

Connecticut General Assembly



January 26, 2011

TO: Senator Andrea L. Stillman, Co-chair
Representative Andrew M. Fleischmann, Co-chair
Senator Antonietta Boucher, Ranking Member
Representative Marilyn Giuliano, Ranking Member

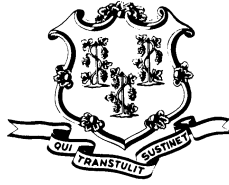
FROM: Senator Toni N. Harp, Task Force Co-chair
Miguel Cardona, Task Force Co-chair

RE: Achievement Gap Task Force Report

In accordance with PA 10-111, § 30, and C.G.S. § 11-4a, we hereby submit to the Education Committee the report and recommendations of the Task Force to Study and Monitor the Academic Achievement Gap Between Racial and Socioeconomic Groups in Connecticut. The task force hopes the committee will consider these recommendations during its deliberations in the 2011 session.

We would be happy to meet with you and the committee at your convenience regarding this report.

cc: Gary Coleman, Clerk of the House of the Representatives
Thomas P. Sheridan, Clerk of the Senate
Education Committee
Office of Legislative Research
Legislative Library
State Library



Connecticut General Assembly

***Report of the Task Force to
Study and Monitor the
Academic Achievement Gap
Between Racial and
Socioeconomic Groups in
Connecticut***

January 2011

Task Force Members

Public Act 10-111, An Act Concerning Education Reform in Connecticut, established a task force to study and monitor the academic achievement gap between racial and socioeconomic groups in Connecticut (§ 30). The act required the task force to have nine members, eight appointed by the legislative leaders, plus the education commissioner or his designee. The task force's appointed members are:

Senator Toni Harp, Task Force Co-Chair
Miguel Cardona, Hanover Elementary School Principal, Task Force Co-Chair

Rev. Lindsay Curtis, Pastor, Grace Baptist Church, Norwalk
Joshua M. Hall, First Vice President, Hartford Federation of Teachers
David R. Kennedy, CT United Way
Dr. Mark McQuillan, Commissioner of Education
Dr. Xaé Alicia Reyes, Associate Professor, Neag School of Education, University of Connecticut
Representative Jason Rojas
Paul Wessel, Director, CT Parent Power
Dudley Williams, Jr., Connecticut Commission on Educational Achievement

Task Force Charge

The task force was charged with considering effective approaches to closing the achievement gap in elementary, middle, and high schools. In carrying out the charge, the act required the task force to consider at least the following:

1. systematic education planning,
2. best practices in public education,
3. professional development for teachers, and
4. parental involvement in public education.

The task force was required to report its findings and recommendations to the Education Committee by January 1, 2011.

Task Force Meetings and Presentations

The task force met seven times (see Appendix 2 for a list of meeting dates) and heard presentations from the following:

Dr. Mark K. McQuillan
Commissioner of Education

George A. Coleman
Deputy Commissioner of Education

Casey Cobb, Ph.D.
Department Head and Associate Professor
Department of Educational Leadership
Neag School of Education
University of Connecticut

James P. Comer, M.D., M.P.H.
Maurice Falk Professor of Child Psychiatry
Yale Child Study Center
Associate Dean
Yale School of Medicine

Robert Margolies, PhD. and Joan Barbuto
The Motivation Center
New Haven Public Schools
Connecticut Coalition for Child Development Education

Steve Simmons and Dudley Williams, Jr.
Connecticut Commission on Educational Achievement

A list of the reports, presentations, and other submissions to the Achievement Gap Task Force task force can be found in Appendix 3 at the end of this report. Hyperlinks to copies of the material are available on the task force's web page, which can be accessed from the General Assembly's Education Committee webpage at: www.cga.ct.gov/ed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Master Plan to Eliminate the Achievement Gap

The task force believes it is morally and economically imperative that Connecticut eliminate the academic achievement gap between racial and ethnic minority and white students and between poor and middle-income students by the end of the current decade. Because of the number and complexity of the steps needed to reach this goal, the task force recommends that the General Assembly enact legislation in the 2011 session to:

- Require the state, by July 1, 2012, to develop a master plan to eliminate the achievement gap by 2020. The master plan should be developed with the expertise provided by the state higher education constituent units and in consultation with the Education Committee, the State Board of Education, and the State Department of Education.
- Reestablish and expand the Achievement Gap Task Force and require it to oversee the master plan's development.
- Require the plan to evaluate and, if appropriate, incorporate the recommendations offered by task force members (see Appendix 1) as well as those offered in reports on the achievement gap published by the Connecticut Advisory Commission to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights and the Connecticut Commission on Educational Achievement (see Appendix 3).

To ensure the master plan is implemented, the task force also recommends that, by July 1, 2011, either through legislation or executive action, an Interagency Council for Ending the Achievement Gap be formed, chaired by the lieutenant governor. This council should advise on the development of the master plan and, once the plan is completed, be responsible for implementing it and providing periodic progress reports to the expanded Achievement Gap Task Force. The agencies to be represented on the council are listed in Table 1 (see below).

Fair and Equitable Education Funding Formula

While funding alone is not the solution to the achievement gap, the task force believes that devising and implementing a fair and equitable funding formula for all public schools, including charters, magnets, and other school choice programs, is fundamental to any serious effort to close the achievement gap. The new funding system must be based on the actual cost of education in Connecticut and must provide low-income and minority students with an adequate educational opportunity.

