

THE BUREAU BULLETIN

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CONNECTICUT STATE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Special Announcement

The Bureau of Special Education wishes a fond farewell to two colleagues retiring July 1, 2009. Tom Badway and Nancy Cappello have made significant contributions to the field and will be deeply missed.

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From the Bureau of Special Education

Brief from the Chief

- Anne Louise Thompson

Throughout our schools, the natural rhythms and routines of end of year activities serve as a guide to the culmination of another busy year. In preschool and elementary settings, field days, award ceremonies and parties abound to celebrate another successful year of growing and learning. At the secondary level, final exams, proms and graduation ceremonies signal endings and new beginnings for scholarship and maturation. These signals point us toward closure as we speed toward that final day of school, knowing there is much left to accomplish and little time to squeeze it all in. So when the dust settles, and students have completed all of their assignments, families have ended the daily preparations of sending and receiving their children from school, and school personnel have shelved their materials and locked their files for the summer, the time is right for reflection and acknowledgement.

Reflecting on the past year's accomplishments is important, no matter what role you play in the education of our children and youth with disabilities. Their success is rooted in the instruction, support, encouragement and beliefs that parents, peers, teachers, support personnel, school staff, and administrators have been committed to for the prior twelve months. All who serve and support students with disabilities need to pause and recognize the contributions they have made. During this year many young people succeeded because you made a difference! Earlier this month, the Governor's Coalition for Youth with Disabilities recognized 18 young men and women with disabilities graduating from our state's high schools with scholarships to support further post-secondary education. We are in a historical time that proudly encourages and holds high expectations for all students, including students with disabilities, at all levels across the range of "able-ism". This includes students that perhaps in the past would have been deemed not capable of achieving at levels that would allow them to enter post secondary educational environments. Yet, these students', their families' and their teachers' ambitions provide these students with a goal of continuing with their education that is truly possible and attainable. Please click [here](#) for this article.

Mark Your Calendars...

- June 30, 2009 ED 166 Data Submission
- July 1, 2009 – August 31, 2009 Evaluation Timelines Data Submission for 2008-09 initial evaluations. Please click [here](#) for the 2009-10 Timely and Accurate Deadline calendar!
- September 16, 2009 Back to School Meeting – Details forthcoming.

Featured Story

State Education Resource Center Celebrates 40 Years of Service 1969 -2009

In 1969, "Sesame Street" aired for the first time. "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" was published for the first time. And, for the first time, Connecticut had a resource center for educators. That Center has expanded its scope considerably and is proudly celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2009.

The State Education Resource Center, known statewide as SERC, is maintained by the State Board of Education to assist and support the CT State Department of Education (CSDE) in ensuring equity and excellence in education. SERC provides extensive professional development, parent and family education, library resources, and technological and print information across Connecticut to educators, families, service providers, community partners, and others interested in high-quality education. The agency is authorized under Section 10-76n of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.).

SERC was established in 1969 as the Special Education Resource Center to support Connecticut's pioneering efforts in providing special education programs. Although this mission continues as part of SERC's activities, SERC was renamed by state statute as the *State* Education Resource Center in 2005 in recognition of the undeniable interrelationship between special education and all other educational improvement initiatives. Initiatives involving early childhood education, family engagement, the education of English Language Learners, literacy, Scientific Research-Based Interventions (SRBI), and Positive Behavior Support are only some of the areas of focus that have become significant components of SERC's programming. SERC's enhanced work in these areas has supported efforts to close all of the state's various achievement gaps by meeting the needs of diverse populations.

SERC's evolution is perhaps reflected best in Professional Development Partnerships, which have expanded in recent years. The partnership work, in collaboration with the SERC Library, involves district, school, and program-based activities. These activities have included more and more on-site training, technical assistance, consultation, and group facilitation to help school and program personnel meet the challenges of increasingly diverse student populations in education.

