



Connecticut State University System

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January 4, 2011

The Honorable Toni Harp
State Senator
Co-Chairperson, Legislative Achievement Gap Task Force
Legislative Office Building, Room 3300
Hartford, CT 06106

Mr. Miguel Cardona
Principal, Hanover Elementary School
Co-Chairperson, Legislative Achievement Gap Task Force
208 Main Street
South Meriden, CT 06451

Dear Senator Harp and Mr. Cardona:

I have followed, with great interest, the work of the Legislative Achievement Gap Task Force over the past few months and I commend you and the other members for your efforts. Closing the achievement gap is one of the most significant challenges faced by Connecticut and it is absolutely critical for the success of the State and its citizens.

You should be aware that closing the achievement gap is a priority of the CSUS Board of Trustees (BOT) and part of its Strategic Focusing Initiative. The Universities are now working together on recommendations for the BOT's review that address the achievement gaps at both the k-12 and postsecondary levels. I would be happy to make the BOT's priority agenda available to you when it is completed.

In addition, the Connecticut State University System (CSUS) is one of 24 university systems across the nation participating in Access to Success, which is an initiative to cut the college-going and graduation gaps for low-income and minority students. Efforts are also underway at all four universities to work with school districts on improving student readiness and performance and ensuring their success. The Bridges Program, which began at Western Connecticut State University (WCSU) and has now been adapted to the other three universities, allows for faculty to work with teachers and administrators to address deficiencies of the high school students early, thus reducing the need for remedial courses in colleges and better preparing them for their postsecondary education.

Before your report to the General Assembly is finalized, I would like to offer a suggestion for consideration by the Task Force with regard to the recommendation to “give a third-party organization with proven educational planning expertise the task of developing a realistic comprehensive plan ...” I would respectfully request that the CSUS play a part in formulating such a plan. We would be happy to collaborate with other institutions of higher education in our state, as such an effort would allow us to share resources and bring together expertise that exists at all of the institutions to help craft a solution.

I welcome the opportunity to discuss this further at your convenience and I look forward to your report to the General Assembly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David G. Carter". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

David G. Carter
Chancellor

DGC/sjm

cc: Dr. Louise Feroe, Senior Vice Chancellor, Academic and Student Affairs
Jill Ferraiolo, Associate Vice Chancellor, Government Relations and Communications