Other Initial Recommendations

In addition to the recommendations listed above, the task force also recommends six other initial steps that can be taken immediately to address the achievement gap. These six recommendations seek to address several key conditions that contribute to the state's achievement gap:

1. Require the State Department of Education to develop high-quality model curricula in reading and math. These curricula should reflect the best practices and most up-to-date research and methods, and should be ready for teachers to use in classrooms.
2. Require the school districts and schools with the biggest achievement gaps to report on their progress in addressing the gaps. The purpose of these reports, which should be presented to Education Committee and the expanded task force, is to (1) make sure policymakers are focusing the state's efforts on the schools and school districts where the problem is the greatest and (2) hold districts and schools that are not priority districts and schools accountable for addressing existing gaps.
3. Establish a center to develop (a) educational methods that are culturally relevant to English language learners; (b) effective learning strategies to help students with low achievement make up lost ground; and (c) teacher preparation programs that incorporate effective, research-based child development and reading instruction tools and practices.
4. Provide extended opportunities, such as longer school days and years, to give students more time to learn and to improve the relationship between the instruction schools offer and each student's individual educational needs.
5. Build on the provisions of Public Act 09-1, June 19 Special Session, to expand teacher and school administrator certification reciprocity with

other states to encourage successful educational practitioners from outside of Connecticut to work in the state.

6. To help close the educational “preparation gap” for low-income and minority children, phase-in a requirement that school districts provide school readiness programs to all eligible children as well as full-day kindergarten for every child. Start by providing needed funding to establish these requirements in all priority districts.

TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

Achievement Gap Task Force (established by PA 10-111)	Interagency Council for Ending the Achievement Gap
<i>Planning, vision, & legislation</i>	<i>Implementation at agency level; exists outside all agencies; helps make agencies accountable</i>
<p>A. By July 1, 2012, develop a master plan to eliminate the achievement gap by 2020. Work with the State Department of Education, the Education Committee, and state university system. Continue and expand the Achievement Gap Task Force membership and require the task force to oversee development of the master plan.</p> <p>B. By July 1, 2011, form an Interagency Council for Ending the Achievement Gap (see right) to (1) advise on the development of the master plan, (2) implement the plan, and (3) submit periodic progress reports to the task force.</p> <p>C. Devise and implement a fair and equitable funding formula for all public schools, including charters, magnets, and other school choice programs, to help close the achievement gap.</p> <p>D. Initial recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop pre-K through 4th grade model curricula for reading and math. 2. Require districts or schools SDE identifies as having significant achievement gaps to submit accountability reports to the task force and the Education Committee on progress toward closing the gaps. 3. Establish a center focused on culturally relevant education methods for English language learners; accelerated learning practices for students who are behind; and standardized, high-quality teacher preparation that integrates training in child development and reading instruction methods. 4. Implement extended learning opportunities, such as longer school days, and provide student-centered learning to improve the relationship between instruction and student needs. 5. Extend the certification reciprocity opportunities enacted in 2009 to encourage out-of-state teachers and administrators to work in Connecticut. 6. Phase-in mandatory pre-K and full-day K in priority school districts. 	<p>Chaired by Lieutenant Governor</p> <p>❖ Members representing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ State Department Education (Turnaround Office, Sheff/RESCO, Choice Bureau) ➤ Department of Children and Families ➤ Department of Social Services ➤ Department of Public Health ➤ Department of Higher Education ➤ Department of Economic & Community Development ➤ Department of Administrative Services ➤ Office of Policy & Management

APPENDIX 1

ACHIEVEMENT GAP TASK FORCE: RECOMMENDATIONS PROPOSED BY TASK FORCE MEMBERS

TABLE 1: ACCOUNTABILITY/EVALUATION				
Recommendation		TF Member	Status	FY 11 Funding
1.	State-wide teacher and student data systems that are readily available within timelines that align with district decision making processes and allow for the sharing of information across districts for the purpose of improved analysis	Williams	<p><u>Partly implemented and funded</u></p> <p>PA 10-111 requires the state to track and report to school boards data on performance growth by students, teachers, schools, and school districts. The new data, which expands the existing Public School Information System (PSIS), must be in place by July 1, 2013. The expanded data system is to be used to for a new system of evaluating teachers and school administration (CGS § 10-10a, as amended by PA 10-111, §§ 3-5).</p> <p>The 2009 federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) also made receipt of funds from the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF) conditional on states making similar changes to state educational longitudinal data systems (LDS) by September 2011. Connecticut received \$541 million in SFSF funds in FY 09 and FY 10 and agreed to the federal LDS expansion requirements.</p> <p>Neither the federal law nor PA 10-111 requires the state to use a “value-added” method for teacher evaluation. Instead, PA 10-111 creates a Performance Evaluation Advisory Council to determine a new teacher/administrator evaluation model.</p>	<p><i>State Funding:</i> \$2.15 million</p> <p><i>Federal Grant:</i> \$1.6 million</p>
2.	State-wide data system that enables districts to develop value-added analysis of student achievement, including the linking of student performance to individual teachers if a district chooses to do so.	Williams		
3.	Provide funding to accelerate completion of the State’s longitudinal data system (SLDS) as required under SFSF II and P.A. 10-111	McQuillan		
4.	Speed up the development and utilization of data systems that permit true individualized teaching/learning for low achieving and ELL students	Kennedy		
5.	Develop a holistic system-wide demographic assessment tool for assessing communities to identify particular needs and goals of individual districts and resources needed to	Reyes		
			<p><u>Strategic School Profiles (CGS § 10-22(c)):</u></p> <p>Requires districts to submit to the SDE an annual profile for</p>	No separate state funding