SERC is comprised of numerous initiatives. Many of the initiatives focus on aspects of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA)*, collaborating with the Bureau of Special Education (BSE) to provide educators, other professionals, and families with coordinated professional development, parent education, and technical assistance programs to support the teaching and learning of students with disabilities. For the complete article which includes a comprehensive description of SERC initiatives, click [here](#).

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State of the State

NAEP Coming Soon

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) will be administered nationally in 2010 to students in Grades 4, 8 and 12. Results will be released for U.S. History, Civics and Geography. Pilot assessments also will be administered in Mathematics and Writing. Connecticut's participation in NAEP 2010 will be limited to the Grade 8 and Grade 12 writing assessments, which will be administered on computers exclusively. This is the first time the writing assessment has been administered in this way and the intention is that all future NAEP writing assessments for Grades 8 and 12 will be computer-based assessments. To read more about this new assessment and the skills it will measure, you may review the new NAEP Writing Framework at <http://www.nagb.org/publications/frameworks.htm>. The *Bulletin* will keep you posted!

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2010 Census Bureau

Readers may wish to review a [recent letter](#) disseminated by Commissioner McQuillan regarding the U.S. Census since national, regional, and local growth and economic levels reported annually will influence funding distribution to districts. The U.S. Census Bureau is proposing partnerships with schools.



Positioning for Paperless

State agencies have been ordered by Governor Rell to use paperless processes whenever possible effective immediately due to the state's economic situation. Please click [here](#) for a recent letter from the Governor to state agencies regarding electronic publishing and maximizing the use of the Internet to complete transactions. The Bureau of Special Education will be making changes to some of its dissemination procedures to be in compliance with this important directive.

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Seclusion and Restraint

The seclusion and restraint regulations became effective May 7, 2009, when the regulations were filed with the Secretary of the State. The regulations require the recording and reporting of instances of the emergency use of physical restraint or seclusion consistent with the requirements of Section 46a-153 of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended by Section 3 of Public Act 07-147. The regulations also require the recording of the emergency use of restraint or seclusion to be done on a standardized incident report developed by the State Department of Education. A draft [copy](#) of a standardized incident report has been developed and is included in this bulletin for immediate use in school districts. The report is to be completed no later than the school day following the incident.

Each instance of the emergency use of physical restraint or seclusion on a child eligible for special education, or a child being evaluated for eligibility for special education and awaiting a determination of eligibility must be recorded. Where seclusion is utilized as specifically provided for in an individualized education program, recording of each instance of its use is not required. Parents, however, are to receive notification consistent with the requirements of Section 10-76b-9 of the regulations. Please click [here](#) for complete regulation text.

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CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Training Requirements

Special Education teachers administering the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) or Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) Skills Checklist during the 2009-2010 school year who have not received CSDE training during the 2006-2007, 2007-2008, or 2008-2009 school years nor the CSDE Certified Rater Training must attend one of the half day sessions of this REQUIRED training prior to test administration in March of 2010. District Test Coordinator's will receive a letter with registration information once the dates and locations have been confirmed. If you have questions, please contact the Bureau of Student Assessment: [Janet Stuck](#) at 860-713-6837 or [Joe Amenta](#) at 860-713-6855.

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<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Capacity per session</u>
August 18	Rensselear	100
August 19	Rensselear	100
September 22	CREC	60
September 23	CES	50
September 24	Education Connection	80
September 29	Aces	60
October 1	LEARN	50
October 2	EASTCONN	80

IDEA ARRA

On May 21, 2009, over 100 districts participated in a 90 minute Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) telephone conference hosted by the BSE. Materials presented during the conference are posted on the Bureau website and may be accessed by clicking on the links below:

- [Teleconference PowerPoint Presentation](#)
- [Maintenance of Effort \(MOE\) Worksheet](#)
- [ARRA Special Education Grant Application](#)
- [ARRA FAQs](#)

