

BULLETIN

The Connecticut Association of Schools
The Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference



Affiliated with the National Association of Secondary School Principals ♦ Member National Federation of State High School Associations ♦ Member National Middle School Association

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MARCH 2001

CIGNA Healthcare Celebrates the Artist in Each Child

CIGNA HealthCare is proud to sponsor Connecticut Association of Schools Elementary Arts Recognition Program. CIGNA celebrates the efforts of teachers all around our state to bring the performing and visual arts to life for Connecticut children and to recognize and nurture the artist in each student.



CIGNA also salutes the students who will be present at the Aqua Turf Club in early March, and the efforts of every student artist throughout our state. CIGNA congratulates them on a job well done!

CL&P to Sponsor Environmental Conference

By Dr. Robert Carroll, Assistant Executive Director

Connecticut Light and Power is the sponsor of the Ninth Annual Environmental Awareness Conference scheduled to attract hundreds of fifth and sixth grade students from across the state. Heightening elementary and middle school students' awareness of environmental issues is an early step toward building a lifelong commitment to protecting our natural resources. Northeast Utilities (NU), CL&P's parent company, shares this commitment and has joined the Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS) in sponsoring this year's conference.

"NU is committed to the belief that corporations have a responsibility to protect the environment and therefore we are happy to join CAS in sponsoring this most worthwhile conference," said Christie Bradway of NU and a member of the CAS Environmental Committee. "We at NU are pleased to have the opportunity to bring environmental awareness to our young people."

"NU recognizes the importance of inspiring the next generation of environmental stewards through investment in education today," said Michael G. Morris, chairman, president, and chief executive officer of NU who began his career as an environmentalist. "Our sponsorship of this conference also continues a company tradition of investing in environmental education."

All of the state's 800 elementary schools and its 155 middle schools have been invited to send up to four students with an interest in the environment to the March 23rd conference, which will be held at Central CT State University in New Britain. The day will include



Connecticut
Light & Power

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LEGAL MAILBAG

By Attorney Thomas B. Mooney, Neag School of Education, Univ. of CT



Editor's Note: As part of a new feature in the BULLETIN, we invite readers to submit short, law-related questions of practical concern to school administrators. Each month we will select questions and publish answers. While these answers cannot be considered formal legal advice, they may be of help to you and

your colleagues. We may edit your questions, and we will not identify the authors. Please submit your questions to legalmailbag@casciac.org.

Q. Dear Mailbag:

A parent told me that my assistant said some rotten things about me. When I confronted him, he told me to bug off, because under the First Amendment he is free to say whatever he wants. What can I do?
My Ears Are Burning

A. Dear Burning:

Your assistant is incorrect. The First Amendment protection applies when public employees speak out on matters of public concern. If that speech harms close working relationships or otherwise seriously impedes the operation of the school district, however, it need not be tolerated. Your assistant's speech was not protected, and I hope that he is looking for another job.

Q. Dear Mailbag:

A parent just threatened to sue me. The parent has joint custody of his son with his ex-wife, and she just enrolled him in school in Florida. When I got the request, I sent the records to the new school in Florida, and now dad is claiming that I violated his rights. Help!
Principal Under Attack

A. Dear Under Attack:

You can rest easy. The law provides the schools may send records to a receiving school without the consent of parents. Moreover, here Mom has custody and gave you consent (though we imagine that mom and dad will be in court over this). Note a new state law, however, that provides that districts must provide notification to parents when records are sent, unless the parent has already given consent.

connecticut news & notes

What's in the hopper?

The following are just a few of the education-related bills under consideration by the 2001 Connecticut General Assembly.

★ **S.B. No. 165** AN ACT CONCERNING CHLAMYDIA TESTING.

Statement of Purpose: To reduce the number of cases of chlamydia in secondary schools, colleges and universities. (In a bid to slow the spread of chlamydia among teenagers and young adults, a state senator is proposing that every incoming high school senior and college freshman in Connecticut be required to undergo testing for the sexually transmitted disease. Chlamydia has been spreading quickly, both nationally and in Connecticut, with the number of reported cases in the state increasing by 18 percent between 1996 and 1999. Public health experts are zeroing in on it as a possible factor in both infant mortality and infertility. The proposed bill would require testing but would not make seeking treatment a condition of enrolling in school. Students would be required to show proof that they had been tested but would not be required to report the results. According to the bill's author, a testing program would be an effective tool because so many of those infected with chlamydia are not aware they have the disease.)

★ **S.B. No. 230/H.B. No. 5075** AN ACT CONCERNING SPECIAL EDUCATION FUNDING AND THE USE OF AUDIO-TAPE TEXTBOOKS IN THE CLASSROOM.

Statement of purpose: That a special education grant be established to provide funding for equipment and the training of special education teachers in the use of audiotape textbooks in the classroom for students with disabilities such as blindness and dyslexia; that the department provide ongoing payments to school districts for the cost of borrowing audio tape textbooks for special education students.

★ **S.B. No. 447** AN ACT CONCERNING TEACHER CERTIFICATION AND FORMER MILITARY PERSONNEL.

Statement of Purpose: To implement the federally sponsored Troops to Teachers Program to facilitate the transition from military service to teaching careers.

★ **S.B. No. 537** AN ACT CONCERNING TEACHER AND ADMINISTRATOR CERTIFICATION AND AN EXTENSION PERIOD.

Statement of Purpose: To provide for a short term extension of teacher and administrator certificates in order to alleviate the teacher and administrator shortage.

★ **S.B. No. 1175** AN ACT CONCERNING THE CONNECTICUT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE TEST.

Statement of Purpose: To change the academic year that students take the CAP test from the sophomore to the junior year.

★ **S.B. No. 1203** AN ACT CONCERNING RETIRED EDUCATOR REEMPLOYMENT.

Statement of Purpose: To amend the teachers' retirement statutes to allow retired educators to be temporarily employed by school districts in shortage areas and earn no more than ninety per cent of the entry-level salary for the assigned subject area. Currently, they are allowed to earn no more than forty five per cent of such salary.

★ **H.B. No. 5434** AN ACT CONCERNING EDUCATION ON PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH GAMBLING.

Statement of Purpose: To provide information to children at an early age to educate them on the problems that may be associated with gambling. (Two lawmakers have proposed a bill to require school districts to start gambling prevention programs as early as the elementary level. Connecticut would join two other states —

New Jersey and Minnesota — that have gambling curriculums in the schools.)

★ **H.B. No. 5740** AN ACT CONCERNING TEACHERS AND INCENTIVES FOR TEACHING IN CERTAIN SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

Statement of Purpose: To establish programs to improve the level of compensation for teachers in priority school districts, teachers in schools on the list of schools in need of improvement and teachers in subject shortage areas. To extend the period of time for bilingual education teachers to meet certification requirements. To waive the fees for certification examinations for candidates who meet criteria specified by the department. To establish a program to assist minority teachers to obtain masters degrees. To provide funds to New Haven for a number of programs to assist the school district in recruiting teachers.

★ **H.B. No. 5753** Title: AN ACT CONCERNING PERFORMANCE ON THE CAP TEST AND ATTENDANCE AT PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.

