box)

- Your child is receiving services by a paraprofessional.
Qualifications:
Highest Level of Education: _____
Years of Experience: _____
Other: _____
- Your child is not receiving services by a paraprofessional.

SAMPLE B-4
PARENTAL NOTICE REGARDING TEACHERS NOT FULLY CERTIFIED OR
FOR LONG-TERM SUBSTITUTES

DATE

INSIDE ADDRESS (Line 1)

INSIDE ADDRESS (Line 2)

INSIDE ADDRESS (Line 3)

Dear Parent:

In fulfillment of new federal legislation, *No Child Left Behind of 2001*, we are required to inform you if your child has been assigned a teacher who, by federal definition, is not highly qualified or who has been taught by a teacher for more than four consecutive weeks who, by federal definition, is not highly qualified. This definition states that "a highly qualified teacher holds full state certification as a teacher (including participating in or holding certification through alternate routes) or has passed a state teacher licensing exam and holds state certification".

In Connecticut, we consider teachers with a non-renewable interim certificate, an interim certificate, and a long-term substitute permit to be qualified to teach in the public school system. However, by federal definition, teachers with these qualifications are not considered to be "highly qualified".

Your child, _____, is being taught by a qualified teacher, hired by the _____ Public School System, who has one of the above-named permits or certificates; while the teacher does not hold full Connecticut certification, he/she holds, at a minimum, a bachelor's degree and has met minimum semester hours of coursework in the subject being taught and needs to complete tests and/or additional coursework to become fully certified.

At this time, the _____ Public School System is unable to find and hire a fully certified teacher to fill this position, but will continue to seek a person who meets the federal definition.

Sincerely,

AUTHOR

TITLE

XXX:xxx

***PLEASE NOTE: This letter would not be applicable for a regular substitute teacher or for a certified teacher providing instruction in an area in which he/she is not certified.**

C. PARAPROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements only apply to paraprofessionals engaged in instructional support who are paid with Title I funds in a Title I targeted assistance school and to all paraprofessionals with instructional duties in a Title I schoolwide program school (regardless of funding source). Paraprofessionals working primarily as translators or solely on parental involvement activities must have a high school diploma or GED, but do not have to meet the other requirements. Individuals who provide personal care services or clerical duties are not considered paraprofessionals under Title I requirements.

1. Education Requirements

The following requirements apply to all paraprofessionals who are either: funded by Title I funds and providing instructional assistance in Title I targeted assistance schools; or funded from any source and providing instruction in Title I schoolwide programs:

- a. Any "Title I" paraprofessional described above providing instructional assistance who is newly hired after January 8, 2002, must have the following:
 - A high school diploma or General Educational Development (GED) test, **AND**
 - Two years of college credit, **OR**
 - An associate's (or higher) degree, **OR**
 - Pass a State Board of Education adopted Paraprofessional Assessment which assesses content knowledge in mathematics, reading and writing and an understanding of how to assist in the instruction of these topics. (NCLB requires a rigorous state or local assessment as one option.)
- b. Currently employed "Title I" paraprofessionals described above providing instructional assistance - **Each paraprofessional must have earned a high school diploma or GED to maintain current employment.** This means that no paraprofessional currently employed should be paid with Title I funds if they do not meet this requirement.
- c. By **January 8, 2006**, each Connecticut Title I funded paraprofessional in a Title I targeted assistance school or any paraprofessional providing instructional assistance in a Title I schoolwide program school must meet **one** of the following requirements:
 - Have two years of college credit; **OR**
 - Hold an associate's (or higher degree); **OR**
 - Pass a State Board of Education adopted Paraprofessional Assessment which assesses content knowledge in mathematics, reading and writing and an understanding of how to assist in the instruction of these topics. (NCLB requires a rigorous state or local assessment as one option.)