The Bureau also directs your attention to the June 2, 2009, memo from the Commissioner regarding the posting of all approved ARRA applications. Please click [here](#). The Bureau of Special Education is in the process of developing and disseminating ARRA "white papers" which will provide guidance on the use of the ARRA funds under the IDEA 611 and 619. The Bureau expects to produce topic specific guidance for IDEA ARRA expenditures in the areas of early childhood special education, serving children with autism spectrum disorders, parent involvement, and transition planning. The purpose of the guidance is to assist school districts in identifying uses of funds to help build capacity, sustain efforts and deliver a high quality education to students, ages 3 through 21, with disabilities. These papers and other information on ARRA will be found in [CT Recovery](#) section on the CSDE's website, www.sde.ct.gov.

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Number of School Days

Some school districts have changed the number of school days per school year in response to budget considerations. For those districts that have changed the length of the 2009-2010 school year since holding most of their annual planning and placement team (PPT) meetings, and whose individualized education programs (IEPs) set forth the length of the previous school year in each student's IEP, the parents of these students should be informed of the impact of this change on their child's IEP. Please [click](#) here for suggested language to use in informing parents and families. Contact Gail Mangs for more information at 860-713-6938.

Bureau Happenings

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State Performance Plan (SPP) and Annual Performance Plan Updates

New and Improved District Annual Performance Reports (APRs)! Our colleagues in the Bureau of Data Collection, Research and Evaluation have been hard at work. Now attached to each district's standard two-page APR is a more parent-friendly report that provides a detailed description of each indicator as well as an explanation of the analysis process. Additionally, both state and district-level data are available for multiple years, where appropriate. The information is displayed via user-friendly charts and graphs. Check out the new APRs at http://www.csde.state.ct.us/public/cedar/apr/apr_reports/2007-08/index.htm. Consultants in the BSE have been working with our colleagues at the State Education Resource Center (SERC) to develop professional development programs that align with the indicators and improvement activities in the SPP. The catalog, which will include descriptions of the offerings, will be featured in the *Back to School Bureau Bulletin* in September. Please take some time to review the catalog and consider which activities would help develop your district's capacity to educate students with disabilities and meet requirements for the SPP.

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Individual Indicator Spotlight: Evaluation Timelines

As summer arrives, some indicator groups are already planning for fall activities such as workgroup meetings and training sessions, others are still in the process of collecting information and closing out districts in areas such as disproportionate representation in special education (indicators 9 and 10), discipline data (indicator 4) and evaluation timelines (indicator 11).

The official opening of the **Evaluation Timelines Data Collection** will occur on July 1, 2009, and will run through August 31, 2009. Districts are to report on all initial evaluations conducted July 1, 2008, - June 30, 2009, for this collection. Please note the extended time to complete the data submission as a result of requests from the field; although districts have requested an earlier submission opportunity due to staff being unavailable in July, the BSE is unable to open the Evaluation Timelines data submission until July 1st but is willing to extend the submission window. Because there continues to be questions, concerns, and a need for clarification concerning the "time clock" and what may or may not fall under an exception category, the BSE has provided three forms of technical assistance concerning this Indicator prior to opening the official data collection:

Option 1: Face to face session with Dr. Jacqueline Kelleher from 8:30-9:30 a.m. at the SERC Administrative Building on June 11, 2009.

Option 2: A live audio session provided through the Internet from 8:30-9:30 a.m. on June 12, 2009.

Option 3: Power Point Presentation available on the CSDE website July 1, 2009.

Please click [here](#) for more details or e-mail Dr. Jacqueline Kelleher at jacqueline.kelleher@ct.gov for more information or to request either an advance copy of the slide presentation or table explaining the evaluation timelines time count. Dr. Kelleher is also able to provide guidance concerning available technical assistance, resources, and innovative practices for ensuring ongoing compliance with this indicator.



