



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: Superintendents of Schools

FROM: Shannon Marimón, Division Director, Talent Office

DATE: April 21, 2016

SUBJECT: Updates on the Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, PEAC Recommendations, Ongoing Support of BloomBoard, and Moving from Compliance to Coherence Conference 2016

On December 10, 2015, President Obama signed into law the **Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)**, which reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and replaces No Child Left Behind (NCLB). While there are many components within the new law, this memorandum is focused on educator evaluation and support.

Please note: Connecticut's current ESEA waiver will remain in effect until **August 1, 2016**. The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is working with the United States Department of Education (USED) to inform the transition to ESSA.

With respect to educator evaluation and support, ESSA grants states greater flexibility. The Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC) remains the body charged with making recommendations to the State Board of Education (SBE) for amendments to Connecticut's current system. PEAC has met on multiple occasions since the passage of ESSA to discuss areas of potential refinement to the Connecticut Guidelines for Educator Evaluation, as well as ongoing support for implementation.

On March 9, 2016, PEAC met and made the following recommendations to the SBE:

- **Annual Educator Evaluation and Support Plan Submission**
PEAC reached a consensus decision to recommend that local educational agencies (LEAs) be allowed to continue with their current CSDE-approved plans for the 2016-17 school year. LEAs would not be expected to submit their 2016-17 Educator Evaluation and Support Plan for CSDE review and approval. If an LEA makes a substantive change that diverges from its CSDE-approved 2015-16 plan, LEAs would submit an amendment form for review and approval. A [Request for Amendment](#) form can be found on the CSDE website.
- **Use of State Test Data in Educator Evaluation**
PEAC voted to recommend that the SBE extend the current flexibility on the incorporation of state test data in the evaluation of educators for the 2016-17 school year. During this time, PEAC will further study the appropriate use of state test data in educator evaluation.

The SBE adopted these recommendations on April 6, 2016, with the understanding that they fully support and expect the implementation of the required use of state test data starting in the 2017-18 academic year. Please note: All 2015-16 Educator Evaluation and Support Plans are publicly available on the CSDE [website](#).

Ongoing Support of BloomBoard

As districts are planning for the 2016-17 academic year, we want to provide an update regarding ongoing support of BloomBoard. Starting in 2013-14, the CSDE, in collaboration with the Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS), funded perpetual licenses for the BloomBoard evaluation/observation platform for all LEAs in the state. As such, LEAs that have opted into use of the BloomBoard platform can continue to manage evaluation/observation data without additional licensing costs.

The CSDE will no longer be able to support the expanded functionality and premium services such as the *Insights Reports* or *Marketplace* credits beyond the 2015-16 school year. This expanded functionality is not required to meet the basic data collection needs of the educator evaluation and support system. For those LEAs that are interested in any of BloomBoard's premium services, please contact your BloomBoard account manager directly.

Coherence Conference 2016

On February 25, 2016, the CSDE Talent Office, in partnership with the RESC Alliance and CAS, sponsored our second annual conference entitled, **Moving from Compliance to Coherence: Aligning Student and Educator Goals and Practices**, at the Radisson Hotel in Cromwell, Connecticut. Over 270 educators attended the conference.

The conference featured 19 Connecticut districts that are aligning school, administrator, teacher and student goals and practices in order to ensure enhanced educator and student performance and inform relevant, high-quality professional learning. The day focused on the importance of telling the success stories of our schools. The CSDE hosted a storytelling hour during which five educators and one student shared personal stories of educators making a difference. Commissioner Dianna Wentzell ended the day by sharing a story of her own. It was an inspiring day of learning from and with educators from across the state.

All of the resources, materials and contact information for the conference presentations are available online via the following link: http://www.connecticutseed.org/?page_id=3507

The Talent Office staff is committed to providing timely information and answers to your questions. Please do not hesitate to contact us for assistance at 860-713-6820.

SM:cpn

cc: Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell, Commissioner of Education
Ms. Ellen E. Cohn, Deputy Commissioner of Education
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