

The background of the slide features a stylized, light blue illustration of two hands shaking. The hands are rendered in a simple, clean style with soft shading, set against a light blue background with a subtle grid pattern. The handshake is positioned diagonally across the lower half of the slide, symbolizing agreement, partnership, or achievement.

Achievement Gap Task Force

Implementing the Recommendations of the Connecticut Commission on
Educational Achievement:
A Preliminary Analysis

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Commissioner of Education
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Preliminary Observations

- Commissioner Simmons and the Connecticut Commission on Educational Achievement deserves great praise!
- Commission's report establishes a blueprint for our State.
- The blueprint aligns with state and federal legislation on education reform, but goes beyond this framework, identifying best practices from other states like Massachusetts, Delaware, and New York and the opinions of Connecticut citizens and community leaders.
- The blueprint establishes a foundation for achieving consensus for what must be done, together, to build a sustainable system for educational improvement and equity for all children.
- Work on the blueprint must start immediately, continue through the next decade, and be sustainable well beyond 2020.
- Thank you, Commissioners!

We Must Begin Immediately!

The Challenges:

1. How can the State Department of Education and its partners integrate the Commission's 60 recommendations with initiatives already started, as well as others that have yet to begin?
2. How, as a state, can we implement all of these recommendations within ten years?
3. How can we build and sustain the will to meet and fund all of the objectives tied to these recommendations?

Important Starting Points

State Legislation

Section 10-4 (State Board of Education's Five-year Comprehensive Plan)

Public Act 06-179 (An Act Concerning State Investment and Child Poverty Reduction)

Section 10-223e (2007 Statewide Education Accountability Plan)

Public Act 08-107 (Teacher Education and Mentoring)

Public Act 09-06 (2009 Educator Certification and Professional Development Reform)

Public Act 10-111 (An Act Concerning Education Reform in Connecticut)

Federal Legislation

2001 No Child Left Behind Act

2004 Americans with Disabilities Act (IDEA)

2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)

- Race to the Top
- i3 Innovation Grants

2009 State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF)

2009 Common Core Standards and Assessments

2011-2012 Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

Related Initiatives

State of Connecticut

2006-2011: “A Superior Education for Connecticut’s 21st Century Learners”

2006: Investment strategies outlined in “Ready by Five, Fine by Nine,” a multiyear plan for early childhood education reform

2006: Connecticut Accountability and Learning Initiative (**CALI**) for districts failing to meet Adequate Yearly Progress (**AYP**)

2007: Scientific, Research-based Intervention (**SRBI**)

2008: *Sheff v. O’Neill* Stipulated Agreement

2009: Flexible certification opportunities for out-of-state teachers, Teach for America

2010: **TEAM** mentoring program for beginning and new teachers

2010: *Public Act 10-111:*

- *The Connecticut Plan for Secondary School Reform*
- “Innovation Schools”
- “School Governance Councils”

2013: Upgrade and expansion of the Connecticut’s PreK-16 longitudinal data system

2013: Performance Evaluation Advisory Committee (**PEAC**) develops, pilots and implements guidelines for supervising and evaluating teachers and principals using multiple indicators of student growth

2015: Regulations for Teacher Certificates, Permits and Authorizations

Related Initiatives

National

SFSF Accountability Requirements

2012: Begin piloting the Board Examination System (BES) through the National Center for Education and the Economy

2013: Complete PreK-16 Longitudinal Data System with Higher Education

2013: Complete Teacher Equity Plan

2015: Complete PreK-12 Assessment System through the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium

New England Region

2012: Begin pilot programs in the New England Secondary School Consortium's "League of Innovation Schools"

What We Must Do ASAP!

To implement the Commission's Recommendations we must:

1. Align the Commission's 60 recommendations for reform to State and Federal legislation and regulatory requirements;
2. Establish clear, unifying goals, and annual objectives linked to the Commission's recommendations;
3. Develop a 10-year Master Plan focused on objectives and action steps identified by the Commission, State Board, Education Committee, and Governor;
4. Identify new administrative and governance structures;
5. Assign timetables for completion, and designate individuals and/or agencies who will assume responsibilities;
6. Develop budgets to accompany each objective;
7. Incorporate steps 1-6 into the State Board of Education's 2011-16, *Five-year Comprehensive Plan*; and
8. Write new legislation, as needed, to supplement current state laws.