The Connecticut State Board of Education adopted the Educational Testing Services *ParaPro Assessment* at the December 2002 Board meeting and established a passing score of 457. This test fulfills the option of passing a rigorous state assessment. A description of the assessment, including sample items, can be found at www.ets.org/parapro/index.html. The assessment takes

two and one-half hours and will include 90 multiple-choice questions which assess skills in mathematics, reading and writing and in assisting instruction. The assessment is designed to be taken on a school site through the Internet with the cost of \$40 to be charged to the district; results are provided to the candidates at the conclusion of the assessment. There will also be a pencil-and-paper version available six times a year with individual registration and payment; results will be provided to the candidate within four weeks of administration.

At the present time, the Department is not contemplating other than the ETS ParaPro assessment - unless, over time, there are alternative tests which could be validated for comparability to the ParaPro content and standards, and approved by the State Board of Education.

2. Duties

A Title I paraprofessional may be assigned:

- To provide one-on-one tutoring for eligible students, if the tutoring is scheduled at a time when a student would not otherwise receive instruction from a teacher;
- To assist with classroom management, such as organizing instructional and other materials;
- To provide assistance in a computer laboratory;
- To conduct parental involvement activities;
- To provide support in a library or media center;
- To act as a translator; or
- To provide instructional support services to students. (A Title I paraprofessional may not provide any instructional support to a student unless he/she is working under the direct supervision of a classroom teacher who meets the NCLB requirements of highly qualified as outlined in Section B.)

3. Use of Funds

A local education agency (LEA) receiving Title I funds may use such funds to pay for the test and to support ongoing training and professional development of paraprofessionals to assist them in meeting the requirements.

4. Verification of Compliance

Effective for the 2002-03 school year, and annually thereafter, the principal of each Title I school (targeted assistance or schoolwide program) must provide an annual written attestation of compliance with these requirements. Specifically, the attestation must assess compliance with the Title I paraprofessional requirements for: newly-hired paraprofessionals, as of 1-8-02; existing paraprofessionals by 1/8/06; all paraprofessionals holding a high school diploma or equivalent; and, paraprofessional duties. Copies of the attestation should be maintained at each Title I school and at each school district's office and be made available to the general public upon request. (Please see the attached Sample B-1 on pg. 16).

D. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF TITLE PROGRAMS

1. **Title I, Part A-Improving Basic Programs Operated By Local Educational Agencies:** provides assistance to improve the teaching and learning of children in high - poverty schools to enable those children to meet challenging State academic content and performance standards.
 - a. **Parental Involvement:** Parental Involvement is defined as "the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring that parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning; that parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school and that parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child." Districts receiving at least \$500,000 of Title I funds shall reserve at least 1 percent to carry out parental involvement activities, including promoting family literacy and parenting skills. Not less than 95% of the funds reserved for parent involvement shall be distributed to the school district's Title I schools, as identified in the consolidated application.
 - b. **Early Childhood:** Title I funds may be used as a foundation to build preschool capacity by expanding the availability of high-quality full-day preschool programs. LEAs may use Title I funds to coordinate and support transitional services for pre-kindergarten children from early childhood development programs to the local educational agency. Districts receiving Title I funds shall, in conjunction with local Head Start agencies, and, if feasible, other early educational (Early Childhood) agencies, coordinate services between the LEAs and Early Childhood agencies; and link LEA educational services with services provided by local Head Start agencies, and entities carrying out Early Reading First programs.
 - c. **District and School NCLB:** Districts receiving Title I funds shall prepare and disseminate an annual District and School NCLB Report, which presents information on the district as a whole and on each school within the LEA. The reports must be disseminated by the LEA to all its schools and mailed or emailed to all its students' parents no later than the beginning of each school year. The reports must also be made widely available through such means as the internet or distribution to the media. The District and School NCLB reports contain the required elements of student performance on the Connecticut Mastery Test and the Connecticut Academic Performance Test, in the aggregate and disaggregated by major racial/ethnic groups, gender, students with disabilities, English Language Learners, economically disadvantaged and migrant status. For each school year, the State Department of Education will produce the District and School NCLB Reports, which will be attached to the Strategic School and District Profiles. The percent of not highly qualified teachers of core academic subjects is also included.
 - d. **Participation of Children Enrolled in Private Schools:** For the purposes of allocating Title I funds for services to eligible private school children, school districts receiving Title I funds have the option of determining either each year or every 2 years the number of private school children from low-income families. Districts receiving Title I funds shall ensure timely and meaningful consultation with appropriate private school officials during the design and