Statement of Purpose: To provide scholarships for attendance at public institutions of higher education to students who perform well on the test. (Two representatives have introduced a bill that would offer college scholarships of \$1,000 for each passing score a student achieves on each section of the CAPT, for a maximum scholarship of \$5,000. The scholarship funds would have to be used at one of Connecticut's public colleges.)

★ **H.B. No. 6632** Title: AN ACT CONCERNING SPECIAL EDUCATION PLACEMENTS AND SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS IN THE CHOICE PROGRAM.

Statement of Purpose: To make the school district where a foster child is placed responsible for providing special education and related services to such child and to make such school district financially responsible for such education and related services up to its average per pupil educational cost. To make the state responsible for the education of students placed in safe homes by the Department of Children and Families. To make the state responsible for the education of students placed in alternative to incarceration programs. To make receiving districts responsible for the cost of special education for students in the choice program and to provide full state reimbursement for the cost of such education to receiving districts. To change the time frame for counts for the special education excess cost grant.

★ **H.B. No. 6633** AN ACT CONCERNING TRANSPORTATION TO CHARTER SCHOOLS AND CHARTER SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION GRANTS.

Statement of Purpose: To require local and regional boards of education to provide transportation to students who reside in their school districts and attend a state charter school. To provide state grants, within available appropriations, for the full cost of such transportation. To allow state charter schools to receive school construction grants.

★ **H.B. No. 6751** AN ACT CONCERNING MASTERY TEST EXEMPTIONS FOR LIMITED ENGLISH-PROFICIENT STUDENTS.

Statement of Purpose: To limit the exemptions from the Connecticut Mastery Test and the Connecticut Academic Performance Test for limited-English-proficient students to students enrolled for one year or less, rather than three years or less, in a program of bilingual education or English as a second language.

For more information about major education-related bills, visit <http://www.cga.state.ct.us/olr/2001majorissues/education.htm>.

national news & notes

■ **ERRATUM:** Please be aware that the address for South Windsor H.S. was printed incorrectly in the new CAS Membership Directory. The correct address is:

*161 Nevers Road, South Windsor, CT
06074*

Please amend your membership directory accordingly!

■ **No Longer No. 1:** If Americans could choose, more of them would spend government money on health-care programs than on schools, according to a survey by the National Opinion Research Center. It found that respondents were most likely to choose health-care programs from a range of 21 governmental programs. Government spending included local, state, and federal levels. According to the survey of 2,817 people, 69 percent of Americans want more funding for health-care programs, while 66 percent prefer that the money go to education. Spending on education had been the public's No. 1 priority in 1996 and 1998, according to the survey, "Trends in National Spending Priorities, 1973-2000," which is conducted every two years. The report is available online at www.norc.uchicago.edu/online/spend00.htm.

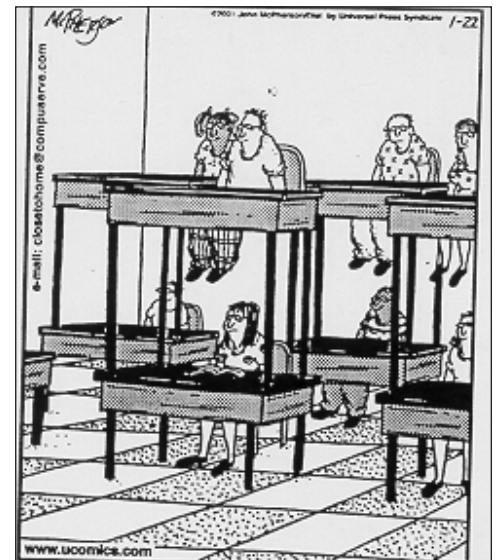
■ **Road Maps for Reform:** A new series of free booklets that provide recipes for comprehensive school reform are now available on the Web. New American Schools—an Arlington, Va., based group that promotes research-based strategies for schoolwide improve-

ment—released the booklets last week. They outline a variety of ways for improving schools, including professional development ideas for teachers and administrators; how to use federal aid to support comprehensive reform; how to match spending with specific strategies; and using independent evaluators to collect and analyze test scores. The booklets are available online at <http://www.naschools.org/respub/>.

■ The Educational Testing Service has announced that it will stop "flagging" the test scores of students with physical or learning disabilities who take its standardized tests with special accommodations, like extra time. The new policy — covering the Graduate Record Examination, the Graduate Management Admission Test, the Test of English as a Foreign Language and Praxis, a test for teachers — will go into effect in October. The announcement is part of the settlement of a lawsuit filed by a California man with no hands who was granted extra time and the use of a computer for taking the time management test. The new policy does not include the tests given for medical or law school. Nor does it cover the SAT.

■ One of the nation's most widely used drug-prevention programs is undergoing major changes to make it more effective. Drug Abuse Resistance Education, popularly known as DARE, will incorporate new strategies and gear its message to older students. The program's focus will shift from its cur-

rent population of 5th graders to 7th grade students, with a booster program in 9th grade. It will continue to use police officers, but more in the role of coach, less as lecturer. The NEW YORK TIMES reports that the new DARE program will "work largely on changing what are known as 'social norms' among students." Research suggests that traditional prevention programs could lead students to "overestimate how many of their peers use drugs" and peer pressure could cause students to seek out drugs, rather than stay away from them. So, the new DARE will be careful not to paint a picture of widespread drug use.



Winston Central School District finds a solution to overcrowded classrooms.

According to a new report by the American Association of University Women, Hispanic girls are lagging behind other racial and ethnic groups of girls in several key measures of educational achievement. Analyzing the differences in educational achievement between Latinas and other groups of girls, the report finds that:

- the high school graduation rate for Latinas is lower than for girls in any other racial or ethnic group;
- Latinas are less likely to take the SAT exam than their White or Asian counterparts, and those who do score lower on average than those groups of girls;
- compared with their female peers, Latinas are under-enrolled in Gifted and Talented Education and AP courses;
- Latinas are the least likely of any group of women to complete a bachelor's degree.

The report, citing Census Bureau statistics, indicated that the dropout rate for Latinas ages 16 to 24 is 30%, compared with 12.9% for blacks and 8.2% for whites. Only 10% of Hispanic women completed four or more years of college, compared with 13.9% of blacks and 22.3% of whites. The report calls upon schools to do more to recognize cultural values that saddle Hispanic girls with family responsibilities, such as caring for younger siblings, that take away from educational endeavors. For more information about the report, visit <http://www.aauw.org/2000/latina.html>.

