

# Connecticut State Department of Education



**Charlene Russell-Tucker, Commissioner**

**Commissioner's Roundtable on Family and Community  
Engagement**

**August 8, 2023 – 1:00-2:30 PM**



# Purpose



The Roundtable's purpose is to advise the Commissioner of Education regarding policy and programmatic priorities to improve outcomes for all students and advance the State Board of Education's comprehensive plan for equity and excellence in Connecticut schools.



# Meeting Ground Rules



**As members of the Commissioner's Roundtable for Family and Community Engagement in Education, we have agreed to:**

- **Be willing to speak our truth** (even the hard truth) while respectfully acknowledging and embracing other views
  - Be open to honest and real conversation that is fearless (“Say what you want, not what you think others want to hear”)
  - W.A.I.T. (Why Am I Talking?)
- **Be active listeners.** Listen respectfully to understand others' opinions
  - Ensure that all voices are valid and respected, making it critical that we hear from everyone in the room
- **E.L.M.O (Enough Let's Move On)**



# Agenda



## **Welcome and Introductions**

John Frassinelli, Division Director and Chlo-Anne Bobrowski, Education Manager  
Steven Proffitt, Director for Special Education Programs and Instructional Design, SERC

## **Emergent Critical Issues in Education**

Charlene Russell-Tucker, Commissioner  
John Frassinelli, Division Director and Chlo-Anne Bobrowski, Education Manager  
Steve McDowell, Assistant Vice President, Financial Aid Services for CSCU

## **Featured Presentation: Change in Kindergarten Entry Age**

Irene Parisi, Chief Academic Officer

## **Listening to Roundtable Members: Strategies for Sharing Information with Families and Community Members**

## **Discussion Wrap-up and Charge to the Roundtable from Commissioner Russell-Tucker**



# Emergent Issues in Education



# Emergent Issues in Education



## Community Outreach

- [Family and Community Engagement in Education Council](#)
- New Dashboard: Students Experiencing Homelessness
- [Expansion of CT Free Schools Meals Program](#)
- [New Special Education Call Center](#)

## Educator Workforce

- [Connecticut PK-12 School Staff Appreciation with a Digital Backpack of Discounts](#)
- [Educators Rising Mini-Grants](#) for Expansion and New Programs



# Emergent Issues in Education



## Teaching and Learning

- [New Grades 3-5 Model Science Curricula](#)
- [Defined Learning for Advancing Computer Science and STEM Project Based Learning Pilot](#)
- [Dual Credit Expansion Grant Program](#)

## Student Supports

- [School Mental Health Specialist](#) grant program
- [2023 Summer Reading Challenge With a \\$370,000 Investment To Support Learning and Literacy Efforts](#)
- [High-Dosage Tutoring \(HDT\) Program in Grade 6-9 Mathematics](#)
- [PACT \(Pledge to Advance CT\) Free Community College Program](#)

Steve McDowell, Assistant Vice President, Financial Aid Services for CSU



# Pledge to Advance CT (PACT)



## Enacted Fall 2020

- CT Resident & CT High School Graduate
- FTIC, Full-Time
- Continuous Enrollment
- Complete FAFSA Annually
- Awards
  - If costs covered by aid, \$250
  - If costs not covered by aid, balance of tuition and fees

## Revised Fall 2022

- CT Resident & CT High School Graduate
- FTIC, Full-Time or Part-Time (6+)
- Continuous Enrollment
- Complete FAFSA Annually
- Awards
  - If costs covered by aid, \$250 (FT) or \$150 (PT)
  - If costs not covered by aid, balance of tuition and fees





# Pledge to Advance CT (PACT)



## Program Expansion for July 1, 2024

- CT Resident & CT High School Graduate
- Full-Time or Part-Time (6+)
- Complete FAFSA Annually
- Awards
  - If costs covered by aid, \$250 (FT) or \$150 (PT)
  - If costs not covered by aid, balance of tuition and fees

## PACT Awards to Date

- Fall 2020: 3,433
- Spring 2021: 2,517
- Fall 2021: 5,266
- Spring 2022: 4,194
- Fall 2022: 10,354
- Spring 2023: 8,317

For More Information ... <https://ctstate.edu/pact>



# Featured Presentation

**Change in Kindergarten Entry Age**  
Irene Parisi, Chief Academic Officer



# Background



## Why a new entry date for Kindergarten?

In 2023, the Connecticut Legislature changed how old a child must be to start kindergarten.