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Bureau Happenings

Parent Advisory Workgroup

The CSDE, BSE Parent Work Group (PWG) is comprised of representative from various parent support and advocacy organizations, parents of students with disabilities, and consultants from SERC and BSE. The group was originally formed to support the CSDE effort to create the state's Continuous Improvement Plan for Early Intervention and Special Education in the area of family involvement. Based upon the recommendation of the PWG, a standing committee was established to advise the CSDE on implementation of the plan. The CSDE added membership to the group in the spring of 2004, by including parents from organizations that were named plaintiffs in the *P.J. et al. v. State of Connecticut, Board of Education, et al. Settlement Agreement*. The PWG continues to advise CSDE regarding implementation of the State Performance Plan and completion of the Annual Performance Reports to the federal Office of Special Education Programs. Please click [here](#) for the complete story. [Back to Bulletin](#)

Timely & Accurate Data

Department data collection, cleaning and reporting activities have been enhanced throughout the 2008-09 school year in an effort to address the increased scrutiny of state reported data for accuracy under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA). The Special Education Data Application and Collection (SEDAC) has implemented a number of enhancements to ensure more accurate and timely data collection from districts regarding special education. A number of reports now exist that districts are able to generate automatically based on their submission of both SEDAC and Public School Information System (PSIS) data. Other data collection systems continue to be enhanced with reports that support student tracking and timely data reporting (e.g., Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO), Evaluation Timelines). Additionally, the discipline collection (ED166) is currently undergoing a redesign for the 2009-10 school year to streamline the data collection, link directly to PSIS – Registration Module (similar to SEDAC) and create a year-round web-based system. Attached are the [Timely and Accurate Data Collection Calendar for 2009-10](#) and [this article](#) in its entirety.



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Reminder: ECO Requirements

This is a reminder to all school districts that they should now be administering the Brigance IED-II in order to collect post-test information for those children exiting the preschool grade and moving on to kindergarten in the fall. So if you haven't started yet – now is the time. Questions can be directed to Maria Synodi at 860 713-6941 or at maria.synodi@ct.gov. This is an ECO Requirement. [Back to Bulletin](#)

The Bureau Bulletin is Accessible



The BSE is proud to announce that the Bureau Bulletin is close to 100% accessible to readers with disabilities. Accessibility increases the number of people who can contribute to and benefit from Bureau Bulletin content. There is an increasing array of federal and state regulations for accessibility. Thanks to the efforts of Deb Koval, Marlene Chameroy and Jacqueline Kelleher at the CSDE, the Bureau is able to effectively disseminate truly accessible content. Please continue to let us know how the *Bulletin* can meet your needs by e-mailing Jacqueline Kelleher at jacqueline.kellerher@ct.gov. [Back to Bulletin](#)

Bureau Happenings

Kindergarten and the IEP

Connecticut General Statutes, section 10-15c, *School attendance by 5-year-olds*, provides that, "the public school shall be open to all children 5 years of age and over who reach age 5 on or before the first day of January of any school year ..."; Hence, a child must be 5 years of age on or before January first of a school year to be entitled to receive general education services from a public school district. The law makes a public education, kindergarten, available to all 5-year-old children. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) requires that school districts provide a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) to eligible children with disabilities beginning at age 3. For the complete article and information on parent "opt out" policies, click [here](#). **Back to Bulletin**



Extension of State Criteria for Specific Learning Disability

The CSDE is offering an extension to districts until June 30, 2010, for the full implementation of the new state criteria for identification of a student as having a specific learning disability, which will eliminate the use an IQ-achievement discrepancy in eligibility determination. This extension does not allow a district to postpone the use of scientific research-based interventions with students or the provision of data-based documentation to parents, as these practices are clearly identified in IDEA as part of the assurances that a student suspected of having a disability has been provided with "appropriate instruction" as required by 34 CFR §300.309. Districts who wish to apply for an extension may complete the application that will be posted on line in June, with a June 30, 2009, application deadline. The application will require a written plan of action and assurances of implementation of the plan from both general and special education administration. If you have any questions about this application, please contact: Perri Murdica at 860-713-6942 or perri.murdica@ct.gov.

