PERFORMANCE MATTERS
News from the CSDE Performance Office

CSDE
CONNECTICUT STATE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
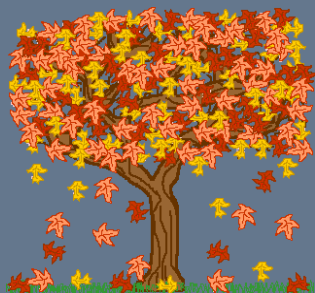
Key Resources

EdSight Listserv

The EdSight listserv is currently available and a link to instructions on how to join will be added to EdSight by the end of October.

The listserv will be a one-way listserv, meaning users will receive messages from the listserv, but will not be able to respond. The purpose of the listserv is to update users when new content is added to EdSight.

To subscribe to the listserv follow these instructions:

1. Compose an email to listserv@list.ct.gov from the email address you wish to have added.

2. Leave the subject line blank and in the body of the message type:
   Subscribe SDE_EDSIGHT YourFirstName YourLastName

3. You will receive an e-mail confirmation request. Follow the directions to confirm your email address.

4. You will then receive an e-mail that you have successfully subscribed to the listserv.

Data Collection STALWARTS

Rich Beganski, Principal and Tammy Cassile, Dean of Students are TCS coordinators for Capital Preparatory Harbor School.

Capital Preparatory Harbor School was a new charter school in the 2015-16 school year. The school staff had never submitted TCS, did not have a fully functional student information system to support reporting, and were unfamiliar with the reporting requirements associated with the TCS data collection. Rich and Tammy attended the CSDE Data Summit on August 17th, returned to the school and began the work to build a TCS file from scratch. They worked back and forth with the Department to clarify rules, strategize solutions unique to their data system and managed to report and certify their TCS file in only 2 weeks. A truly impressive accomplishment!

The Performance Office Team salutes Rich Beganski and Tammy Cassile!

Upcoming Data Collection Timelines

Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO)
November 1, 2016

ED162 (Non-certified Staff)
November 30, 2016

Kindergarten Inventory
December 9, 2016

ED205 (Title I Evaluation Report)
December 11, 2016

For complete information about timely/accurate due date, see the Data Collections Guide for 2016-17

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

In December of 2015, President Obama signed into law the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The title of the reauthorized legislation, which replaces the No Child Left Behind Act, is the **Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)**. The passage of the ESSA provides a much anticipated opportunity to improve outcomes for all students.

ESSA requires that states develop and submit a consolidated State plan to the U.S. Department of Education. In our commitment to obtain input and feedback from a diverse group of stakeholders, and ensure that Connecticut's ESSA State Plan is rooted in the day-to-day needs of educators, students, and communities, we have developed the **Connecticut ESSA Stakeholder Survey**. This survey is designed to gather feedback from interested members of the public regarding key policy questions concerning Connecticut's transition to the ESSA and enable us to better understand stakeholder priorities. Input received will be captured and considered as the CSDE drafts Connecticut's ESSA State Plan. To access the survey, please visit https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CTESSASurvey. The survey is also available on the CSDE home page under QuickLinks and on our ESSA Resources page.

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium — Interim Assessments

An assessment can be formative or summative. An assessment that combines aspects of both formative and summative and occurs between them has been referred to as an interim assessment. Different assessments serve different purposes. Experts caution against using one assessment for too many purposes.

Interim assessments are administered periodically to evaluate students' knowledge and skills ideally relative to a specific domain or sub-skill (e.g., "Read Informational Text" or "Numbers and Operations in Base Ten"). They should inform decisions primarily at the classroom level but may also extend to the grade/school level. They are best administered in domain blocks, few times a year based on the needs of the teacher/grade-level team and the curriculum. They may be standardized but it is more important that the test items in these interim blocks be aligned to the standards and of the same quality as those in the summative assessment. Some interim assessments measure overall performance like the summative and also claim to predict results on the summative assessments. Repeatedly measuring overall performance throughout the year with an eye to predicting the summative assessment results may inadvertently reduce the instructional value of an interim assessment to the classroom teacher while overemphasizing the summative. Preserving the interim assessment's focus on teaching and learning without raising the stakes on that assessment will strengthen the ability of the standards (and not the test) to drive instruction.

Five webinars have been scheduled in November and January to provide Connecticut educators with the most up-to-date information regarding the Smarter Balanced Interim Assessments for 2016-17. These webinars are for returning users and new users of the Interim Assessments. A description of each webinar, date and time it is being offered, and information on how to register is included in the Interim Assessment Webinar flyer. Information about the Smarter Balanced Interim Assessment is available on our Web site.

Want to know the latest about student assessment in Connecticut?

Then subscribe to the *Student Assessment News*. To automatically receive the *Student Assessment News* and/or other announcements, register for e-mail updates on the Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal.

Growth Model

The Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment Growth Model for District and School Accountability is described in detail in an October 11, 2016, letter to Superintendents from Commissioner Dianna Wentzell.   The Smarter Balanced Assessment system was designed to provide us with results that enable valid interpretations of not only student achievement but also growth over time; educators know that matched student growth results are often a better indicator of the effectiveness of educational interventions than simply comparing achievement scores or proficiency rates from one year to the next. Therefore, after two successful years of implementation, Connecticut will begin implementation of a growth model for the Smarter Balanced assessments.

