

A Proposal to Transform Schooling in Connecticut

SCHOOLING FOR THE TWENTY FIRST CENTURY



The Need

- Poverty and the Achievement Gap
- International Achievement Gap
- Changing Skill Requirements of a 21st Century Work Force
- *New Mission of Public Education*
ALL CHILDREN must meet rigorous standards in order to be college and career ready.



The Problem

- Our current school system was designed for another age and for another purpose.
- Public education is not designed to insure that every student will achieve high standards of learning. Designed to give every child a chance to learn.
- Reform without systemic change has and will continue to fail. Tinkering or reform does not make a substantial difference.



The Solution

- All teaching and learning must be learner centered and must result in high levels of achievement for all students.
- Progress is based on mastery of standards not time metrics like age and Carnegie units.
- All learning experiences are consistent with individuals' learning styles and interests; learning can occur at anytime and anywhere.



Getting From Here to There

- State Level
 - Alignment from Governor to Commissioner.
 - Role of the State Board of Education – Establish standards for all children in English, mathematics, science, social studies, world languages and the arts.
 - Hold local districts accountable for meeting standards and remove all process mandates.
 - Provide assistance for districts.
 - Intervene on a graduated scale based on learning outcomes.



Getting From Here to There

- Preparation programs must change to prepare teachers and administrators to work in transformed schools.
- Strengthen preparation of new teachers and principals with increased clinical experiences.
- Retain only effective or highly effective teachers and principals



Getting From Here To There

- Local Districts
 - School districts must have the capacity to provide different options for children to meet education standards.
 - Allow children and their parents to choose from a menu of options including magnet schools, charter schools, vocational-technical schools, as well as different schedules and curriculums.



Getting From Here To There

- Local Districts
 - Structure school districts so that they are fiscally independent.
 - Begin schooling at age three.
 - Ensure all early childhood programs are high quality.
 - Ensure high quality preschool teachers.
 - Make high quality early childhood programs universally available.



Getting From Here To There

- Local Leadership
 - The role of the Board should be defined by statute to setting local standards and benchmarks for system performance, other policy matters and the hiring, supervision and retention/dismissal of the Superintendent.
 - The authority, role and responsibility of the Superintendent of Education must be clearly commensurate with responsibilities.



Getting From Here To There

- Local Leadership
 - Provide stability of quality leadership. Remove statutory limit on length of superintendents' contracts.
 - Make authority of principals commensurate with responsibilities.
 - Make authority of teachers commensurate with responsibilities.



Getting From Here To There

- Accountability
 - For growth in student achievement.
 - Demonstration of competency instead of seat time as basis for certification preparation programs.
 - Demonstration of competency as basis for retention of services. Relationship to present definition of tenure.



First Steps

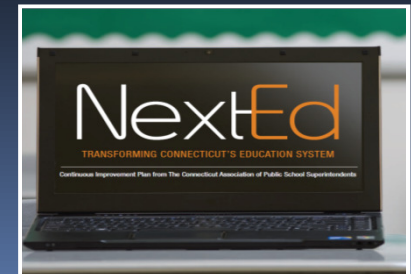
- Initiate serious conversations at state and local levels about what it takes to transform system.
- Build coalitions with others around areas of agreement.
- Stay flexible on means but strong on purposes.



Education Transformation

Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents

- Employ internationally benchmarked standards in all disciplines – English, mathematics, science, social studies, the arts and world languages.
- Personalize Learning - focus on student learning needs, styles and interests.
- Make learning the constant and time the variable.
- Make high quality early childhood available to all beginning at three years of age.
- Strengthen accountability of students, teachers, administrators and Boards of Education.
- Boost the quality of all entering and working in the education profession.
- Increase options for students of learning paths.
- Increase options for students to demonstrate learning.
- Make the system outcome driven. Eliminate process controls.
- Increase school district capacity to provide personalized learning.



Transforming Public Education