LONDON - In the biggest study to date examining the influence of birth weight on intelligence, scientists have found that babies born on the heavy side of normal tend to be brighter as adults. Experts have long known that premature or underweight babies tend to be less intelligent as children. But the study, published this week in the *British Medical Journal*, found that among children whose birth weight was more than 5.5 pounds - considered normal - the bigger the baby, the smarter it was likely to be. The researchers found that men whose birth weight was at the low end of the normal range had a 31 percent likelihood of receiving a college degree, while males who had the highest birth weights had a 45 percent likelihood of obtaining a higher education. Scientists think it has something to do with bigger babies having bigger brains, or perhaps more connections within their brains. But the lead researcher on the project said there was no need for parents of smaller infants to despair - the results were averages and size at birth doesn't necessarily determine intellectual destiny. "Birth weight is only one of numerous factors that influence cognitive function. It may not actually be a very powerful one," said Marcus Richards, a psychologist at Britain's Medical Research Council who conducted the study. "Parental interest in education - being in the PTA and getting involved in your child's homework - has an enormous impact, one that may even offset the effect of birth weight." Similarly, Richards said, the head start enjoyed by hefty babies can be squandered. Living in an overcrowded home, breathing polluted air or being caught in the middle of a divorce tend to diminish children's intelligence scores, he said. (Source: *Heavier Babies Become Smarter Adults*, Associated Press, Jan. 26, 2001)

... more national news & notes

■ In an effort to help educators and policymakers ensure that using tests to make decisions that have high-stakes consequences for students are educationally sound and legally appropriate, the Department of Education office for Civil Rights (OCR) has recently released *The Use of Tests When Making High-Stakes Decisions for Students*. In a review of legal principals, the guide points out that test score disparities among groups of students do not alone constitute discrimination under federal law. "The guarantee under federal law is for equal opportunity, not equal results." Because Constitutional challenges to testing programs under the Fourteenth Amendment have raised both equal protection and due process claims, the guide recommends that educators ensure that the testing program is reasonably related to a legitimate educational purpose, students receive adequate notice of the test and its consequences, and that students are actually taught the knowledge and skills measured by the test. The guide also includes resources related to the test measurement and nondiscrimination principles discussed in the guide that policymakers and educators can use to ensure that decisions that have high-stakes consequences for students are made accurately and fairly. For a copy of the guide, visit www.ed.gov/offices/OCR/testing/index.html.

■ To address employers' concerns that high school graduates were not prepared for the demands of the workplace, teachers in the Kent school district in Washington state have begun giving students grades for "Employability." Along with the usual marks in mathematics, science, and other academic subjects, students now receive a second grade for each course that takes into account their work habits, commitment to quality, attendance and punctuality, and communications and interpersonal skills. While the grades are not factored into students' overall grade point averages, those who score well on the measurements earn a "hire me first" card they can present to employers during job interviews. A 1997 survey of area employers found that even students who did well academically were not prepared for the demands of the workplace, particularly when it came to working with others, showing up on time, and working hard. Anthony Zeiss, who has conducted extensive research on workforce-development and workplace issues, said that academic success is not the most important, or even one of the top requirements, for strong job performance. Several of his surveys show that employers, more than anything else, look for applicants with positive attitudes and effective communications skills.

■ Teenagers who make public pledges to delay sexual intercourse until they are married tend to wait longer to have sex than those who do not make such "virginity pledges," a study by researchers at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill concludes. However, they discovered that the virginity pledges

were effective only in specific situations and for specific age groups. "Our findings surprised us because we didn't expect to see any effect from these pledges, but it was just the opposite," Peter S. Bearman, the lead investigator, said in a prepared statement. "The effectiveness of pledging depends on students' ages," he said in the statement. "Among adolescents aged 18 and older, pledging makes no difference. Among 16- and 17-year-olds, pledgers delay sex significantly. Among the youngest adolescents, the effect of pledging depends strongly on the social environment of the teen's school." The study was based on data from the Add Health study, a Congressionally mandated project that sent questionnaires to about 90,000 middle and high school students and followed up with detailed, in-home interviews with 20,000 of those youths and their parents.

■ A new report released by U.S. Surgeon General David Satcher shows that, while arrests rates for violent crimes by youth have dropped substantially in recent years, the epidemic of youth violence in the U.S. is not over. At the same time, the report found a number of existing programs that are highly effective in preventing serious violent behavior and eliminating major risk factors for violence. *Youth Violence: A Report of the Surgeon General* examines factors that lead young people to gravitate toward violence, reviews the factors that protect youth from perpetrating violence, and identifies effective research-based preventive strategies. A full copy of the report can be viewed at www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/youthviolence/.

legal news & notes

■ A California teacher who sued the Las Virgenes Unified School District because he believed a principal wrongly changed grades he gave three students has won his case in state appeals court. The ruling has two effects: It says that a teacher's grade is final, and that marks for conduct must be considered grades. "We now have a landmark case stating clearly that final letter grades and citizenship marks are the domain of the issuing teacher," said James Ferris, who sued the district. Ferris, who teaches math and music at Wright M.S. in Calabasas, gave the students unsatisfactory conduct grades in music because they had been disruptive, though they received A's and B's for their classwork. The grades meant the students could not participate in the school's honor society or go on a field trip. In response to complaints from their parents, the principal changed the conduct grades to satisfactory, arguing the parents had not been given adequate notice that their children were being disruptive and needed to change their behavior. The 2nd District Court of Appeals made the ruling in January, upholding a Los Angeles Superior Court decision. (Source: *Scripps Howard News Service / The Journal Inquirer*, Jan. 23, 2001)

■ The 10th Circuit Court of Appeals held that allowing students to grade the work of other students violates the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). In *Falvo v. Owasso (Okla.) Independent School District*, students successfully challenged the practice of grading one another's work and calling out their own grades in class, alleging the practice violated FERPA. FERPA precludes educational institutions from receiving federal funding if they maintain a policy or practice of disclosing a student's educational records without obtaining proper authorization from a student or parent. The court found that the Owasso students' graded work qualified as education records within the meaning of FERPA because such documents contained information directly related to individual students and were maintained by the school. Because graded work is protected under FERPA, the court found that peer grading and mandatory grade disclosure violated FERPA and granted the students' injunction, barring Owasso from continuing the grading practice in its classrooms. (Source: *Principal Leadership*, January 2001)

■ The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals held that the state of Nevada is not required to pay for educational services of a disabled student schooled at home. In *Hooks v. Clark County School System*, Christopher Hooks, a disabled child educated at home, requested state subsidization for speech therapy under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). At the time of the claim, students receiving the home-education exemption from Nevada education regulations were not allowed access to a school's instructional or ancillary services under IDEA. (The law has since changed to allow disabled children schooled at home to access services.) Rather than seek exception from the school district or enroll in school,

continued on following page

CAS OPPOSES BILL ON SCHOOL START TIME

Position Statement

SB Bill 14: "To prohibit regularly scheduled instruction classes before 8:30 a.m. in any public school."

The Connecticut Association of Schools opposes this bill at this time for the following reasons:

1. There is concern that the start of the school day should remain a prerogative of the local school district and not become a state mandate. If a local district would like to start school later in the morning, this could be done -- the local Board's decision.
2. The bill as written includes all levels K-12. Even if the research were accepted that older students would benefit from a later start due to sleep patterns, there is no reason to affect younger students.
3. There is research about the benefits of older students starting school late. However, this research should be reviewed by experts to be sure the benefits are not outweighed by the deficits.
 - a. It may be that many students prefer an early start to the day and are not affected by the sleep pattern problem. Their day would be unnecessarily delayed.
 - b. Younger students could be required due to bus scheduling to wait for buses and travel in the dark.
 - c. There would be the expense of paying for more buses in many districts. Is this cost justified since it would be reflected in the education budget?
 - d. The majority of high schools start at about 7:30 a.m. An 8:30 start would mean a dismissal at approximately 3:15 p.m. This would limit the activities of students in the p.m., including athletic programs (especially during the shorter daylight winter days), co-curricular activities, work experiences and participation in cross district educational programs.

