Course and Credit Requirements - Total 25 Credits

Math – 4 Credits (Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II or Statistics & Probability, other mathematics)
Enfield current: 3 (no specific courses)

Science – 3 Credits (Biological/Life Science, Chemistry/Physical Science, other science)
Enfield current: 2 (no specific courses)

STEM Elective - 1 Credit (Science, Mathematics, Engineering or Technology)
Enfield current: 7 electives no specific requirement as to "what"

English – 4 Credits (English I, English II, Literature and Composition - American, World, or British Literature, other English course or courses)
Enfield Current: 4

Social Studies - 3 Credits (American History, International/World Studies, 1/2 Credit Civics, I/2 Credit Social Studies Elective)
Enfield current: 3

World Languages - 2 Credits (Note: Requirement may be completed in middle grades; if so, 2 additional "open elective" credits are required)
Enfield current: 0

Fine Arts - 1 Credit (Art, Music, Theatre, Dance)
Enfield current: 1 or Vocational Education

Humanities Elective - 1 Credit (English, Social Science, Fine Arts or other Humanities courses)
Enfield current: 7 electives no specific requirement as to "what"

Comprehensive Health Education - 1/2 credit
Physical Education - 1 Credit
Enfield current: 2 PE & Health combined

Career & Life Skills Electives - 2 Credits (Career and Technical Education, World Languages, English as a Second Language, community service, or other career & life skills course such as Personal Finance, Public Speaking, and Nutrition & Physical Activity.
Enfield current: 7 electives no specific requirement as to "what"

Open Electives Total 1.5 Credits
Enfield current: 7 electives no specific requirement as to "what"

Capstone Experience Total 1 Credit
Enfield current: 0

Connecticut's economic future depends on investing in secondary schools.

We don't need much to get started, but we do need to get started . . . now!

Accountability and Assessment
Holding All Students to High Standards

To assure students are learning the desired content, state-developed final examinations will be administered in each high school. These exams will be given to students at the completion of five of the required courses and will count for at least 20% of the student's final grade. These final exams will be for Algebra I, Geometry, Biological/Life Science, English/Language Arts II, and American History. Some will include performance components. Students must score at least 70% on the final exams to successfully complete the course.

CAPT (Connecticut Academic Performance Test) will continue to be administered in Grade 10 to meet NCLB requirements and to serve as a constant in measuring progress over time.

Student Supports
Providing A Variety of Supports to Ensure That All Students Succeed

Many student supports will be necessary to ensure that all students graduate from high school with the skills and understandings that are desired. Districts will need to provide remedial support in a timely and effective manner and create and expand programs that help students stay interested and involved in school. These programs may include mentorships, peer and adult tutoring, computer-based supports, after-school and weekend programs, school-based health programs, differently paced and/or modularized courses, and other options. The key is that a variety of strategies must be tried and implemented to help all students achieve.

Higher Education
Ensuring That All Students Graduate "College Ready"

Significant numbers of Connecticut's current high school graduates must enroll in remedial English and/or Mathematics courses when they get to college. The establishment of a rigorous set of high school expectations and a challenging course of study for students will serve to better align the high school curriculum with expectations for college level work.

Connecticut institutions of higher education, both public and private, can serve a significant role in the success of these enhanced requirements. Increased collaboration between higher education and the Kindergarten-Grade12 community will serve to better align high school requirements with college expectations, and may include increased opportunities to earn college credit while still in high school, automatic admission to Connecticut colleges, and tuition assistance for students who excel in their high school performance.

Implementation of the CT Plan 2009-2019

Phase 1: School Years 2009-2011

- Develop 1-2 model curricula, final examinations, and formative assessment systems - all tied to the Department of Education's data warehouse and network.
- Develop a long-range implementation plan that encourages district participation, based on CT's current and projected financial capacity.
- Work with CT's regional education service centers (RESCs) to develop policy and guidance documentation for implementing student success plans, capstone projects, on-line courses, innovative schedules and assessment alternatives.
- Pilot 21st century courses such as *Bio21* offered through *The Center for 21st Century Skills @ Education Connection*, to determine their effectiveness and potential as model curricula.
- Identify 20 - 25 districts to begin piloting aspects of *The Connecticut Plan* in Phase I and full implementation in Phase 2.
- Share best practices (curricula, engaging teaching methods, successful student support structures) through state and regional workshops and the CEN (CT Education Network).

Phase 2: School Years 2011-2014

- Begin implementation phase, introducing all elements of the *Connecticut Plan* in the 20-25 pilot districts.
- Complete development of model curricula, begin professional development for all teachers in educational uses of technology, begin investments in remedial and tutorial supports for students, develop guidance and alternatives for students struggling with final examinations.