This model was developed with extensive guidance from the CSDE's technical advisory committee, which is comprised of renowned state/national experts on psychometrics and measurement. The CSDE also consulted repeatedly with leaders, educators, and testing experts from many Connecticut districts. The results from this growth model will serve as the basis for Indicator #2 of the Next Generation Accountability System starting with the 2015-16 results. The CSDE expects that growth results will be available through EdSight in November.
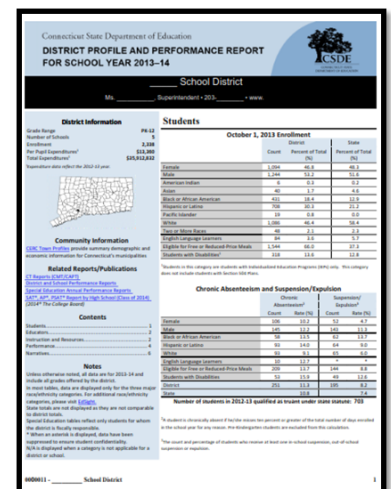
Additional information about the growth model including a narrated PowerPoint presentation about the growth model can be found on the Performance Office accountability page. If you have any questions about the growth model, please contact Ajit Gopalakrishnan, Chief Performance Officer.

Profile and Performance Reports

The Profile and Performance Reports (PPR) and their predecessor reports, the Strategic School Profiles, were developed in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes 10-220 (c). Each year, the Department produces these reports for all of the public school districts and their schools. Copies of the 2014-15 and 2013-14 PPR for districts and schools can be found on EdSight as well as SSPs from 2001-02 through 2012-13.

The 2014-15 PPR includes results from the Next Generation Accountability System. They provide a more complete picture of district and school performance. The 12 indicators of the accountability system are:

1. Academic achievement status measured by state assessments
2. Academic growth
3. Assessment participation rate
4. Chronic absenteeism
5. Preparation for postsecondary and career readiness – coursework
6. Preparation for postsecondary and career readiness – exams
7. Graduation – on track in ninth grade
8. Graduation – four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate – all students
9. Graduation – six-year adjusted cohort graduation rate – high needs
10. Postsecondary entrance rate – all students (college enrollment)
11. Physical fitness
12. Arts access

The Performance Office accountability page provides additional information (including a two-page FAQ) about the Next Generation Accountability System.

College Scorecard

Indicator 10 of the Next Generation Accountability System measures post-secondary entrance rates of all students. It is essential that students not only enroll in college—they must also graduate with a high-quality degree. To assist students and families in the college search, the United States Department of Education released the first annual update of the redesigned College Scorecard, a college search tool that President Obama launched in September 2015 and that nearly 1.5 million users across the nation have accessed since. With over 4,000 institutions available for students and families to search, the College Scorecard provides answers to critical questions about each institution, like how likely students are to complete their degrees, how much debt students take out, and how much the students typically earn after attending. And the interactive website provides users with the ability to search by program, degree type, location, or by name of institution.
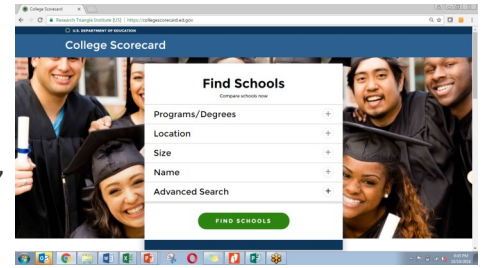
These are some of the resources available on the College Scorecard website:

College Scorecard Communications Toolkit: The Toolkit will help you easily communicate the unique benefits of the College Scorecard to students and families and how you can reach different audiences through targeted mediums. The Toolkit includes information about what's available in the Scorecard, examples of social media content for Facebook and Twitter feeds, and a sample e-mail that you can send to stakeholders.
How-to guide for educators and families: This is a concise one-page guide for using the College Scorecard. It can serve as a handout for principals, counselors, teachers, students, and families. This "how-to" resource will help your students and educators understand what to look for and how to conduct searches on the website.
Video: If you are working to reach educators and students through social media or e-mail communications, a video is available that shows the many advantages of using a tool like the College Scorecard to help broaden their college search.

Music Instruction

Access to the arts for high school students is Indicator 12 of the Next Generation Accountability System. According to a recent study, exposure to the arts, including music instruction, can provide academic benefits to students . The study around music instruction concluded that participating in a music ensemble for two years was associated with improved brain responses to speech and stronger reading skills. The findings are highlighted in a June 2016 article titled Neurobiology of Everyday Communication: What Have We Learned From Music? in the journal Neuroscientist.

In this study, Nina Kraus, the director of Northwestern University's Auditory Neuroscience Laboratory, had two groups of high school students– one group participated in a music ensemble class, three-to-six times per week, for two years, and the other group participated in JROTC, an army physical education and character-building program. The students in the study had never participated in organized music activities at school before the research began in their freshman year.

After two years, reading skills in both groups had improved—but the music group's scores improved more. The music students also showed changes in the part of the brain that processes sound. Kraus explains that the key to improving student academic performance with music is to have students make music, not just listen to it. Kraus stresses the need for student composition because the interactivity of such exercise creates sound-to-meaning brain connections. The sound-to-meaning connections strengthen the auditory processes important for language, for reading, and for making meaning of sound. Kraus concludes that this research is relevant to educators across all disciplines because it demonstrates that sound is fundamental to communication and learning.   Kraus' research about sound and the brain is available at the Auditory Neuroscience Laboratory.