Alignment Examples

Commission's Areas of Recommendation:

1. Demand Accountability
2. High Expectations
3. Foster Leadership
4. Excellent Teaching
5. Invest Intelligently
6. Turnaround Schools



State Legislation

1. Section 223e
2. Public Act 10-111
3. Public Act 06-179

Federal Legislation

1. Longitudinal Data Systems
2. Common Standards and Assessments
3. School Improvement Grants (SIG)

Align and Integrate Goals

Commission's Goals

1. Connecticut will largely eliminate the achievement gaps between low-income and non-low income students on 4th and 8th grade CMTs and on high school graduation rates
2. Connecticut will have one of the smallest achievement gaps in the nation and will be the highest state overall based on 4th and 8th grade NAEP rankings

State Department of Education Goals: (2011-2013)

1. Increase the percentage of all students scoring at the goal level from 75 to 80 percent on the CMT and 60-65 percent on the CAPT
2. Reduce by half the gaps in student performance between Black/Hispanic and white students on the CMT, CAPT and in the graduation rate
3. Increase CT's four-year NGA four-year graduate rate from 79-90 percent
4. Increase parent and community involvement
5. Lower Connecticut's out-of-school suspension rate by 1% each year
6. Develop fair, appropriate systems for mentoring, supporting, supervising, and evaluating teachers and principals that is evidence-based and focus on multiple indicators of student growth

State Board of Education's 2011-16 Comprehensive Plan: (In Process)

Federal

2001 No Child Left Behind Act:

1. Proficiency in Reading Math by 2014
2. Highly Qualified Teachers
3. English Language Proficiency
4. All Students Graduating from High School

American Recovery & Reinvestment Act

1. High-quality Standards and Assessments
2. Longitudinal Data Systems
3. Great Teachers and Leaders
4. Turning Around Low-Performing Schools

ESEA Reauthorization: A Blueprint for Reform

1. College and Career-Ready Students
2. Great Teachers and Leaders in Every School
3. Equity and Opportunity for All Students
4. Raise the Bar and Reward Excellence
5. Promote Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Develop a Flexible, 10-Year Master Plan by January 2012

Master Plan Components: First Steps

Immediate Actions: Fiscal Year 2011-12

With assistance from the State Departments of Education and Higher Education, the Task Force should consider taking steps to:

- Enact immediately 2-3 of the Commission's recommendations for Fiscal Year 2011-2012 (e.g.):
 - Revise age requirements for entrance to Kindergarten by September 1
 - Funding for after-school and summer school remediation for students with low CMT scores
 - Provide funding to accelerate completion of the State's longitudinal data system (SLDS)
- Revise and integrate long-range goals of the Commission, State Department of Education, and USDOE
- Establish immediate, and short-term objectives, leading to the realization of these goals
- Organize and implement Department's *Six Partnership Committees* in concert with the P20 Council
- Develop timelines, agencies responsible, and partners needed to implement the requirements of all state and federal legislation enacted since 2007, most critically Public Act 10-111, and Section 223e
- Propose legislation enacting the recommendations of the State Board of Education's Ad Hoc Committee for Financial Reform:
 - Education Cost Sharing (ECS) formula changes
 - Common school calendar statewide
 - Regional transportation system sponsored by Regional Educational Service Centers
 - Changes in funding allocations for magnet school tuition and transportation reimbursements for districts outside the *Sheff* region
- Develop a new, *Five-Year Comprehensive Plan* with a New State Board of Education.

To accomplish these steps, the Task Force should consider assigning development of Master Plan to a non-profit organization, state agency, or institution of higher education with expertise in long-range planning.

Master Plan Components: Next Steps

Essential Action Steps for Fiscal Year 2012-13

- Propose new legislation establishing new governance structures:
 - Secretary of Education and/or Education Advisor to Governor
 - Department of Early Childhood Education
 - School Turnaround Office in State Department of Education
 - Center for the Study of English Language Learning and Culturally Relevant Instruction
 - Other structures to ensure statewide accountability for high achievement
- Propose new legislation relative to Commission's recommendations, with special emphasis on teacher and principal effectiveness, expanded learning opportunities, and regionalization
- Complete cost analyses of short- and long-term objectives for implementing the plan, making use of federal, state, and local resources
- Implement recommendations of Performance Evaluation Advisory Council as per PA 10-111
- Begin district survey of the impact of *The Secondary School Reform Plan* on municipal capacity and finances
- Complete revisions and implementation of *Connecticut's Common Standards and Assessment* program in concert with the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (**SBAC**)

Master Plan Components: Next Steps

Identify Next Steps, Evaluate, and Revise Plan for 2014-2020

- Submit report to General Assembly on success and impact of *The Connecticut Secondary School Reform Plan* on local boards of education; link to results-based accountability (RBA) systems identified as a priority of the General Assembly
- Mobilize public outreach and media campaign to ensure and sustain focus on P20 reform statewide

Essential Beliefs and Attitudes

- Remain persistent, vigilant, open to new ideas and perspectives!
- Stay optimistic, committed, passionate!
- Collaborate! Make achievement gap reform a grass-roots movement that engages all sectors of state and local government.
- Closing Connecticut's achievement gap is ***“an economic and moral imperative for our state.”*** (See *Commission Gap Report p.2*)

Questions and Answers

Thank you!