development of such district's Title I programs on issues such as: how the children's needs will be identified; what services will be offered; how, where, and by whom the services will be provided; how the services will be academically assessed and how the results of that assessment will be used to improve those services; the size and scope of the equitable services to be provided; the proportion of the LEA's funds allocated to private school students; the method or sources of poverty data that are used to derive the allocation for private school students; and how and when the LEA will make decisions about the delivery of services to eligible private school students, including a thorough consideration and analysis of the views of the private school officials on the provision of services through a contract with potential third-party providers; and how, if the district disagrees with the views of the private school officials on the provision of services through a contract, the school district will provide in writing to such private school officials an analysis of the reasons why the school district has chosen not to use a contractor. Consultations shall include meetings of school district and private school officials and occur before the school district makes any decision that affects the opportunities of eligible private school children to participate in programs under Title I. Such meetings shall continue throughout implementation and assessment of services. Districts shall retain in their records and provide to the State Department of Education, a written affirmation signed by officials of each participating private school that the consultation required has occurred. If such private school officials do not provide such affirmation within a reasonable period of time, districts shall forward the documentation that such consultation has taken place to the State Department of Education.

2. Title II, Part A-Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting Fund: Consistent with its local plan and needs assessment, the Title II, Part A program offers an LEA the flexibility to design and implement a number of different activities that can result in a teaching staff that is highly qualified and able to help all students, regardless of individual learning needs, achieve challenging State content and academic achievement standards and provide school principals with the knowledge and skills necessary to lead their schools' efforts to increase student academic achievement. For example, Title II, Part A specifically authorizes the following types of activities:

- Developing and implementing mechanisms to assist schools to effectively recruit and retain highly qualified teachers, principals, and specialist in core academic areas.
- Developing and implementing strategies and activities to recruit, hire, and retain highly qualified teachers and principals. These strategies may include (a) providing monetary incentives such as scholarships, signing bonuses, or differential pay for teachers in academic subjects or schools in which the LEA has shortages. (Note: Because the purpose of Title II, Part A is to increase student academic achievement, programs that provide teachers and principals with merit pay, pay differential, and/or monetary bonuses should be linked to measurable increases in student academic achievement produced by the efforts of the teacher or principal (b) reducing class size; (c) recruiting teachers to teach special needs children, and (d) recruiting qualified paraprofessionals and teachers from populations underrepresented in the teaching profession, and providing those paraprofessionals with alternative routes to obtaining teacher certification.

- Providing professional development activities that improve the knowledge of teachers and principals and, in appropriate cases, paraprofessionals, in:
 - (a) Content knowledge. Providing training in one or more of the core academic subjects that the teachers teach; and
 - (b) Classroom practices. Providing training to improve teaching practices and student academic achievement through (a) effective instructional strategies, methods, and skills; (b) the use of challenging State academic content standards and student academic achievement standards in preparing students for the State assessment.

- Providing professional development activities that improve the knowledge of teachers and principals and, in appropriate cases, paraprofessionals, regarding effective instructional practices that —
 - (a) Involve collaborative groups of teachers and administrators;
 - (b) Address the needs of students with different learning styles, particularly students with disabilities, students with special needs (including students who are gifted and talented), and students with limited English proficiency;
 - (c) Provide training in improving student behavior in the classroom and identifying early and appropriate interventions to help students with special needs;
 - (d) Provide training to enable teachers and principals to involve parents in their children's education, especially parents of limited English proficient and immigrant children; and
 - (e) Provide training on how to use data and assessments to improve classroom practice and student learning.