Recommendation: Refer this issue to a study committee which will review literature, study implications and find out what has happened in districts and states which have initiated late openings. This could be expanded to include a review of the school calendar.

Written by Thomas F. Galvin, Assistant Executive Director

Legal, continued

Hooks filed a complaint with the Nevada Department of Education and then argued in federal court that home education should be included in the definition of "private school or facility," thereby granting disabled home-schooled students access to services under IDEA. The 9th Circuit held that IDEA grants states the discretion to determine whether school includes or excludes home education. Because Hooks was not enrolled in "school" as defined by the laws of Nevada, the state was not obligated to subsidize the speech therapy services available to disabled students under IDEA. (Source: *Principal Leadership*, January 2001)

The Connecticut Association of National Honor Societies

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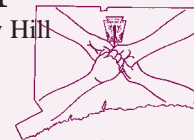
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❖ Theodore Sergi ❖

Connecticut Commissioner of Education



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For further information, contact CANHS Chair Don Gates, 860.342.1720.

NEASC SAYS SCHOOLS WITH LOW SCORES MAY STILL BE GREAT SCHOOLS

By Tom Galvin, Assistant Executive Director

At a mini-conference at Weaver High School on January 30th, urban administrators were advised by NEASC Commission on High Schools Director Dr. Pamela Gray-Bennett that the NEASC visiting team judges not if students reach expected levels, but whether the schools know whether or not the students achieve these levels and what they are doing about it. The result is that it is possible that schools with low scores may be judged "great" because of their excellent programs and schools with high scores may not be favorably judged because of weak programs.

Dr. Gray-Bennett explained that the changes in the accreditation process resulted from a decision to shift the NEASC mission to an emphasis on teaching and learning with a clear purpose to maximize student learning. In cooperation with the Northeast and Islands Regional Laboratory at Brown University, the standards were redesigned and reduced to seven, four directly related to teaching and learning and three serving as supports for teaching and learning. The "visit" was also changed and now emphasizes to a much greater extent evidence of student learning, including student work samples, shadowing of students in classes and portfolios.

Schools interested in more information are encouraged to use the accreditation web site: www.lab.brown.edu/neasc.

The CAS Urban Principals' Committee is chaired by Dr. Gladys Labas, principal of Maloney High School in Meriden.



Dr. Pam Gray-Bennett (l) and Dr. Gladys Labas



CT Commissioner of Education Ted Sergi

COMMISSIONER SERGI ENCOURAGES PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE SUMMER

By Tom Galvin, Assistant Executive Director

Conard High School in West Hartford was host to a State Department of Education update conducted by the Connecticut Commissioner of Education Dr. Theodore Sergi on January 24th. Over 60 high school administrators had an opportunity to become familiar with the points of view and activities of the department and the commissioner and ask questions of interest and concern.

A major topic of interest was professional development programs for high school administrators. Dr. Sergi agreed with the concern of many that it is increasingly difficult for principals and assistant principals to leave their buildings while school is in session and encouraged greater use of summer time for in depth professional development programs. He stressed that this not only addresses the issue of leaving school while in session, but it is a time when principals are better able to concentrate on learning.

In a discussion of testing, Dr. Sergi discouraged the creation of an "exit test," urging instead the use of multiple ways to assess student progress. He would like schools to develop their own student competencies individually with appropriate assessments applied to them.

Replying to questions about the administrator and teacher shortage, Dr. Sergi stated that everyone needs to do a better job of bringing up the next generation of teachers and administrators to replace those retiring. He encouraged "grass roots" efforts to let young people know of the benefits of teaching and young teachers know of the rewards of administration. He pointed out that the Alternate Route to Administration has helped with a holding rate about the same as traditional programs. He did not encourage an administrative ARC for non-educators. He was inclined toward looking at how the duties of the principal could be delegated, with the possible addition of administrative assistants to help with managerial responsibilities.

Other topics discussed included: closing achievement gaps, keeping buildings open for students in the afternoon and evening, school construction increases, BEST, and increased federal spending for special education.

The program was sponsored by the CAS Association of High School Principals. Dr. Mike Buckley, principal of Avon High School, is the chair.

Schools, Students Can Succeed Without Acing State Mastery Test

By Patricia DeRenzo

*The item below was written by Patricia DeRenzo, principal of Clinton Avenue School in New Haven, in response to an article which appeared in the **New Haven Register** about the ten New Haven Schools that fell on the state's list of "failing schools." Ms. DeRenzo's article appeared in the **Register** in November 1999. It is reprinted here with the permission of the author.*

Labeling by using one part of one measure -- the Connecticut Mastery Test -- is a deliberate misrepresentation of what our students and schools are capable. It is an attempt to further demean and attack our minority students and urban schools.

The state is aware through its mandated annual school profiles of the many factors that affect student performance, particularly on the Connecticut Mastery Test. It is aware of the socio-economic status of most of our parents, and how the effect of poverty, English language limitations, mobility, class size, and limitations in support services affect the test performance of our urban minority students.

It is aware of how inappropriate the Connecticut Mastery Test is for our children whose first language is Spanish. Yet the state still requires that after three years in the bilingual program, these children must take the Connecticut Mastery Test. I wonder if after three years of Spanish language instruction members of the legislature would pass the test "at goal" if the test were given in Spanish.

But acting under a new state law, the Department of Education has released a list of elementary and middle schools, including Clinton Avenue School, whose fourth-grade students from 1998 did not meet the 20 percent "goals" level of mastery on the test.

At Clinton Avenue, we use several criteria to indicate success in our school's educational program. The Connecticut Mastery Test is only one of the various assessments used to measure student learning. Various district, school and teacher-designed assessments are used throughout the year to help us develop comprehensive educational plans that will more effectively meet the needs of students and development needs of teachers.

Based on these on-going assessments, Clinton Avenue School students are, indeed, learning and over the years have demonstrated improvement in not only their academic proficiency on CMT results but improvement in areas not measured on the CMT.

Besides assessing our students' skills in math, reading and writing, we assess our bilingual students in their language acquisition skills. We assess all of our children in their ability to solve problems not found on the CMT, but those they are likely to encounter in every day life.

Besides academics, our children are learning lifelong skills like solving problems through peaceful negotiation. In so doing, our students develop their self-esteem and sense of empowerment and belonging. We know our Clinton Avenue School children have learned these lifelong skills because they demonstrate respect for themselves and others. They exhibit a positive attitude toward their school, instruction, and teachers. Our students develop their sense of responsibility to themselves, their families, school and community.

These are benchmarks of student learning and school success that reflect not only academic achievement but achievement in skills that will enable our children to succeed in the real world.

Last year, our students won first place in the country for the best elementary school newspaper. During the same year, the school became a model school for an innovative language arts program called Essentials of Literacy. Clinton Avenue was selected to be featured on a video that will be

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middle school news

EAST HAMPTON MIDDLE SCHOOL ADOPTS EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM MODEL

By Richard T. Huelsmann

The Early Intervention Program (EIP) is a model that many schools throughout the state of Connecticut are utilizing. It is a model that nurtures growth and provides an environment that allows educators to work together on behalf of students to ensure success. Critical components of the process are effective brainstorming, problem solving, data collection, monitoring, communication and network support.