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Anticipated Guidelines Revisions

The Bureau of Special Education is considering a revision of the *Guidelines for Occupational Therapy in Educational Settings*, *Guidelines for Assistive Technology*, and the *Guidelines for Physical Therapy in Educational Settings* to take place during the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 school years. The Bureau hopes to confirm the revision project this summer the first stages of the revision project in the early fall. More information will follow in the next Bureau Bulletin. More information will be made available in the next Bureau Bulletin. If you are interested in providing feedback or otherwise participating in the upcoming revision process, contact Sarah Harvey for details by calling 860-713-6936. The *Executive Summary* of the *Guidelines for Identifying Students with Learning Disabilities* stage of the publication process. When completed, it will be disseminated by e-mail and hard copy in June and will also be posted on the CSDE, SERC and *Shared Work* websites. Please click [here](#) for more details about the LD Guidelines and professional development opportunities or contact Perri Murdica directly at 860-713-6942.

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Ask A Consultant

Q. What documentation must the LEA have on file for children who have been referred from the birth to three program to the school district?

A. The State Department of Education expects that the school district will have the following list of documentation within a child's record. Although some of the information will not be generated by the school district, when received, it should become a part of the child's record.

- Birth To Three Referral Form and local education agency (LEA) Standard Referral Form
- Parent Notice of Referral
- Invitation to Birth To Three's 90 Day Transition Conference
- Copy of the Transition Plan developed at the 90 Day Transition Conference
- Signed Releases of Information for the Records the LEA requests to receive from Birth To Three
- Birth To Three Evaluations, Individualized Family Service Plan(s), Other 0-3 Information/Documentation
- Signed Parental Consent for the initial LEA Evaluation
- LEA Evaluation(s)
- Signed Parental Consent for Special Education Initial Placement in Special Education
- Individualized Educational Program (IEP)
- Prior Written Notice(s) of PPT meetings, as appropriate and Invitations to PPT Meetings

For more Q & A, please see our latest documents on [early childhood transitions](#) or [developmental delay](#).

Questions may be directed to Maria Synodi at the CSDE at 860-713-6941 or by e-mail at

maria.synodi@ct.gov.

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Focused Monitoring Closes Out

The Bureau of Special Education visited eight districts in the 2006-07 school year around the key performance indicator: Decrease the number of students in all disability categories who are suspended or expelled as defined by Connecticut General Statutes (Sec. 10-233a (b)): "exclusion from regular classroom activities beyond 90 minutes." These districts have submitted their final progress report to the bureau. The bureau is currently reviewing these progress reports and additional progress data to determine if these districts need continued monitoring or if closeout from focused monitoring is applicable. Districts that demonstrate improved performance in data and have address the goals in their improvement plan for better student outcomes will be closed out of focused monitoring. Four districts were visited in the winter of this school year around the key performance indicator: Improve the district's effectiveness of efforts to educate students with an IEP as demonstrated by procedural compliance with the IDEA, and students with disabilities' participation and performance on statewide assessments. These districts will undergo improvement planning and begin implementation of improvement activities this summer. They will submit progress reports at six-month intervals to monitor progress toward better student outcomes around academic achievement. The focused monitoring system undergoes annual adjustments to meet the requirements of IDEA and to meet the needs of districts. There is a Focused Monitoring Steering Committee that advises the bureau of suggested adjustments. This group is a broad stakeholder group comprised of public school district personnel, parents, state agency personnel and meets three times a year. Future bulletin articles will document changes being made to the focused monitoring system. **Back to Bulletin**

