

SERIES: 2000-2001
CIRCULAR LETTER: C-6

TO: Superintendents of Schools

FROM: Theodore S. Sergi
Commissioner of Education

DATE: August 18, 2000

SUBJECT: BEST Program: 2000-2001

For the year 2000-2001, the State Board of Education has adopted the attached BEST Program requirements. The attachment summarizes categories of participation effective for beginning teachers first registered in the BEST Program during the 2000-2001 school year. Unfortunately, the state budget for BEST has not kept pace with the growth in the number of new teachers. We are, however, maintaining the \$200 per first year teacher professional development payment and the full schedule of statewide training, orientation and seminars. We anticipate approximately 3500 first year teachers in September.

Due to the high relative cost of administering the Connecticut Competency Instrument (CCI) assessment for a small number of beginning teachers (only 120), the decision was made to eliminate the CCI assessment for beginning teachers of agriculture, bilingual education, business education, health, home economics, technology education, and TESOL. These beginning teachers will be provided with support by a mentor/mentor team during their first year of teaching, and attend BEST Orientation workshops.

We are hopeful that the Governor and the General Assembly will agree to fund the BEST Program in the 2001-2003 biennial state budget, at a level that will provide a state stipend for every mentor and sufficient funds to conduct the training, seminars and scoring of portfolios.

The BEST Program has been nationally recognized as a model program and most recently was honored by the Education Commission of the States as an exemplary program of induction to the teaching profession.

We look forward to your continued partnership in this important and successful initiative.

TSS:fsm
Attachment

BEST PARTICIPATION CATEGORIES 2000-2001¹

I. PORTFOLIO INDUCTION PROGRAM

BEST Program requirements for teachers of:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bilingual Education • Elementary Education • English Language Arts • Mathematics • Middle grades • Music | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical Education • Sciences • Social Studies • Special Education • Visual Arts • World Languages |
|---|---|

Year One	Year Two	Year Three (if needed)
<p>School-based support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support by mentor or mentor team <p>State-based support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discipline-specific seminars • Orientation Sessions 	<p>School-based support: (optional at the discretion of the district):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support by mentor or mentor team. <p>State-based support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discipline-specific seminars • Portfolio Clinics • Portfolio Videotape sessions <p>Assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission of a teaching portfolio by May 1. (April 15 for special education teachers.) 	<p>State-based support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portfolio conferences for beginning teachers not meeting the portfolio standard in Year Two. <p>Assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resubmission of a teaching portfolio by January 1.

Special note:

- Beginning teachers of bilingual education and world languages will be participating in pilot studies of the discipline-based portfolio;
- Both middle school and bilingual education teachers should attend the seminars that correspond to the discipline they are teaching (e.g., elementary education, mathematics) and are required to submit a portfolio in that discipline by May 1 of their second year of participation in BEST.

II. SUPPORT ONLY INDUCTION PROGRAM

BEST Program requirements for teachers of:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Education • Health Education • Home Economics • Technology Education • Marketing Education • TESOL | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture • Partially Sighted • Hearing Impaired • Blind • Occupational & Trade-related subjects in comprehensive high schools |
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Year One
<p>School-based support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support by mentor or mentor team <p>State-based support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BEST Orientation Workshops

¹Applicable for beginning teachers first registered in the BEST Program as of the 2000-2001 school year.