The Early Intervention Program (EIP) at East Hampton Middle School is known as the Student Success Team and is similar in nature to the elementary Student Assistance Model (SAM). This team is a group of educators consisting of representatives from grades 6,7,8, as well as counselors and administrators. The Student Success Team has gone through much training and continues to receive support through the Special Education Resource Center (SERC), which is funded by the Connecticut State Department of Education.

The East Hampton Middle School Student Success Team shares a single vision, which is that ALL students are capable of experiencing educational success through specific interventions developed by the Student Success Team and implemented by the student, faculty and parents.

The Student Success Team provides support and assistance when a staff member or parent, because of academic, social and/or behavioral concerns, brings a student into the program. Communication, problem solving and collaboration are essential qualities of the Student Success Team. The process is individualized for each student. This helps teachers to focus on one issue, and it allows the Student Success Team to develop strategies uniquely for each student. When a student is involved in the program, the student is given an opportunity to reach his or her individual potential; the focus would begin with what the student knows, not what the student does not know.

Although East Hampton Middle School has specific members composing the team, teachers and parents are also an important part of this team's success. Teachers need to feel supported and work with the Student Success Team. They need to document strategies that they have used and when contacts, either via phone or meeting, to a student's home have been made. Parental contact is critical and should be ongoing for the student's success. When there is an interdependent partnership between the home and school, the learning, growth and change in the students can be nurturing and positive.

The East Hampton Middle School is in the beginning stages of developing the Student Success Team. The school is excited about having this team to support our students and staff. With time, patience, training and support, the Student Success Team can be very successful in assisting ALL students to reach and work at their individual potential. Those desirous of more information should contact the school counselor, Mrs. Mercaldi, at (860)365-4060.

Richard T. Huelsmann is Principal of East Hampton Middle School and Chairman of the Connecticut Association of Middle School Principals.

EDITORIAL: Grade Configuration in Middle Schools — What Works Best

By Earle G. Bidwell, Assistant Executive Director

One of the hot topics in middle level education is the "demise of the middle school and the return to the K-8 model." Several communities, including a few in Connecticut, are engaged in discussions about a potential change. This writer has been asked for advice and has on two occasions been asked to address the issue in public forums. For those who are considering a change, here are a few thoughts.

First and foremost, there is no "one right model" for middle schools. In Connecticut alone, there are sixteen different configurations of grade organizations that contain middle grades: 173 that resemble the classic middle school and 52 that resemble the elementary or K-8 model.* Of the 52 K-8 schools, 44 are public schools and 23 of these are located in Bridgeport, New Haven or Hartford. The reader is cautioned not to make qualitative judgments about programs based on the location of these schools, but to note that almost half of them are located in population centers that would tend to be favorable to neighborhood schools.

In other New England states, the pattern appears to be the reverse. The urban areas appear to have more middle schools and the rural areas more K-8 schools. As one northern New England colleague remarked, "most of our schools are K-12 because most towns only have one school." Thus, grade

continued on following page

Newsletter notes

J.F.K Helps Others

The J.F. Kennedy Middle School recently showed their holiday spirit and generosity in a big way. Over forty new backpacks loaded with new dolls, stuffed animals, puzzles book and other kinds of toys were distributed to community organizations. The drive was sponsored and organized by the JFK Community Service Club.

In The Middle, John F. Kennedy Middle School, Enfield

WTIC Fox 61 Student News at CNHMS

Students at Capt. Nathan Hale Middle School continue to be involved in producing stories for Fox 61 Student News. To date, six stories have been submitted and all have been scheduled to be aired. The topics of some of the stories are: "Green Monster" at Fenway park, Ronald's Rolls (a story about the bakery which produces rolls for McDonald's) a Civil War Museum, Rocketman (about the attempt to launch a model rocket into space) and Turkey Farmer. To view evaluations about these and other stories, go to:

<http://www.fox61.com/hdocs/foxkids/kidsnews.html>.

CNH PTO News, Capt. Nathan Hale School, Coventry

Lifesavers!

- Always set clear expectations for your students. The more consistent you are, the more likely they are to respond.
 - Nagging, lecturing and threatening never work. Discussing, debating, and providing consequences are more effective.
 - Having students sit in on team meetings allows for some quality team-one time with the adolescent. Invite students to your team meetings for positive reasons.
 - Humor is a great strategy. Ten to 15 year olds need to laugh at least 20 times a day.
 - Next time you are communicating with a student, think of this information. Seven percent of the total impact of a message is attributed to the spoken word, 23 percent to vocal inflection and 70 percent to nonverbal behavior.
- Classroom Connections, National Middle School Association*

... more middle school news

Editorial, *continued*

configuration appears to have more to do with demographics, building and population than to philosophy.

Critics of the middle school movement charge that too much attention is paid to making students feel good and not enough attention is given to academics. Furthermore, that putting large groups of early adolescents together in one building is a management nightmare and poor misbehavior is rampant. They maintain that the neighborhood school concept provides a safer, saner atmosphere, gives students more ownership for their school and allows healthy cross grade interactions.

Proponents of the middle school argue that K-8 schools ignore the unique needs of the early adolescent learner, are not programatically responsive and don't prepare students adequately for high school. They also maintain that K-8 schools don't provide the necessary programming, exploratory opportunities and support services.

Given the two extremes, it seems imperative to look at the research and survey the literature to determine which model is superior. One of the more inclusive reports is a Kappan account of a longitudinal study of 97 schools in Illinois over a seven-year period. (What Works in Middle-Grades School Reform, Phi Delta Kappan, March 1997) "One of the major overarching findings is the importance of considering the comprehensiveness and level of implementation of the *Turning Points* recommendations..." Furthermore the report concluded, "The data show that, across subject areas, adolescents in highly implemented schools achieved at much higher levels than those in nonimplemented schools and substantially better than those in partially implemented schools." Additional data indicated that these students performed better on standardized tests, were involved far lower levels of behavior problems than in less implemented schools and were less fearful about the future, about something bad happening to them or about being victimized. A later report entitled Middle Grade Reform (Phi Delta Kappan, June 2000), reported on a Schools to Watch initiative of the National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grade reform.

A summary of their criteria is:

- Academic excellence. All students are expected to meet high academic standards. Teachers supply students with examples of high quality work that meets a performance standard.
- Curriculum, instruction and assessment are aligned with high standards.
- The adults in the school have opportunities to plan, select, and engage in professional

The Turning Points 2000 Recommendations

- ★ Teach a curriculum grounded in rigorous, public academic standards for what students should know and be able to do, relevant to the concerns of adolescents and based on how students learn best.
- ★ Use instructional methods designed to prepare all students to achieve higher standards and become lifelong learners.
- ★ Staff middle grade schools with teachers who are expert at teaching young adolescents, and engage teachers in ongoing, targeted professional development opportunities.
- ★ Organize relationships for learning to create a climate of intellectual development and a caring community of shared educational purpose.
- ★ Govern democratically through direct or representative participation by all school staff members, the adults who know the students best.
- ★ Provide a safe and healthy school environment as part of improving academic performance and developing caring and ethical citizens.
- ★ Involve parents and communities in supporting student learning and healthy development

development that is aligned with nationally recognized standards. They have regular opportunities to work with their colleagues to deepen their knowledge and to improve their practice.