Bureau Happenings

IEP Form Translated in Spanish

The Bureau of Special Education is pleased to release the revised individualized education program (IEP) forms in Spanish! Readers are able to download as a PDF [file](#) or Microsoft Word [document](#). BSE consultant, Gail Mangs, presented the latest updates in IEP amendments at the Fifth Annual Back to School meeting. Districts are aware that changes focus primarily on specific transition planning changes and became effective for all IEPs released on or after October 1, 2009. Please e-mail Gail at gail.mangs@ct.gov if you have questions concerning the translated IEP pages. **Back to Bulletin**

June 2009 Update for Paraprofessionals

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) established the [District Contacts for Paraprofessional Issues](#) to disseminate information of importance to paraprofessionals and their supervisors. This update is part of the Department's efforts to provide districts with the information and resources to effectively train, supervise, and evaluate paraprofessionals. **Back to Bulletin**

Federal Focus

Connecticut Meets Requirements !

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services released state determinations on implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) for Part B and Part C for fiscal year 2007. The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) has recognized Connecticut as having met requirements under Part B of IDEA. For IDEA Part B, 30 States are now in "meets requirements" status. Connecticut is the only state in the New England region to have met requirements for both Part B and C. Click [here](#) for more information on how other states compared. **Back to Bulletin**



Materials for Students with Print Disabilities

Provision of access to appropriate materials for students with print disabilities in a timely manner is a requirement of IDEA 2004. Some materials are available directly from the publishers. An additional resource is the National Instructional Materials Access Center (NIMAC) which is the repository for electronic file sets of curricular materials that can be converted into large print, audio text, braille, digital text and other specialized formats. In preparation for next year, now is a good time to develop a list of needed materials and either place orders directly with the publishers or fax completed NIMAC request forms to the Bureau of Special Education. For more information on using the NIMAC and a copy of the NIMAC request form see [NIMAS/NIMAC – Ensuring Access to Students with Print Disabilities](#) or contact Mike Smith at the Bureau of Special Education at michael.s.smith@ct.gov or 860-713-6931. Craig Struble at SERC (struble@ctserc.org) is a great source of technical information on using alternative text formats. Craig has created a multimedia presentation on the NIMAC which can be accessed at <http://www.ctserc.org/nimas/player.html>. **Back to Bulletin**

Resources & Opportunities

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Summer Reading Challenge

The 2009 Governor's Summer Reading Challenge was launched on May 7, 2009, at the Connecticut State Library in Hartford. Governor M. Jodi Rell, Commissioner Mark K. McQuillan and State Librarian Kendall Wiggin were on hand to stress the importance of reading during the summer. Posters, student journals and all other materials are available on line. For more information, contact the Public Information Office at 860-713-6548. Click [here](#) for a memo disseminated by the Commissioner earlier last month. **Back to Bulletin**

The National RTI Center website is up and functioning for states. This resource highlights the work of all states in the areas of RTI and LD identification. This new state resource can be found at <http://state.rti4success.org/>

A New Request for Proposal on Website

Please click [here](#) for more information on Curriculum & Instruction - RFP992 - Investing and Personal Finance Education Programs in the Public Secondary Schools. The funding is being provided to develop an investing and personal finance education course. **Back to Bulletin**

Transition Materials

SERC and the Department have two secondary transition publications that are appropriate to be used in classes with students. ***Building A Bridge (2009)*** has been recently updated and printed. Educators who wish to have one or more boxes of publication are requested to arrange to pick them up either at SERC (Middletown) or at the State Office Building (165 Capitol Ave.) in Hartford during working hours. Please follow the procedures below to arrange to pick up the boxes:

1. **To pick up publications at SERC in Middletown:** Contact Dawn Gosselin, Dissemination Coordinator at SERC (860-632-1485, ext. 250) to arrange for a pick up date/time.
2. **To pick up publications in Hartford,** call or e-mail, Dr. Patricia Anderson: at 860-713-6923 or patricia.anderson@ct.gov. You will be given an office number to call to make arrangements to pick up boxes of publications at the back entrance to the CSDE building so that you will not have to worry about parking in Hartford! **Back to Bulletin**



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