TABLE 1: ACCOUNTABILITY/EVALUATION

Recommendation		TF Member	Status	FY 11 Funding
	meet these goals.		the district as a whole and each school that includes measures of (1) student needs; (2) school resources; (3) student and school performance; (4) number of students enrolled in adult education; (5) equitable resource allocation among schools; (6) reduction of racial, ethnic, and economic isolation; and (7) special education.	
6.	Create a sub-committee of the P-20 Council, with additional members, which would be charged with developing a frame work for closing the Achievement Gap within a set number of years	Rojas	<p><u>New. No legislation needed.</u></p> <p>The P-20 Council was created by executive order. It is co-chaired by Michael Meotti, Commissioner of Higher Education, and Mark McQuillan, Commissioner of Education. It supports collaboration among early childhood, K-12, higher education and workforce training to create an effective education and career pathway that maximizes the number of skilled people in Connecticut with a postsecondary degree or other credential. The council’s goal are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a public policy framework for state leaders that increases collaboration across the systems at their current and potential points of intersection. • Explore how the systems can work more effectively together to deliver services. • Realign existing activities and operations in a way that makes the education pipeline more responsive to the diverse needs of students. 	
7.	Require that Boards of Education set student performance goals, upon which the board would be evaluated	Rojas	<p><u>Educational Goals Implemented</u></p> <p>State law requires each board of education to with participation of parents, students, school administrators, teachers, citizens, local elected officials, and other appropriate parties, (1) prepare a statement of educational goals for the district that is consistent with educational interests of the</p>	None

TABLE 1: ACCOUNTABILITY/EVALUATION

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Recommendation		TF Member	Status	FY 11 Funding
			state and (2) develop student objectives that relate directly to the goals and identify specific expectations for student skills, knowledge and competence (§ 10-220(b))	
8.	Create a legislative oversight committee to review the progress of the state 20 lowest performing schools. The committee would be responsible for reviewing the implementation of curriculum, parental involvement, and tracking the progress of the school in eliminating the achievement gap. School district representatives would be required to make the data available to the committee. Committee would be chaired by the Co-Chairs of the Education Committee, and committee members would represent parents, teachers, administrators, the commissioner of SDE, a member of the state board of education as well co-chairs of the other committees of cognizance. The leaders of the General Assembly would make the appointments. The committee would be staffed by the Office of Legislative Research. The committee is required to meet quarterly beginning July 1 and is required to submit yearly reports to the General Assembly and the committees of cognizance.	Harp	New	
9.	Create an ongoing Success Task Force, led by the Commissioner, the Office of Educational Equity (OEE), and Secretary of Education to analyze, prioritize, and make public a plan to address attainment disparities. Use said plan as an accountability and evaluation tool for the OEE, CSDE, and Secretary of Education	Cardona	New	
10.	Perform an equity audit on current policy and practice	Cardona	New	
11.	Create a gap analysis between the states that are most effective at closing the achievement gaps and CT.	Cardona	New	
12.	Link proficiency or higher score on CAPT with graduation	Rojas	<u>May Require Legislation</u> State law currently prohibits using CMT or CAPT as the sole	None

TABLE 1: ACCOUNTABILITY/EVALUATION

Recommendation		TF Member	Status	FY 11 Funding
			<p>criterion for promotion or graduation (CGS § 10-14n (f)).</p> <p>State law also requires boards of education to specify (1) the basic skills students need to graduate from high school and (2) a process for assessing students in those skills. Boards must use the CAPT as one, but not the exclusive, assessment and must identify courses for students who have not successfully completed the assessments to help them reach satisfactory levels before graduating (CGS § 10-223a)</p> <p>Starting with the Class of 2018, PA 10-111 requires students to pass five end-of year examinations to graduate from high school.</p>	
13.	Require students to meet a certain achievement level before advancing to the next grade.	Harp	<p><u>Reading proficiency requirements for promotion in effect for priority districts and early grades. Not currently funded.</u></p> <p>State law requires (1) priority school district boards of education, within available appropriations, to develop a personal reading plan for each student who fails to meet the statewide standard for remedial assistance on the reading component of the 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade mastery test and (2) requires school principals to provide written justification to the superintendent in order to promote 1st, 2nd, or 3rd grade students with personal reading plans who are still substantially deficient in reading (CGS § 10-265g)</p>	<p><i>Early Reading Success Program:</i> Not funded.</p>

TABLE 2: CURRICULUM

Recommendation		TF Member	Status	FY 11 Funding
1.	State-wide curriculum and common assessments mapped to common core, international and national professional organization (e.g., NCTM) standards.	Williams	<p><u>Enacted. Will take effect 9/1/2014</u></p> <p>PA 10-111 enhances graduation requirements starting the Class of 2018. These changes will require upgrading curriculum in some districts.</p>	Unfunded
2.	Align high school curriculum to world/international standards. Tie standards to a board examination system	Kennedy		
3.	Implementation of Common Curriculum for groups of communities that have measureable levels of inter-district transiency	Rojas		
4.	Curriculum used should be evaluated, tested, and scored based on how students advance in the lowest performing schools.	Harp	<p><u>Certain curriculum approval requirements already in effect</u></p> <p>State law currently gives the State Board of Education (SBE) authority to require the local board of education for a school or district in need of improvement to implement model curriculum, including recommended textbooks, materials, and supplies approved by the State Department of Education (SDE) (CGS §10-223e (c)(2)(F)). (see Appendix A)</p> <p>State law requires all boards of education to establish a school district curriculum committee that must recommend, develop, review, and approve all curricula for the district (§ 10-220 (e)).</p>	<p><i>School accountability:</i> \$1,803,284</p>
5.	SDE should determine the curriculum for school districts not making sufficient progress unless the school district is engaged in a federal program to improve the school’s curriculum. SDE should oversee the curriculum’s implementation and provide technical assistance where necessary.	Harp		
6.	Accelerate the process by which curricula, aligned with the national Common Core Standards and new high school graduation requirements, is implemented, particularly in the lowest achieving schools	Kennedy		
7.	Examine culturally relevant pedagogy to engage children	Cardona	No state law on this topic, although it may be done on the district level	