- Developmental responsiveness. The school creates a personalized environment that supports each student's intellectual, ethical, social and physical development.
- The school provides multiple opportunities for students to explore a rich variety of topics and interests in order to develop their own identities, discover and demonstrate their own competence and plan for the future.
- The school develops alliances with families to enhance and support well-being of their children.
- Social equity. Evidence of a commitment includes tutoring, mentoring, special adaptations, and other supports for students. All students have access to all classes and activities. Students have ongoing opportunities to learn about and appreciate their own and others' cultures.
- Organizational structures and processes. A shared vision of what a high performing school is and does drives every facet of school change. The school holds itself accountable for its students' success rather than blaming others for its shortcomings.

The evidence seems to point to developmentally responsive middle schools that have a mission consistent with the findings of research. They contain the components outlined in the National Middle School Association's belief statement and are characterized by:

- educators committed to young adolescents;
- a shared vision;
- high expectations for all;
- an adult advocate for every student;
- family and community partnerships; and,
- a positive school climate.

Therefore, developmentally responsive middle level schools provide:

- curriculum that is challenging, integrative and exploratory;
- varied teaching and learning approaches;
- assessment and evaluation that promotes learning;
- flexible organizational structures;
- programs and policies that foster health, wellness and safety; and
- comprehensive guidance and support services.

Conspicuously absent from the literature cited above is any mention of grade configuration. One may conclude from this that it is not one of the critical factors but implementation of the *Turning Points* recommendations is. While all things are possible in any grade configuration and there are highly successful schools in all of the sixteen categories in Connecticut, those considering change must consider some key issues. They must consider which grade configuration would best support: (a) the recommendations of Turning Points, (b) provide teachers specifically trained in middle level philosophy, vision and mission, (c) provide instructional leadership from administrators trained and experienced in meeting the needs of early adolescents, (d) secure necessary guidance and support services, (e) afford exploratory opportunities, (f) support subject area specialists, (g) promote teaming. The conclusions are complex and perhaps unique for each community, however the evidence is clear. Implementation of the *Turning Points* recommendations have been shown to be the critical factor in successful middle schools. Any plan or grade configuration that does not fully support them is flirting with failure. Even halfway compliance has been shown to yield poor results. It is my strong recommendation that all communities look toward full implementation of the recommendations and then decide which grade configuration will work best.

* Schools reporting grade configurations to CAS

elementary school news

K.E.S. CELEBRATES THE ARTS

By Hans Stvilbyckij



On Friday, May 18, 2001, Killingworth Elementary School in Killingworth, CT will be holding its 6th Annual Festival of the Arts. Volunteer artists and crafters from surrounding towns and all over New England will be sharing their talents, answering questions and showing students how much fun learning can be. Stationed on the grounds of the school, outside under tents and in the classrooms, the artists will meet with students for demonstrations and hands-on activities. It is a day-long event dedicated to arts education and appreciation.

The goal of the festival is to bring the arts to the school and thereby broaden student awareness. Five years ago, the list of volunteers was 23. Last year, there were over 100 participants! It is hoped that the festival will initiate a deeper appreciation of the time and effort involved in acquiring a special skill, and impress upon the students the importance of volunteerism. By exposing the students to the many artisans and art forms, the expectations of the festival are being realized ten-fold.

Over the years, some of the arts the students have participated in are drama workshops, line dancing, painting, cartooning, martial arts, clowning, recycled crafts and cake decorating. They have also witnessed the magic of holography, puppetry, bird carving, dressage, dog agility, pottery, music and kite making. The list goes on and on.

This accomplishment has been no mean feat. Such an immense undertaking has become a community effort. The "big event" would not be possible without the cooperation, commitment and determination of everyone involved: The PTO organizers, the teachers, custodial staff, secretaries, students, parents and artist volunteers.

The arts are "the mode by which people can enrich their lives." Therefore, they affect us all. They "challenge and extend human experiences", by giving us a way of expressing what might otherwise be inexpressible. It is through art education that each of us is first introduced to these avenues of self-expression, and then given the opportunity to explore them. "Technology and science (may) provide the means through which man achieves survival. The arts are what make survival worthwhile."

Hans Stvilbyckij is an Art teacher at Killingworth Elementary School.

Environment, continued from page 1

workshops on the use and abuse of rain forests, recycling, birds of prey, and protecting our environment, as well as a study of the dinosaurs that once roamed Connecticut.

"Our conference provides fertile ground for the seeds of environmental awareness to take root with elementary and middle school students, and NU's participation ensures another year of program growth," said Robert Carroll, assistant executive director of the Connecticut Association of Schools.

Northeast Utilities is New England's largest energy company and a major energy trader in the Northeast, serving more than 1.7 million electric power customers in Connecticut, Massachusetts and New Hampshire, and 185,000 natural gas customers in Connecticut. NU is a community and economic development partner committed to environmental leadership and stewardship by pursuing creative, innovative initiatives and new technologies that protect the environment and are consistent with our corporate goals. For more information on NU, please check out its web site at www.nu.com.

CAS HONORS SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

By Robert F. Carroll, Ed. D., Asst. Executive Director

The Connecticut Association of Elementary School Principals (CAESP) takes great pleasure in announcing another first for CAS: honoring parent volunteers at a banquet to be held on March 28, 2001, at the Aqua Turf Club, Southington.

The program is being sponsored by Gilbane Building Co. located in Glastonbury. The firm is a dedicated supporter of education and is happy to honor and recognize those much needed volunteers that our schools could not do without. The company has joined CAS in celebrating these wonderful members of every elementary school's family at this very special banquet. Every school has parents who have made a major contribution to the school and deserve such public recognition. The purpose of the banquet is to provide member schools with this opportunity to say "thank you" in a very special way. Each person honored will receive a framed certificate, and the services they performed will be recorded in a book that every participating school and award recipient will receive.

Each school participating in this program will be able to recognize up to three (3) parent volunteers each year. Many schools have already indicated their wish to participate and have reserved tables of 10 or 12 so that the principal, PTA/PTO representatives, board members, other school personnel and families of the honoree can celebrate the hard work performed by these volunteers. NO tickets will be available at the door, and any elementary school that has not already made arrangements to participate may do so by completing the Reservation Banquet Request form sent to schools last month. Any school needing a form should contact the CAS office. The cut off date for reservations has been extended to permit schools that have not already reserved tables to do so; however, the extended deadline date will end soon. It is suggested that schools that have not signed up yet fax their reservation forms rather than mail them. The CAS fax number is (203) 250- 1345. If you have any questions about completing this form, contact Joyce Smith at CAS at (203) 250-1111.

Gina Vance, Hebron Avenue School Glastonbury, is the chairperson of this premiere event. She is assisted by co-chairs Louis Pear, West Hill School, Rocky Hill, and Paula Erickson, O'Connell Elementary School, East Hartford. Non-member schools will pay a one-time surcharge of \$40.