- Developing and implementing initiatives to promote retention of highly qualified teachers and principals, particularly in schools with a high percentage of low-achieving students, including programs that provide teacher mentoring, induction, and support for new teachers and principals during their first three years; and financial incentives for teachers and principals with a record of helping students to achieve academic success. Districts are encouraged to use Title II, Part A funds to support beginning teachers in the BEST Program. Activities may include:
 - (a) providing stipends and other financial incentives to mentor teachers or "master teachers;"(b) expanding the support of beginning teachers into their second or third year of teaching; (c) providing workshops of other professional development for beginning teachers and their mentors as well as principals around effective teaching practices and the portfolio process; and (d) providing release time for collaboration between beginning teachers and their mentors and/or content colleagues.

- Carrying out programs and activities that are designed to improve the quality of the teaching force, such as innovative professional development programs that focus on technology literacy, tenure reform, testing teachers in the academic subject in which teachers teach, and merit pay programs. (Note: Because the purpose of Title II, Part A is to increase student academic achievement, programs that provide teachers and principals with merit pay, pay

differential, and/or monetary bonuses should be linked to measurable increases in student academic achievement produced by the efforts of the teacher or principal.

- Carrying out professional development programs that are designed to improve the quality of principals and superintendents, including the development and support of academies to help them become outstanding managers and educational leaders;
- Hiring highly qualified teachers, including teachers who become highly qualified through State and local alternative routes to certification, and special education teachers, in order to reduce class size, particularly in the early grades; and
- Carrying out teacher advancement initiatives that promote professional growth and emphasize multiple career paths (such as paths to becoming a mentor teacher, career teacher, or exemplary teacher) and pay differentiation. (Note: Because the purpose of Title II, Part A is to increase student academic achievement, programs that provide teachers and principals with merit pay, pay differential, and/or monetary bonuses should be linked to measurable increases in student academic achievement produced by the efforts of the teacher or principal.)

Please note that LEAs are required to contact appropriate officials of all private schools within the boundaries of the school district annually to determine if they want their teachers to participate in the Title II program.

- 3. Title II, Part D, Subpart I-Enhancing Education Through Technology:** consolidates the current Technology Literacy Challenge Fund (TLCF) Program and the Technology Innovative Challenge Grant Program into a single State formula grant program. Fifty percent of the funds will be allocated to districts on a formula basis to districts receiving Title I funds. Fifty percent of the funds will be distributed on a competitive basis. The primary goal of the Ed Tech program is to improve student academic achievement and ensure that every student is technologically literate by the end of eighth grade through the use of technology in schools. It is also designed to encourage the effective integration of technology with teacher training and curriculum development to establish successful research-based instructional methods. **Districts are to ensure that education technology will be used to connect schools and families.**
- 4. Title IV, Safe and Drug Free Schools:** The focus of the Title IV program is to support programs that prevent violence in and around schools; that prevent the illegal use of alcohol, tobacco, and drugs; that involve parents and communities; and that are coordinated with related Federal, State, school, and community efforts and resources to foster a safe and drug-free learning environment that supports student's academic achievement.

Recipients of Title IV funds shall adhere to the Principals of Effectiveness by basing their programs on (1) a thorough assessment of objective data regarding the incidence of violence and illegal drug use; (2) an established set of performance measures a safe, orderly and drug-free learning environment; (3) scientifically based research that provides evidence that the program to be used will reduce violence and illegal drug use; (4) an analysis of the

prevalence of risk factors, including child abuse and domestic violence; protective factors, or other variables; (5) meaningful and ongoing consultation with and input from parents.

A major change was that the cap for building expenditures was increased to forty (40) percent. However, no more than twenty (20) percent of the Title IV funds, in the aggregate, may be used for the following activities: (1) support of ‘safe zones of passage’; (2) acquiring and installing metal detectors, electronic locks, surveillance cameras or other related equipment; (3) reporting criminal offenses committed; and (4) developing and implementing comprehensive school security plans.