TABLE 3: GOVERNANCE

Recommendation		TF Member	Status	FY 11 Funding
1.	Establish governance structures that reflect the best practices in urban school district governance.	Williams	Likely requires legislation Reorganizing the state’s education governance structure will likely require new legislation, depending on the extent of the recommended changes.	
2.	Reorganize the CSDE to develop an Office of Educational Equity (OEE) that reports directly to the Commissioner.	Cardona		
3.	Create a Secretary of Education (political leverage point) position to influence educational equity through legislation. Said person would report directly to the Governor of the CT.	Cardona		
4.	Connecticut needs strong leadership by the Governor in our efforts to build a high-performance educational system in Connecticut, including the establishment of key executive branch positions with responsibility for the overall educational system and for the Early Care and Education System.	Wessel		
5.	Lowest performing schools should be budgeted for separately from their local boards of education and monitored directly by SDE.	Harp	Part of this recommendation is addressed in the school accountability law (CGS 10-223 (c)(2)) (See Appendix A)	<i>School Accountability:</i> \$1,803,284
6.	Appoint the Lieutenant Governor to serve as Liaison to P-20 Council and Chair Achievement Gap Sub-Committee	Rojas	New. Does not require legislation. (For more details on the P-20 Council see table 1, item 6)	
7.	Establish a school funding system that establishes adequacy and equity, including fully funding all mandates. In the short-term, this includes avoiding the reduction of ECS funding created by the expiration of ARRA and other federal stimulus monies.	Williams	Changing the ECS formula requires legislation. Funding levels for ECS grants are determined through the legislative budget process	
8.	Monies must follow the child as it does in public school financing. This provides choice for both	Curtis	Changing distribution formulas for state education funding requires legislation	

TABLE 3: GOVERNANCE

Recommendation		TF Member	Status	FY 11 Funding
	child and family.			
9.	Require the State to take on some services and functions which are currently performed in a disorganized manner by our local school districts.	Wessel	Requires statutory and budget changes	
10.	Seek creative ways to fund legislation aimed at improving equity for students. This should include the regionalization of services, where appropriate (beginning with Healthcare and transportation costs).	Cardona	<p><u>Several state laws address cooperative arrangements among districts.</u></p> <p>Towns may form cooperative arrangements among towns allowed to provide school accommodation, services, programs, activities, special education, and health care services (§ 10-158a).</p>	<p>State reimburses cooperative arrangements for adult education, school construction projects, and school transportation services in the same manner as other school districts.</p>
11.	Accelerate efforts to increase inter-district shared services by requiring SDE to undertake pilot study of sub-region (5-6 districts) districts	Rojas		<p><i>Interdistrict Cooperative Programs:</i> \$11,127,369</p>
12.	Encourage school districts to share services and save money	Wessel	<p>School districts may form cooperative arrangements to provide adult education (§ 10-74d)</p> <p>State provides grants for interdistrict cooperative programs among school districts (§ 10-74d)</p> <p>In 2010, the legislature established a grant payable in FY 12 to any municipality whose board of education makes a cooperative arrangement with at least one other board of education to provide school transportation resulting in a savings in FY 11 (PA 10-167).</p> <p>New legislation permits two or more municipalities or local or regional boards of education to enter into a written agreement to act as a single entity to provide medical or</p>	<p><i>School Transportation Incentive Grant;</i> depends on savings achieved</p>

TABLE 3: GOVERNANCE

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Recommendation		TF Member	Status	FY 11 Funding
			health care benefits for their employees under certain conditions (PA 10-174).	
13.	Require that Boards of Education present detailed budgets that lay out what sources of funding (state aid, federal aid, property tax, grants) pay for what services	Rojas	<u>May require legislation.</u> State law currently specifies how boards of education must prepare budgets, how they transfer money among accounts, and financial reporting to the state (§ 10-222)	None
14.	Increase transparency so that we can understand how we are spending our money	Wessel		

TABLE 4: TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

Recommendation		TF Member	Status	FY 11 Funding
1.	Focus State-wide on preparing, developing, and supporting effective school and district leadership.	Williams	<p><u>Following provisions are already enacted and took effect July 1, 2010.</u></p> <p>PA 10-111 requires SDE to review and approve proposals for school administrator alternate route to certification (ARC) programs and specifies minimum criteria for approval including (1) entities that may offer administrator ARC programs; (2) admission criteria, including a requirement that an applicant have at least 40 months of Connecticut teaching experience with at least 10 months of teaching in a public school; (3) that participants serve a one-year residency as an administrator; and (4) that program graduates obtain a master's degree within five years. As of December 9, 2010, no administrator ARC programs have been approved. The Regional Service Center (RESC) Alliance is in the process of developing an ARC program for administrators.</p> <p>PA 10-111 also gives the education commissioner additional authority to waive the requirement that a school superintendent hold a superintendent certificate issued by the SBE, if a waiver is requested by the superintendent's employing board of education.</p>	None
2.	Align educator evaluation and placement systems with student achievement data (based on multiple measures) and school/district reform needs.	Williams	<p><u>Enacted but not implemented. Provisions are effective July 1, 2013.</u></p> <p>PA 10-111 requires SBE, by July 1, 2013, to develop guidelines for a model teacher evaluation program that includes student academic growth and requires local school district evaluation programs to be consistent with those guidelines. The guidelines must, at a minimum, include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> ways to measure student academic growth; 	Unfunded

