

Series: 2002-2003

Circular Letter: C-31

TO: Superintendents of Schools

FROM: Theodore S. Sergi, Commissioner of Education

DATE: June 13, 2003

SUBJECT: Highlights of the 2003 Regular Session of the Connecticut General Assembly

The Connecticut General Assembly has now adjourned its 2003 Regular Session and will be meeting soon in a special session to pass a budget, amendments to the General Statutes to implement the budget, and bond authorizations.

Below is a list of the most important education bills that were passed during the regular session and some examples of the contents of each bill. Please note that the Governor has not yet signed many of these bills and that some of them have not yet been assigned public act numbers. Additionally, we are in the process of getting the new legislation on the Department of Education's website under "Education Bills: 2003" at <http://www.state.ct.us/sde/legal/index.htm> and hope to have this finished shortly.

Once the General Assembly completes the special session, we will provide you with a more detailed summary of all of the 2003 legislation. Please remember that the **Back-to-School Meeting** for superintendents has been scheduled for **August 19, 2003**.

### **2003 HIGHLIGHTS**

**An Act Concerning Indoor Air Quality in Schools** (sHB 6426, as amended) concerning issues such as school district indoor air quality programs; new indoor air quality inspection and evaluation requirements; state reimbursement for certified school indoor air quality emergencies, as determined by the Department of Public Health; new requirements for Department of Education approval of school building project plans and sites; the maintenance and operation of heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems in schools; and local indoor air quality committees.

**An Act Concerning the Federal No Child Left Behind Act and Teacher Certification** (sSB 1155, as amended; Public Act 03-168) concerning issues such as state achievement tests for public school students in grades 3, 5, and 7; the movement of fall state testing to the

spring; the validity of elementary and special education endorsements for the teaching of kindergarten; and state educator certification regulations.

**An Act Concerning the Provision of Medical Care for Students' Health Care Needs** (sHB 5931, as amended) concerning issues such as the administration of medications in schools including, but not limited to, the use by school paraprofessionals of cartridge injectors to administer epinephrine; glucose self-testing by children in schools; the inclusion of information on children with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder or learning disabilities in in-service training on the growth and development of exceptional children; and policies about school personnel recommending the use of psychotropic drugs for a child.

**An Act Concerning Minor Revisions to the Education Statutes** (sSB 1093, as amended; Public Act 03-174) concerning issues such as the posting of Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) scores on a student's permanent record and transcript; the time of day when state-wide tests can be administered; school district technology plans; fees for participation in certain after-school programs; the Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST) program; and durational shortage area permit (DSAP) holders and collective bargaining.

**An Act Concerning the Reemployment of Retired Teachers, the Purchase of Additional Credited Service in the Teachers' Retirement System, the Excess Earnings Account, Credit for Service with Certain Bargaining Organizations, and Payment for Additional Credited Service Purchased by Boards of Education, and Making Changes to the Teachers' Retirement System** (sHB 6696, as amended) concerning teachers' retirement issues such as the earnings limit for re-employed retired teachers and the provision of certain vested active teachers with retirement benefits that are contractual in nature. (Please note that this bill may have budget implications. As the Governor has not yet signed it, you should not implement its provisions until you are certain that it has been signed.)

**An Act Concerning Donation of Teaching Services by Private Sector Specialists** (sHB 5841, Public Act 03-66) concerning the use of private sector specialists, not necessarily certified to teach, to provide instruction in areas identified as workforce shortages.

**An Act Concerning Paraprofessionals** (sHB 5289; Public Act 03-11) concerning wage payment schedules for certain paraprofessionals in schools.

We hope that this is helpful. Please contact Katherine T. Nicoletti, Esq., at (860) 713-6520 or [katherine.nicoletti@po.state.ct.us](mailto:katherine.nicoletti@po.state.ct.us) if you have questions.