- 5. Title IV, Part A, Subpart 3 - Gun-Free Requirements:** A student who is determined to have brought a firearm to a school or has possessed a firearm at school must be expelled for a period of not less than one year. Districts are able to modify expulsion of a student on case-by-case basis, provided the modification is in writing. Exceptions to the expulsion requirement are now expressly allowed in two cases: firearms that are lawfully stored inside a locked vehicle on school property, and firearms that are brought to school or possessed in school for activities approved and authorized by the district, if the district adopts appropriate safeguards to ensure student safety. The Department must collect from districts information on any expulsions that are made under the law, and must report that information to the U.S. Department of Education annually, including the name of the school concerned, the number of students expelled from each school, and the type of firearms involved.

6. Title V, Part A, Innovative Programs:

The Title V, Part A, Innovative Programs grant supports education reform efforts; innovation based on scientific research; the purchase of instructional, library, and media materials; and the implementation of programs to improve school, student, and teacher performance.

The priorities for the use of Title V, Part A funds are to:

- support local education reform efforts that are consistent with and support the Connecticut Curriculum Frameworks;
- provide funding to enable school districts to implement promising educational reform programs and school improvement programs based on scientific research;
- provide a continuing source of innovation and educational improvement, including support programs to provide library services and instructional and media materials;
- meet the educational needs of all students, including at-risk youth; and
- develop and implement education programs to improve school, student, and teacher performance, including professional development activities and class size reduction programs.

E. LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS (ELL)

Title III is an entitlement program to assist schools in developing high quality, English language acquisition and enhancement programs. All school districts receiving these funds must achieve specific goals by implementing programs where activities are conducted in the following five areas:

- English language development;
- content area instruction;
- professional development for all administrative and teaching staff serving ELL students;
- parental notification and involvement (see paragraph below); and
- student assessment and program evaluation.

All school districts conducting educational programs for ELL students with Title III funds must ensure that the students attain English proficiency, achieve to high levels in core academic areas, and attain the same content and academic achievement standards as all students. Districts must also ensure that they are not in violation of any state law, including constitutional law, regarding the education of ELL children.

1. Assessment

- a. All districts providing services to ELL students shall annually assess the English proficiency of those in grades K-12 in speaking, reading, writing and listening and comprehending.
- b. All districts must ensure that ELL students take the CMT in grades 4, 6 and 8 and the CAPT in grade 10. There are no longer **any test exemptions** for ELL students, as per the federal NCLB requirements.

In 2000, the SDE adopted the Language Assessment Scales (LAS) in speaking, listening, reading and writing for use by school districts providing bilingual education in fulfillment of Section 10-17f(c) of the Connecticut General Statutes. Since all districts will now have to annually assess their K-12 ELL students, all districts will use the LAS with ELL students. This annual linguistic assessment must take place during a three-week period in April or May of each year. The SDE has provided information on ordering the appropriate tests from the vendor, CTB McGraw-Hill. The SDE will collect the students' test results through an ELL data collection in June of each year, and through the Public School Information System beginning June 2006.

2. Notification of Parents

- a. All school districts awarded Title III grants will inform the parent(s) of ELL students who are provided language instruction using Title I and/or Title III funds, not later than 30 days after the beginning of school, of the following:
 - reason for identification as ELL and need for a language program;
 - level of English proficiency, how this was assessed and the status of the student's academic achievement;
 - methods of instruction to be used in the program, in other available programs, and the differences among programs including the use of English and native language instruction;
 - how the program will meet their child's educational strengths and needs;

- how the program will specifically help their child learn English and meet age appropriate academic achievement standards and eventually meet graduation requirements;
 - exit requirements and the expected rate of transition from the program into mainstream classes;
 - the expected rate of graduation from secondary school for students in such a program, if Title III funds are used for ELL students in secondary schools;
 - how the program meets the objectives of the IEP for a student with a disability; and
 - written guidance detailing parents' rights to have their child immediately removed from the program, the options that parents have for declining enrollment of their child in the program and for choosing another program of instruction and written guidance for assisting parents in selecting other available programs.
- b. Each school district using Title III funds to provide an ELL program failing to make progress on the annual measurable achievement objectives (described in Section 3122) shall separately inform a parent or the parents of a student identified for participation in such a program, or participating in such a program, of such a failure not later than 30 days after the date such failure has been determined. All information to parents shall be provided in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent possible, in a language that the parent can understand.
- c. Each school district operating programs with Title III funds shall implement an effective means of outreach to parents of ELL students regarding parental involvement in the education of their child, including how parents may be active participants in assisting their child in learning English, in achieving to high standards in core academic subjects and in meeting the same challenging State academic and content standards required of all students. This outreach shall include holding, and sending notice of opportunities for, regular meetings to formulate and respond to recommendations from parents regarding their participation in open dialogue.
- d. For students identified as an ELL after the beginning of the school year, school districts must provide all parental notification within two weeks of placing the child in the ELL program.