TABLE 4: TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

Recommendation		TF Member	Status	FY 11 Funding
			<p>2. consideration of “control” factors tracked by the expanded public school data system that could influence teacher performance, such as student characteristics, attendance, and mobility; and</p> <p>3. minimum requirements for evaluation instruments and procedures.</p> <p>The act establishes a Performance Evaluation Advisory Council to help SBE develop the model teacher program evaluation guidelines and the expanded public school information system to support it.</p>	
3.	Hold higher education institution that do not adequately prepare teachers to teach in the 21st century classroom accountable	Williams	SDE collects data on success rates of teacher preparation program graduates on the teacher certification exam, by school.	
4.	Give districts the ability to assign staff based on factors other than seniority, if they so choose. Performance, experience, training and qualifications should be taken into account, in addition to seniority.	Williams	<p>Generally governed by district collective bargaining agreements. State authority to override such agreements is constitutionally limited.</p> <p>School accountability law gives the SBE, in a school or district identified as in need of improvement, authority to “direct the transfer and assignment of teachers.” That law also requires any such SBE directive that affects working conditions, it must be carried out in conformance with the Teacher Negotiation Act (§ 10-223e (c)(2)(D)). (see Appendix A)</p>	<p><i>School accountability:</i> \$1,803,284</p>
5.	Attract more effective teachers to the most challenged schools	Wessel	<p>School accountability law gives the SBE, in a school or district identified as in need of improvement, authority to “provide incentives to attract highly qualified teachers and principals.” That law also requires any such SBE incentives that affect working conditions to be carried out in conformance with the Teacher Negotiation Act (§ 10-223e (c)(2)(C)). (see Appendix A)</p> <p>PA 10-111 gives experienced teachers an incentive to move</p>	<i>Same as above</i>

TABLE 4: TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

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Recommendation		TF Member	Status	FY 11 Funding
			to a priority school district by allowing a teacher who already had tenure in another district to achieve tenure in within 10 months rather than 20 months in the priority district. The act also expands opportunities for priority school districts to reemploy retired teachers who are collecting state teacher pension pensions without triggering a benefit reduction.	
6.	Health benefit coverage: The economies of scale and the enhanced bargaining leverage of the State of Connecticut may be able to more cost effectively offer health coverage for Connecticut’s teachers. The ongoing discussions of health benefit s “pooling” and the ongoing work of the Sustinet Board might be provide opportunity to explore this.	Wessel	<u>Already allowed</u> PA 10-174 permits two or more municipalities or local or regional boards of education to enter into a written agreement to act as a single entity to provide medical or health care benefits for their employees under certain conditions.	None
7.	“Teachers at Large” employed directly by the State to work in high-need school districts: Like the “circuit riders” in early American history, the State of Connecticut could directly employ master teachers available for placements in schools around the state. Teachers could move between low-performing 3 schools and less challenging assignments over the course of their career, accruing cross-district expertise and seniority over time. Starting from a clean slate, a new labor relations paradigm could be developed reflecting current best practices, building on the New Haven teachers’ contract model and others. Incentives for urban placements and accountability standards could be built into the model. The State itself could bear the cost these master teachers, the local school district could (similar to “cost centers” in the private sector), or they could be jointly shared. This would be a comparable approach to supplementing the existing teacher workforce as that performed today by Teach	Wessel	New	

TABLE 4: TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

Recommendation		TF Member	Status	FY 11 Funding
	For America, with the benefit of being able to retain and develop teachers far beyond the two years typical of TFA placements. Conceivably this approach could be expanded to administrators as well.			
8.	Create an Education Extension Service to allow faculty and experts from school of education to come into schools in need of improvement to provide training and technical assistance	Harp	<p>As part of a school or district improvement effort, the school accountability law requires SBE to assign technical assistance team to the school or district in need of improvement to guide initiatives and report progress to the education commissioner (CGS § 10-223e) (see Appendix A).</p> <p>CommPACT Schools: PA 07-3, June Special Session, established a program within the Department of Higher Education for improving educational outcomes in the state’s neediest school districts through a higher education/elementary and secondary education collaborative effort.</p> <p>Innovation Schools: PA 10-111 permits a board of education for a priority school district, acting with or without an external partner, to convert an existing school or establish a new school as an “innovation school” through agreements with the teacher and administrator unions for the purpose of improving school performance and student achievement. External partners can include higher education institutions.</p>	<p><i>School Accountability:</i> \$1,803,284</p> <p><i>CommPACT and Innovation schools:</i> Not funded</p>
9.	Identify professional development needs that are holistic and grounded in individual communities’ characteristics including demographics and socioeconomic resources. Identify appropriate resources for professional development grounded in knowledge of the communities and expertise in culturally relevant and research-based best practices.	Reyes	<p><u>Recently adopted professional development requirements not yet implemented:</u></p> <p>Starting July 1, 2011, state law required school boards to fully consider priorities relating to student outcome needs as determined by SBE when establishing professional development activities for their certified employees. It also requires each board to establish a professional development</p>	

TABLE 4: TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

Recommendation		TF Member	Status	FY 11 Funding
			<p>committee to, among other things, develop, evaluate, and annually update the district's professional development plan. (PA 09-1, June 19 Special Session)</p> <p>PA 10-111 expands the entities eligible for state funding to provide professional development services, technical assistance, and evaluation activities to local and regional boards of education, state charter schools, vocational-technical schools, school readiness providers, and other educational entities, as the education commissioner determines.</p>	
10.	Provide continued support through technical teams to be involved in the discussion of needs assessments, approaches and implementation, outcomes assessment discussions	Reyes	<p><u>Enacted</u></p> <p>As part of a school or district improvement effort, the school accountability law requires SBE to assign technical assistance team to the school or district in need of improvement to guide initiatives and report progress to the education commissioner (CGS § 10-223e) (see Appendix A).</p>	
11.	Require that Superintendents annually set with Board of Education approval- student performance goals, upon which the Superintendent would be evaluated	Rojas, Kennedy	<p><u>Local Discretion</u></p> <p>Whether or not to do this is currently at the discretion of a local board of education. Not required by state law. The strategic school profiles (§ 10-220) are intended to encourage this practice.</p>	
12.	Individualize teacher professional development based on the local educational authority goals and SDE goals.	Harp	<p><u>Recently adopted professional development requirements not yet implemented:</u></p> <p>Starting July 1, 2011, state law requires school boards to fully consider priorities relating to student outcome needs as determined by SBE when establishing professional development activities for their certified employees. It also</p>	None

