




STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION



TO: Superintendents of Schools

FROM: Dr. Miguel A. Cardona, Commissioner of Education 

DATE: December 2, 2019

SUBJECT: Student Recruitment for Choice Programs

School and district representatives, including those from the interdistrict magnet schools, regional agricultural science and technology education centers, Open Choice districts, the Connecticut Technical Education and Career System (CTECS), and charter schools, have begun their recruitment period for the 2020-21 school year. Your school counselors have likely been contacted by staff members to arrange for visits to meet with your students and parents/guardians.

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is reaching out to remind you of the importance of ensuring that students and families become aware and gain knowledge of the full range of public school and choice program options available, so they may determine the appropriate path for each student to be successful. In the spirit of Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-220d, “full access” should allow representatives to communicate with and/or make presentations to students and their families who are eligible and interested in participation in one of the programs mentioned above.

The CSDE encourages you to provide the recruitment teams with student directory information, as is appropriate within the state and federal standards for student privacy. While mailings or distribution of printed information does not satisfy the condition of full access, districts have various options to allow choice programs a chance to interact with resident students and families. For example, your district may consider coordinating access to all choice programs at a school fair, or accessibility in shared spaces during the school day without disrupting the daily educational programming.

We all agree that our students deserve full access to the information about all available programs that will best fuel their passion for success. Therefore, the CSDE encourages choice programs and districts to work cooperatively to ensure that the right to full access is balanced with the equally important goal of limiting disruption to our students’ core programming. The CSDE further reminds choice programs of their responsibility to ensure students have access to their educational programming, regardless of a child’s potential need for special education resources, accommodations, English Learner needs, or larger growth potential. These responsibilities should be clearly communicated by choice program representatives with students and families during the recruitment process.

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Families interested in Regional School Choice options, such as interdistrict magnet schools and Open Choice programming should be encouraged to visit choiceeducation.org to learn about times and locations of the fairs and other information sessions. Families interested in CTECS will find information at <http://www.cttech.org/>. Information related to regional science and technology education is available at <https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Career-and-Technical-Education/ASTE/Agricultural-Science-and-Technology-Education>.

If you have any questions related generally to access of choice program recruiting, please contact Jessa Mirtle, Legal Director, CSDE at (860) 713-6517 or jessa.mirtle@ct.gov; questions specific to CTECS should be directed to Susan Scott, Legal Director, at the CTECS at 860-807-2181 or susan.scott@ct.gov.

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