3. Reporting

- a. The results of the LAS must be reported annually to the SDE in June of each year.
- b. All districts awarded Title III grants must report to the SDE how their Title III program and professional development activities link to scientific research on the education of ELL students.

F. UNSAFE SCHOOL CHOICE OPTIONS

On June 4, 2003 the Connecticut State Board of Education adopted a policy that defines a persistently dangerous school and the criterion to identify a student who had been a victim of a violent criminal offense while on school grounds. The policy was explained in Series 2002-03 Circular Letter C-34, which can be accessed at www.state.ct.us/sde/circ/circ02-03/c-34.pdf.

Individual students who are victims of a violent criminal offense on school grounds must be offered an opportunity to transfer to a safe public school within their district. If such a school is not available, some alternative must be provided.

The state definition of a violent criminal offense has three components, each of which must be met. First, a student or staff suffers bodily injury as a result of intentional, knowing, or reckless acts committed by another person. Second, the police have been notified and a report taken. Third, the factual underpinnings in the police report are sufficient to constitute a crime described in the penal code, Title 53a of the Connecticut General Statutes.

A school will be declared persistently dangerous if, over a three year period, it exceeds tolerance levels in two of the three categories: number of gun violations, number of weapon violations per student, or number of violent criminal offenses per student. If such conditions occur in a single year a school will be placed on notification. If such conditions persist for a second year, it will be placed on warning status. Schools so identified must take steps to improve school safety.

Individual students who are victims of a violent criminal offense on school grounds must be offered an opportunity to transfer to a safe public school within their district. If such a school is not available, some alternative must be provided.

A school will be declared persistently dangerous if, over a three year period, it exceeds tolerance levels in two of the three categories: number of gun violations, number of weapon violations per student, or number of violent criminal offenses per student. If such conditions occur in a single year a school will be placed on notification. If such conditions persist for a second year, it will be placed on warning status. Schools so identified must take steps to improve school safety.

For 2003-04, there were no Connecticut public schools identified as persistently dangerous.

G. GRADUATION RATE

Due to the impetus of NCLB, Connecticut has implemented a public school information system that allows for the collection of individual student information during the school year. Using this system, the CSDE will be able to calculate a graduation rate using the following definition for the class of 2006 and each class following. The rate will be calculated as follows:

- Number of June 2006 four-year graduates, with regular diploma (may include special education students who have until age 21 to earn a regular diploma).
- Number of June 2006 graduates plus number of 2005-06 12th grade dropouts; plus number of 2004-05 11th grade dropouts; plus number of 2003-04 10th grade dropouts; plus number of 2002-03 9th grade dropouts.

The individual student data for each class will be tracked beginning with 9th grade in October 2002. Therefore, we will be able to calculate the graduation rate for each subgroup for the class of 2006.

In the interim, Connecticut plans on using an alternative measure based on schools' reported aggregate graduation data that is currently collected and has been collected and reported for over a decade. The graduation rate will be calculated as described above, but will be based on aggregate data reported by districts and used in the determination of AYP for high schools.

Because of this current aggregate nature of the way these data are collected, Connecticut will only be able to report on the subgroups of race, gender and special education until 2006.

In the interim, Connecticut will use the CAPT writing standard (at least 70 percent basic or above, or improvement based on previous year) disaggregated to determine Safe Harbor.