THE CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS
30 Realty Drive, Cheshire, Connecticut 06410
(203)250-1111 ■ Fax: (203)250-1345 ■ www.casiac.org

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ciac news

■ Congratulations to Robert Broderick, retired athletic director from Simsbury High School. Bob was named Section I Distinguished Official Contributor by the National Federation Officials Association. The Distinguished Official Contributor Award goes to an individual, whether a former coach, official, athletic director or state association employee, who has made a significant contribution to officiating.

■ According to officials at the U.S. Department of Education, Physical Education for Progress (PEP) grant guidelines will be announced sometime in March and school districts will have six weeks to submit proposals. The winning grants will be announced the first week of June, 2001 and recipients will have 12 months to complete their projects. Grants are to help initiate, expand, and improve physical education programs for kindergarten through grade 12 students. Funds can be used to purchase equipment, develop curriculum, hire and/or train physical education staff, and support other initiatives designed to enable students to participate in physical education activities. The success of the programs funded by this first \$5 million will be important in efforts to get the rest of the \$400 million authorized by the legislation. For further information about the grants, check the "Funding Opportunities" on the department's web site at <http://www.ed.gov/funding.html> or <http://www.ed.gov/GrantApps/>.

■ The National Federation has released a new brochure to help schools better understand the relationship between high school athletic programs and Title IX. The brochure contains such sections as "Definition of Sport," "Keeping One Step Ahead of OCR Investigations," "Participation Opportunities," and "Resources." The NF plans to mail a copy to each of the 20,000 high schools nationwide.

■ The United States Sports Academy has launched an online library of sports-related resources. Visit www.ussa.edu and click on the "Library and Online Resources" link to access sports-specific journals, databases and more!

The following resolution was adopted by the major organizations involved in wrestling at all levels in the United States. The organizations involved were: NFHS, NCAA, USA Wrestling, National Wrestling Coaches Association and AAU.

RESOLUTION

"As leaders in wrestling, we are dedicated to maximizing the safety of athletes who participate in the sport.

Traditionally, this sport has depended upon weight to assure competitive fairness. We resolve to consider both weight and other alternative measures to maintain competitive equity in the sport.

In order for this to be achieved in a fair, responsible and practical way, we resolve to:

- * promote safe and responsible weight control practices on every level of the sport;
- * eliminate from wrestling any and all weight control practices, which could potentially risk the health of the participants;
- * constantly monitor and evaluate rules and procedures to make sure effectively achieve these goals;
- * educate coaches, athletes, parents and fans about proper weight management strategies;
- * stress technique, strength, fitness, skill, experience and strategy as the most effective methods to achieve success in wrestling."

The National Youth Sports Safety Foundation has published a new report containing information on the number and causes of sports-related deaths among children under 19. According to "Youth Sports Deaths," which is based on information from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission:

- Between 1984 and 1998, 276 youths ages 0-19 have died due to their involvement in fourteen sports and fitness activities.*
- The leading cause of death involved trauma to the head.
- The number of deaths per year was fairly consistent (appx. 22 per year).
- Four of the five top sports where the most deaths occurred were the most popular sports: baseball, football, basketball, and soccer.

**the activities include baseball, basketball, boxing, football, gymnastics, horseback riding, ice hockey, martial arts, soccer, softball, track & field, volleyball, weight lifting and wrestling.*

(Source: USSA's Sport Supplement)

CELEBRATED BASKETBALL CONSULTANT TO SPEAK TO SCHOLAR-ATHLETES



Frank Layden

Nationally recognized basketball consultant Frank Layden will be the keynote speaker for the 18th Annual Scholar Athlete Banquet on May 6, 2001. Presently a consultant to the New York Knicks, Frank spent 21 years with the Utah Jazz, where he was a general manager, president, and head coach. During his eight-year tenure as head coach, he led the Jazz to four winning seasons and five straight NBA Playoff berths, including the 1983-84 Midwest Division Championship. That same season, Frank was honored as the NBA's Coach of the Year, Executive of the Year, and as winner of the J. Walter Kennedy citizenship Award. Avid reader, golfer, theater lover and baseball fan, Frank was inducted into the Buffalo Sports Hall of Fame in 2000 and the New York City Hall of Fame in 1998.

“Predicting the future is easy. It’s trying to figure out what’s going on now that’s hard.”

- Fitz Dressler

What's happening in other states? . . .

The South Dakota High School Activities Association (SDHSAA) recently changed the seasons for both girls' basketball and volleyball. Girls basketball and volleyball, which are currently fall and winter sports, respectively, will swap seasons effective with the 2002-2003 school year. The change was the result of a lawsuit alleging that having volleyball in the fall violated the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, Title IX, and the Equal Protection Clause of the South Dakota Constitution. The plaintiffs claimed that volleyball players were placed at a disadvantage when it came to athletic recruitment and scholarships. In October 2000, the United States Department of Justice, Division for Civil Rights intervened on the plaintiff's behalf. Surveys conducted by the SDHSAA in 1993, 1996 and 2000 consistently showed appx. 80% of the membership opposed switching girls' basketball to the winter and girls' volleyball to the fall. However, another survey conducted in November 2000 found that 67% of the schools supported a negotiated settlement as opposed to going to trial.

... more ciac news

SUPREME COURT SAYS STATE ASSOCIATION IS STATE ACTOR

The U.S. Supreme Court, by a vote of 5 to 4, held that a state high school athletic association made up of both public and private schools can be considered a "state actor" for purposes of enforcing civil rights laws.

In 1997, rival football coaches alleged that Brentwood Academy, a private school football powerhouse in Tennessee, violated the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association's rules in recruiting high school football players. The school was accused of providing football tickets to two middle school athletes and inviting incoming ninth-graders to join the football team for spring practice when they were still in the eighth grade. The athletic association bars members from using "undue influence . . . to secure or retain a student for athletic purposes."

The association decided that Brentwood violated its rules and fined the school \$3,000, put it on probation for four years and banned it from tournaments for two years. Brentwood Academy sued, claiming that the penalties violated the school's civil rights, and a federal judge issued an order barring enforcement of the recruiting rule.

The 6th Circuit Court of Appeals, with jurisdiction over Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky and Tennessee, dismissed the suit, ruling that the association, which is financed largely by football and basketball ticket sales, did not function as a governmental body in the state and therefore could not be sued under federal civil rights law. The Supreme Court said the appeals court was wrong.

The majority opinion by Justice David H. Souter held that "the pervasive entwinement" of public schools and their officials with the association made it an arm of the state government.

"There would be no recognizable association, legal or tangible, without the public school officials, who do not merely control but overwhelmingly perform all but the purely ministerial acts by which the association exists and functions in practical terms," Souter wrote.

The court thus rejected the association's contention that permitting Brentwood to sue would open the high school sports association to a flood of litigation.

Still, insofar as it preserved the right to sue a quasi-state body under federal civil rights law in the limited area of interscholastic sports, yesterday's ruling seemed to represent a modest variation on the recent trend at the court toward insulating state government from suits by individuals claiming various forms of discrimination. For the most part, those decisions have been 5 to 4, with pro-states' rights conservatives in the majority.