Public Act 23-208, Section 1(a) changed the birth date cutoff date from January 1 of any given school year to September 1 of any given school year

*(Effective July 1, 2024): (a) The public schools shall be open to all children five years of age and over who reach age five on or before the first day of September of any school year...*

Handouts:

- [SDE/OEC Joint Memo: Minimum Age to Enroll \(Spanish\)](#)
- [New Entry Age for Kindergarten FAQ \(Spanish\)](#)



# What



## What is the new entry date for Kindergarten?

For the 2023-2024 school year there is no change to the entry date	Children must be 5 on or before January 1, 2024 in order to enter kindergarten for the 2023-2024 school year.
For the 2024-25 school year and all following years	Children must turn 5 on or before September 1 to enter kindergarten for any given school year.



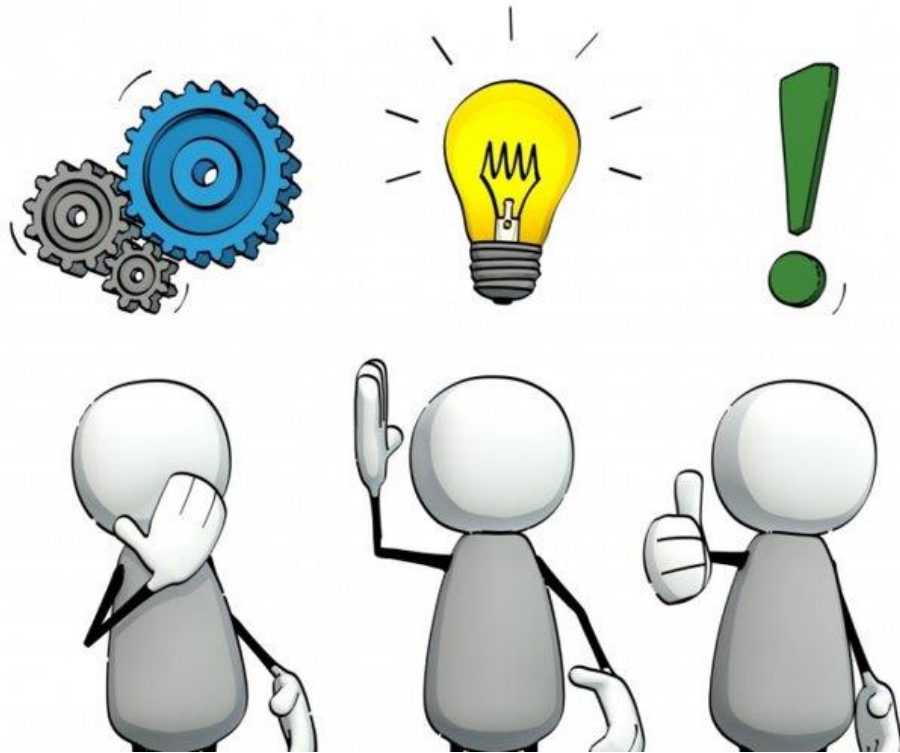
# Waiver and Assessment



## Are there exceptions to this change?

*Section 1 (a)...a child who has not reached the age of five on or before the first day of September of the school year may be admitted (1) upon a written request by the parent or guardian of such child to the principal of the school in which such child would be enrolled, and (2) following an assessment of such child, conducted by such principal and an appropriate certified staff member of the school, to ensure that admitting such child is developmentally appropriate.*

# Think, Pair, Share



- **What thoughts, feelings, and associations come to mind first when you think about the change in Kindergarten Entry Age?**
- **What might we consider in the parental request for waivers?**
- **What might we consider in the school/district waiver process?**



# Listening to Roundtable Members



Based on your personal, organizational, and advocacy perspective, please share with us:

**What did you learn? How will you share today's information with families and community members?**

**What thoughts or concerns are you hearing from your constituencies regarding today's topics?**



# Thank You!



## Date for Fall 2023 meeting:

- October 17, 2023
- All meetings are 1:00-2:30 p.m.