TABLE 4: TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

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Recommendation		TF Member	Status	FY 11 Funding
			requires each board to establish a professional development committee to, among other things, develop, evaluate, and annually update the district's professional development plan. (§ 10-220a, CGS 2010 Supplement)	
13.	Train principals in new data systems and holding them accountable for reaching student achievement goals within their buildings	Kennedy	Enacted, not yet implemented PA 10-111 evaluation and data systems requirements take effect July 1, 2013	Not funded
14.	Eliminate tenure for principals and assistant principals	Kennedy	New Requires change in state law (§ 10-151 (2) – definition of “teacher”)	
15.	Modify initial tenure for teachers from 40 months to 50 months	Kennedy	New Requires change in state law (§ 10-151 (6) (A))	
16.	Give teachers input in developing a new evaluation system	Hall	Enacted, not yet implemented. See # 12 above. In addition, under PA 10-111, model evaluation guidelines are created by Performance Evaluation Advisory Council, which includes teachers and teacher representatives.	Unfunded
17.	Emphasize teacher development in any new evaluation system	Hall		
18.	Examine professional learning opportunities for adults	Cardona		
19.	Require educators to reflect a racial and gender balance with the school population in which they serve. This includes the positions of superintendent, principal, house master, guidance counselors, teachers, and aides	Curtis	Minority Teacher Recruitment Program: A 2007 law required the RESC Minority Recruiting Alliance to study how best to (1) encourage minority middle and high school students to go to college and enter teacher preparation programs, (2) recruit minority college students to enroll in teacher preparation programs and become teachers, and (3) recruit and maintain minority teachers in Connecticut schools. The alliance was also required to propose guidelines for pilot minority teacher recruitment and retention programs and specified types of pilot programs the alliance can consider (§ 10-151). Minority Teacher Incentive Grant Program and	<i>Minority Teacher Incentive Program</i> \$471,374

TABLE 4: TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

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Recommendation		TF Member	Status	FY 11 Funding
			<p>Weisman Scholarship Program: These programs provide up to \$5,000 a year for two years of full-time study to minority undergraduates enrolled in a Connecticut teacher preparation program. Both programs also provide eligible students with \$2,500 in yearly stipends for up to four years of teaching in a Connecticut elementary or secondary school. The only difference between the programs are that the Weisman Scholarship Program is designed specifically for students planning to teach math or science in a Connecticut middle or high school. Both programs are run by the Department of Higher Education (§ 10a-168a)</p>	

TABLE 5: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Recommendation	TF Member	Status	FY 11 Funding
<p>supervising school activities, homework, and protocol and process for advocating for their children. Including, making parent/teacher meetings mandatory.</p>		<p><u>State Laws on Parental Involvement:</u></p> <p>By September 1, 1998, local school board must adopt written policies and procedures to encourage parent-teacher communication, including through use of monthly newsletters, required regular contact with all parents, flexible parent-teacher conferences, drop-in hours for parents, home visits, and the use of technology for such things as homework hotlines (§ 10-221(f)).</p> <p>Annual school district strategic school profiles must include information about parental involvement and if the district has taken measures to improve parental involvement, including methods to (1) engage parents in planning and improving school programs and (2) increase support to parents working at home with their children on learning activities (§ 10-220(c)).</p> <p>PA 10-111 requires school boards with low-achieving schools to create school governance councils made up mostly of students’ parents or guardians. The councils are empowered to, among other things, advise the principal on the school budget before it is submitted to the superintendent, interview candidates to fill principal vacancies, and vote to reorganize low-achieving schools using school reconstitution models included in the act.</p> <p>PA 10-111 also transferred the Parent Trust Fund from the Department of Social Services to SDE. The education commissioner must use the fund for programs aimed at improving children’s health, safety, and education through parents’ community involvement. The programs must (1) train parents in civic leadership skills and (2) support increased,</p>	

TABLE 5: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

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Recommendation	TF Member	Status	FY 11 Funding
		sustained parental engagement in community affairs.	

TABLE 6: EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Recommendation		TF Member	Status	FY 11 Funding
1.	More instructional time, including a longer school day and school year and increased access to on-line learning opportunities.	Williams	<p>Priority school district grants: Must be used to improve student achievement and enhance educational opportunities through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dropout prevention programs • Alternative and transitional programs for students having trouble in regular educational programs • Academic enrichment, tutorial, or recreational programs in schools both after school and during the summer • Extended-day kindergarten programs • Early reading intervention programs, including summer and after-school programs • Enhancing use of technology to support instruction or improve parent-teacher communication • Strengthening parent and other community involvement in schools, school district programs, activities, and education policies • Obtaining accreditation for elementary and middle schools from the New England Association of Schools and Colleges <p>Extended School Hours Grants. These grants must be used to keep public schools open outside of school hours for academic enrichment, academic support, and recreational programs for students in the district.</p> <p>Summer School Program Grants. These grants must be used to fund remedial instruction for students</p>	<p><u>Priority school district grant totals:</u> \$117,237,188</p> <p>Includes allocations for <u>Priority school districts:</u> \$40,929,547</p> <p><u>Extended school hours grants:</u> \$2,994,752</p> <p><u>After School grants:</u> \$4,500,000</p> <p><u>Summer school grant program:</u> Not funded</p>
2.	Provide funding for after-school and summer school remediation for students with low CMT scores	McQuillan		
3.	Implement expanded opportunities (extended school day, year, tutoring) for teaching, learning and remediation for K-3 students in schools/districts most in need	Rojas		
4.	Provide more learning time and change the length of the school day to include but not be limited to possible increase in the number of days of school.	Harp		
5.	Longer school day with more time on task	Curtis		
6.	Identify early and then support regularly low-achieving students through both an increase of time-on-task (e.g., longer school day, summer education, etc.) and tutoring	Kennedy		
7.	Identify those students at minimum by grade one and maximum grade three who need necessary interventions to begin to narrow the learning gaps through such means as longer school days/school years, Saturday academies, high quality tutorial services etc.	Hall		