Justice Clarence Thomas -- in a dissenting opinion joined by three other members of the court's conservative bloc, Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist, Antonin Scalia, and Anthony M. Kennedy -- said that the majority's opinion "not only extends state-action doctrine beyond its permissible limits but also encroaches upon the realm of individual freedom that the doctrine was meant to protect." (*Source: Washington Post, Feb. 21, 2001*)

EDITORIAL: With this One, CIAC is Right on the Money

By Mike DiMauro (*Reprinted from The Day, February 4, 2001*)

The place: Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference Headquarters, Cheshire, CT

The scene: Important people gathered in a conference room, having just made a decision that will cost them considerable cash.

Musical interlude: Handel's Hallelujah Chorus.

Finally. Oh, finally. Finally! After our common sense has been insulted, and after we've been lied to more times than the O.J. jury, finally in January, 2001, finally!

It wasn't about the money.

Crank it up, Handel.

Hallelujah.

Finally! After countless examples of some overpaid creep telling the cameras with a straight face, "it's not about the money," and then running to the bank faster than Ray Lewis did from the limo, we see some hope.

The CIAC, the governing body of state high school sports, has politely rejected an overture from Mohegan Sun officials, who were intrigued at perhaps moving state championship high school basketball games to the casino's soon-to-be-opened 10,000-seat arena.

The Sun wouldn't have charged a site fee, considered paying the CIAC to bring its events to the arena, and might

have even opened avenues of corporate sponsorship, creating profitability for the CIAC heretofore unimaginable. The casino's offer of good will would have exposed student-athletes to major league surroundings.

Was it an easy decision for the CIAC? Of course not. Idealism, while, well, idealistic, doesn't pay the rent.

No way, no how

While Mohegan Sun officials ought to be commended for a magnanimous gesture, they need to understand something: amateur athletic events do not belong there or on any casino property.

Even in a gorgeous 10,000-seat state-of-the-art arena.

Even with the best of intentions.

Chances are, more than one of you just asked the question, "but isn't this supposed to be for the kids?" Of course. And in or near a casino is no place for kids, who are exposed to enough debauchery -- just by watching MTV.

You might be asking what would be so terrible about offering such a playing environment to young people, perhaps providing a lifetime of memories in one night.

You would ask that question, quite

continued on page 12

Proposed NCAA Amateurism Deregulation

Status Report: NCAA Division II delegates approved the proposed amateurism changes. The changes will become effective August 1 and will allow prospective student-athletes to engage in certain activities that would previously have jeopardized collegiate eligibility. Before full-time collegiate enrollment in a Division II institution, prospects can be drafted by a professional sports organization, enter a professional agreement, receive compensation for athletics competition, participate on a professional team, and accept prize money based on place finish without losing collegiate eligibility. Division II delegates also approved a separate proposal regarding receipt of education expenses before collegiate enrollment. The proposal, which becomes effective immediately, will permit prospective student-athletes to accept education expenses, which are disbursed directly to their preparatory or private schools, from individuals or entities other than an agent, professional sports team or organization, or boosters. National Federation representatives, who made a presentation at the NCAA Convention in January, feel that they have made inroads in their efforts to urge Division I members to defeat certain aspects of the amateurism deregulation proposals. The presentation outlined the NF's opposition to a number of the NCAA's amateurism proposals, including pay for play, pay for victory, and third party tuition payments. "We were heartened that a large number of presidents and commissioners in Division I supported the points that we have been making regarding the high school perspective to the amateurism proposals," said NF Executive Director Robert Kanaby. The Division I Management Council will vote on this issue in April.

INVESTORS IN CT YOUTH

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Just Kid, Inc.

Mohegan Sun, *continued*

reasonably, because gambling is encouraged, mainstream, and exposed to only the most selective prosecution.

Our state pays its bills with gambling revenues -- \$327 million last year -- advocates participation in lotteries ("you can't win if you don't play,") irresponsibly condones Super Bowl pools found in every office and tavern from Stonington to Salisbury ... and then would think nothing of tapping your phone should you egregiously want to call in 10-team parlay of the Giants and the over.

The CIAC's "thanks but no thanks" decision was linked, in executive director Mike Savage's words, to "a concern that people will see us associating with gambling."

Damn straight. How can we tell our children about the pitfalls of gambling, and then cheer them on in a gambling house?

Playing a high school sporting event there would be as heedless as playing a UCONN basketball game there. Last summer, published reports quoted Sun officials discussing the possibility of bringing UConn

basketball to the new arena.

That cannot happen. Gambling is the No 1 scourge of any college athletic program, evidenced by what has transpired at Boston College, Northwestern and Arizona State in the last 10 years. The walls of Gampel Pavilion are consistently adorned with reminders to student-athletes about how any and every form of gambling is an NCAA no-no, beginning with the most modest NCAA tournament bracket pool.

Seems rather obvious, no?

Certainly.

So why is this beginning to feel like a twice-a-year rant? Why has every single word you've read thus far been typed on this laptop before? Easy: Since our society treats gambling with such hypocrisy, we revisit such issues ad nauseam ... while the hypocrisy rolls on, like Tiger Woods through the back nine.

At least today sings a happier ballad. The CIAC saw through the money and did what was decent and honorable, knowing it would be losing serious cash.

Finally.

It's not about the money.

Mine eyes have seen the glory.

NF Football Rules Revisions: 2001

1-1-5 Prior to the game, the referee shall meet with the head coach(es) and captain(s) and explain that everyone is expected to exhibit good sportsmanship throughout the game.

1-1-11 The NFHS Football Rules do not recognize protests.

1-3-1a Deleted the panel requirement for footballs.

1-5-3h Jerseys, undershirts or exterior arm covers/pads manufactured to enhance contact with the

football are not permitted.

2-17-2a Blocking below the waist is restricted to only players who are on the line of scrimmage and in the free blocking zone at the snap.

9-4-4 Penalty There are now two penalties for illegal contact with a scrimmage kicker or holder.

8-2-4, 10-5-4 Delete 8-2-4 and reword 10-5-4 that previously required the automatic declination of certain fouls committed by the opponents of the scoring team.

DeRenzo, *continued*

used throughout the country to demonstrate the successful implementation of this program.

Our students also took first place and other awards at the annual city science fair. Our annual Learning Exhibit has become a well-known, successful exhibition of student projects that reflect the learning that has taken place during the school year.

Our totally dedicated teachers are another example of school success. They are continuously involved in staff development activities, community and school wide activities. The atmosphere at Clinton Avenue School reflects our motto -- "We are

family, we are brothers and sisters." Anyone visiting the school senses the warm, affectionate, family like quality of the school's environment. Our parents are part of our school family and are another measure of our school's success. They love and support their school and are there whenever we need them. Over 90 percent of our classroom-teaching assistants are our own Clinton Avenue School parents.

It is time for Connecticut to recognize, as Theodore Sergi, the education commissioner, has stated, that the state has "not served the children in these buildings as well as we should."

It is time for the state to consider all of

the above factors if they are to create a formula that will more accurately reflect school and student success.

Further, based on those identified needs, the state working with each individual school should provide support and appropriate resources that will enhance and equalize the opportunity for all students to learn successfully, urban and suburban. Only then will the state do what it is mandated to do: serve all of its students equally and fairly.

In the meantime, our Clinton Avenue School staff will continue to put forth 200 percent in its efforts to achieve student learning success.