TABLE 6: EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

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Recommendation		TF Member	Status	FY 11 Funding
			<p>who fail to meet the remedial standard on the 4th and 6th grade Connecticut mastery tests. Programs can include after-school, weekend, and vacation programs. (CGS § 10-265f)</p> <p>After School Grant Program: Provides grants for programs that take place when school is not in session. The programs must be for educational, enrichment, and recreational activities for children in grades K-12.</p>	
8.	Conduct a meaningful pilot of the Board Examination System as a way of providing both (1) advanced opportunities to motivated students and (2) freeing up and redeploying teachers for needed provision of remediation services	Kennedy	<p>Enacted; Effective July 1, 2010</p> <p>PA 10-111 (1) authorizes SDE to create a board examination series pilot program to allow students in grades 9 through 12 to graduate from high school by passing a series of exams instead of meeting the regular high school graduation requirements and (2) permits school boards to award credit toward graduation requirements for the successful completion of online coursework, if the board has adopted an online course policy that meets standards the act sets.</p>	
9.	Encourage inclusion of the partnerships with early childhood and after school learning programs.	Curtis		
10.	Expand opportunities for high school students to take college level courses by having professors teach on-site	Rojas	<p>New</p> <p>Starting July 1, 2011, PA 10-111:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires boards of education to provide high school level courses for which an advanced placement (AP) examination is available through the College Board 	<p><i>PA 10-111 provisions:</i> Unfunded</p>

TABLE 6: EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

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Recommendation		TF Member	Status	FY 11 Funding
			<ul style="list-style-type: none">Requires SBE to develop guidelines to help school districts train teachers to teach AP courses to a diverse student body.	

TABLE 7: EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Recommendation		TF Member	Status	FY 11 Funding
1.	Universal Pre-K	Hall	New. Requires legislation and budget action	<i>School readiness grants:</i> \$69,813,190
2.	Universal PreK beginning at age four, including comprehensive efforts to identify and intervene with students who exhibit special needs starting at the age of three.	Williams		
3.	Legislate mandatory Pre-Kindergarten and Full-day Kindergarten in districts in which the achievement gaps in 3 rd grade are greater than a predetermined number.	Cardona	SBE can order district in need of improvement to implement full-day K under school accountability law (§ 10-223e) (see Appendix A).	<i>Early Childhood Program:</i> \$5,007,354
4.	Expand high-quality preschool and full-day kindergarten particularly for low-income children to ensure school readiness	Kennedy	See the attached list of school districts that already offer full-day and extended day kindergarten.	
5.	Expand high-quality pre-school and full day kindergarten to ensure school readiness	Wessel		
6.	Create an entity within SDE that pulls together under one umbrella pre-K related programs from other Departments/Agencies	Kennedy	<u>Office of Early Childhood Planning; Early Childhood Cabinet</u>	<i>Early Childhood Cabinet:</i> Not funded
7.	Consolidate early childhood education programs and agencies within SDE	Rojas	2009 legislation created a new Office of Early Childhood Planning within the SDE and required it to coordinate state services for children from birth to age nine. The act also reconstitutes the Early Childhood Cabinet with different membership and duties and requires the agreement September 24, 2010 between the education and social services commissioners about their departments' duties regarding school readiness programs to be submitted annually to the legislature. (§§ 10-16y and 10-16z, CGS 2010 Supplement)	
8.	For Professional Development, CT needs effective early learning credentials. The curricula at the state teachers colleges needs to be much improved and the bachelor's early learning credential, proposed recently at St. Joseph's, Hartford, should be revisited.	Wessel	Minimum qualifications for school readiness staff increased beginning July 1, 2015. Existing law requires each school readiness classroom to have someone with the following minimum qualifications: 1. a credential from an SDE-approved organization and 12 credits in early childhood education or child	

TABLE 7: EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Recommendation		TF Member	Status	FY 11 Funding
			development from an accredited higher education institution, 2. an associate's or four-year degree from an accredited institution plus the 12 credits, or 3. a teaching certificate with an early childhood education or special education endorsement. Starting July 1, 2015, each school readiness classroom must have a staff member with at least (1) a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution in early childhood education, child development, or a related field approved by SDE or (2) a teaching certificate with an early childhood or special education endorsement (CGS 10-16p(b)).	
9.	Raise the enrollment age for kindergarten so that a student is age five by 9/1 and providing transitional supports to low income families/students	Kennedy	New. Requires statutory change (§§ 10-15c and 10-184)	
10.	Revise age requirements for entrance to Kindergarten: Phase in an adjustment to the admission date to Kindergarten over four years, eventually admitting only those students who are 5 years of age on or before October 1. In addition, eliminate the provision that allows for parents to wait to enroll their children in kindergarten until that child is age 6 or 7 but grant local and regional boards of education the discretion to implement these age requirements and provide for waivers on a case-by-case basis. Provide school readiness slots for those students in priority school districts that will no longer be eligible to enroll in kindergarten.	McQuillan		
11.	Improve data collection to support the expansion of high quality pre-school programs	Rojas	Enacted A 2009 law requires enhanced tracking, though the Early Childhood Information System , of (1) children receiving care and education from a board of education or any	See above

TABLE 7: EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

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Recommendation		TF Member	Status	FY 11 Funding
			publicly funded program; (2) the existing and potential workforce for early childhood programs; and (3) early childhood program characteristics. It makes the SDE responsible for giving each child, staff member, and program a unique identifier and requires all publicly funded early childhood education programs or agencies to enter all children and staff in the system. (§10-16y (2) CGS 2010 Supp.)	
12.	Recommend to Program Review and Investigations to evaluate \$600 million in Early Childhood Grants for efficiencies and efficacy	Rojas	<p>A 2009 law requires the Office of Early Childhood Planning to begin a longitudinal evaluation of the school readiness program by January 1, 2010. (§ 10-16y, CGS 2010 Supp.)</p> <p>The school readiness program went through the Appropriations Committee’s results-based accountability (RBA) process in 2009. The program’s RBA report card is here.</p>	

TABLE 8: OTHER

Recommendation		TF Member	Status	Funding
1.	Consider best practices that have been proven in other states	Wessel		
2.	Move from punitive to collaborative and supportive oversight of district performance. (This includes using language such as: “failing schools” ---underfunded, understaffed schools are set up for failure)	Reyes	New	
3.	Propose legislation to establish the Center for the Study of English Language Learning and Culturally Relevant Instruction	McQuillan	New	
4.	Implement the in-school suspension law in lowest performing school districts.	Harp	In-school suspension law went into effect in July 1, 2010 (CGS 2010 Supp. §10-233c, as amended by PA 10-111 § 20)	None
5.	Give a third-party organization with proven educational planning expertise the task of developing a realistic comprehensive plan – based on reports and recommendations already developed - that will measurably reduce the Achievement Gap over time sensitive periods; reports back to Task Force?	Kennedy	New	

APPENDIX A: EXISTING STATUTORY SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY REQUIREMENTS (CGS § 10-223e)

2007 Law (PA 07-3, June Special Session)

REQUIRED ACTIONS TO IMPROVE STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Schools Requiring Corrective Action under the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act

The law requires schools and districts that are designated as “in need of improvement” under Connecticut law and requiring corrective action under the federal NCLB to be placed on a list of low-achieving schools and districts and subjected to intensified supervision and direction by SBE. **It requires SBE to take any of the following actions, any combination of them, or any closely related actions to improve student performance and remove a school or district from the “low-achieving” list** and address other school or district needs:

1. require operations and instructional audits, the **implementation of an SDE- approved curriculum**, the use of state and federal funds for critical needs as directed by SBE, and additional training and technical assistance for teachers, principals, and central office staff members hired by the district

2. **identify schools for (a) reconstitution**, which the commissioner can phase in, as charter schools or schools based on certain models of improvement, or **(b) management by an entity other than the board of education**;
3. require the board for the school or district to **implement model curriculum**;
4. direct the school board to develop and implement a plan addressing achievement and learning environment deficits as recommended in the instructional audit;
5. assign a **technical assistance team to the school or district to guide initiatives and report progress to the education commissioner**;
6. develop benchmarks for the school or district to meet as it progresses toward removal from the list of low-achieving schools or districts;
7. provide funding to districts near the low-achieving district so students within the low-achieving district can attend public school in a neighboring district; and
8. direct the establishment of learning academies within schools that require continuous **monitoring of student performance** by teacher groups.

The law also allows SBE to provide incentives to attract highly qualified teachers and principals and to direct the transfer and assignment of teachers and principals. It does not appear that this latter provision supersedes collective bargaining agreements.

SBE must monitor progress in these schools and districts and notify school boards about their progress in meeting any improvement benchmarks. If a low-achieving district fails to make sufficient progress toward the benchmarks and fails to make adequate yearly progress (AYP) under NCLB for two years, the SBE, after consulting with the governor and the district's chief elected officials, can ask the General Assembly to adopt legislation allowing the SBE or another authorized entity to control the district. (PA 10-111 now gives commissioner this authority without going to the legislature.)

The law also requires the education commissioner to prepare a statewide education accountability plan in conformance with NCLB that (1) identifies the schools and districts in need of improvement, (2) requires the development and implementation of improvement plans, and (3) utilizes rewards and consequences.

Schools/Districts Not Making AYP for Two Years

A school district or elementary school that fails to make AYP for two successive years must be designated as a low-achieving school or district and must be evaluated by the education commissioner. The **commissioner can require that the school district or school provide full-day kindergarten classes; summer school; extended school days; weekend classes; tutoring; or professional development to its administrators, principals, teachers, and paraprofessional teacher aides**. In ordering these educational programs, the commissioner may limit the offering to the subgroup of students that have failed to achieve proficiency, those in particular grades, or those who are otherwise at substantial risk of educational failure.

The identified low-achieving school district or the school district in which an identified low-achieving school is located must pay for any educational programs ordered. However, the commissioner cannot order an educational program that costs more to implement than the total increase in the town's ECS grant above the prior fiscal year.

PA 08-153, Added more authority to the provisions of the Accountability law:

The act builds on PA 07-3, JSS, by expanding the state board of education's authority to require additional training and technical assistance for teachers, principals, and central office staff, to also include students' parents or guardians. It is not clear if the act is attempting to allow SBE to require training for parents or require districts to provide the training for parents.

The act also allows SBE to require training of local and regional boards of education to improve their operational efficiency and effectiveness, and submit an annual action plan to the education commissioner outlining procedures for monitoring their effectiveness. Finally, it provides that if SBE issues directives for the following and they affect working conditions, the directives must be carried out in accordance with the Teacher Negotiation Act (i.e, teacher and administrator collective bargaining).