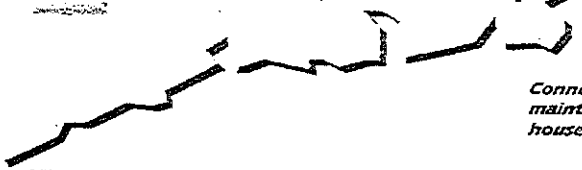
Phase 3: School Year 2014-2015

- Develop incentives for districts to fully participate in *The Connecticut Plan*.
- Complete phase-in and make adjustments to clarify and strengthen the *Plan*, based on the first four years of achievement and formative assessment data; introduce PISA examinations and support funds for PSAT test takers.
- Prepare for voluntary implementation of *The Connecticut Plan statewide*, potentially involving all 166 districts.

Connecticut's Plan for Secondary School Reform

Can Connecticut afford to wait?

Connecticut's financial crisis is just beginning and is certain to grow worse. We must take steps now to safeguard our future. Education is our surest path to a strong economy, but regrettably our high schools currently graduate thousands of students ill-equipped for college, and without sufficient skills for the job market. We must reform our secondary schools now, or face a future without the skilled workers needed to sustain our economy and our standard of living.



Some Alarming Facts...

- CT now has one of the largest achievement gaps between whites and minority students in the country.
- Thirty to forty percent of students in some urban high schools never earn a diploma.
- Only one-fourth of CT's ninth graders who go on to college ever complete their bachelor's degree program, even after six years.
- CT's colleges are now providing remedial instruction to an alarming number of incoming freshman - sometimes more than 40% of new students. Why? Because they are not "college ready" and lack basic reading and mathematics skills.

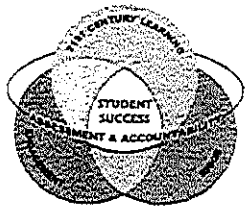
Connecticut must break this downward cycle to maintain its position as leaders in innovation, household income and economic strength.

The need: A comprehensive statewide secondary school reform plan, *The Connecticut Plan*

We need all of Connecticut's children to succeed in school - and in life beyond the classroom.

Designing secondary schools where all students can learn and achieve at high levels will require important and substantial changes in our current structures, practices and assumptions. Small fixes here and there are not the answer. We must be committed to do all we can to enable all students to graduate from any high school in Connecticut with skills and understandings to not just succeed, but *excel*.

In the *Connecticut Plan for Secondary School Reform*, increased interventions and supports, high expectations, and engaging, supportive environments will mean that more of our students will stay in school and graduate. With these reforms, our students will have increased options and be better equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary for success in further education or the workforce.



At the center of *The Connecticut Plan for Secondary School Reform* is STUDENT SUCCESS - the expectation that all students can and will succeed. For this to happen, schools must be redesigned so that *every* student is engaged, learns rigorous and significant content, and develops skills essential for success in the 21st century. This will require varied and flexible educational opportunities, personal connections, academic challenge, targeted supports, and a customized course of studies tied to each student's education and/or career goals.

Connecticut's Plan for Secondary School Reform
Investing Today for a Better Tomorrow

Find out more information and follow progress on the implementation of *The CT Plan* on the Connecticut State Department of Education Website, http://www.sde.ct.gov.

Key Elements of Connecticut's Plan for Secondary School Reform

Focus on Engagement

- **Relevant, interesting and meaningful learning opportunities**
- **Supportive environments that address students' needs at appropriate levels**
- **Structures and programs that help students feel connected to the school community**

Focus on 21st Century Skills

- **Locate, analyze, interpret and communicate information in a variety of media and formats**
- **Solve problems creatively and logically**
- **Collaborate with others face-to-face and via technology tools**
- **Demonstrate leadership skills, habits of personal and social responsibility, and adaptability to change**
- **Effective use of technology tools**

Focus on Rigorous and Engaging Content

- **Required content that provides a solid foundation for continued education or the workforce**
- **Learning activities requiring higher-order thinking, deep understanding of important ideas, critical self-reflection**
- **Emphasis on application of knowledge and skills rather than rote memorization**

Model Curricula

Assuring Quality and Consistent Curricula

To assure that consistent course content is presented throughout the state, model curricula will be provided for eight of the core course requirements: Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Statistics & Probability, Biological/Life Sciences, English I, English II and American History. Teaching and learning of 21st century skills will be integrated into each of the model curricula.

Additionally, the state will provide formative assessment instruments that compliment each model curriculum, to help teachers focus on student areas of need and modify instruction as needed.

Student Personalization

Addressing Each Student's Needs and Interests

Beginning in 6th grade and continuing through high school, each Connecticut student will participate in the development of a Student Success Plan. The plan incorporates the student's individual interests and abilities, and establishes an individualized program of study that will help every student stay interested in school and set and achieve post-high school educational and career goals.

Middle School Connections

Early Intervention and Easing the Transition from Middle School to High School

Beginning secondary school reform in 9th grade is clearly too late for many students. Specifically, this plan calls for "Early Warning" and student support systems, as well as Student Success Plans for every student, beginning in Grade 6; the creation of model Language Arts curriculum for Grades 6-8, linked to high school English Language Arts I and II; the creation of model curriculum in Scientific Inquiry and Experimentation for Grades 6-8; and joint common professional development for teachers in middle school and high school.

Middle school students will be required to complete an 8th Grade Portfolio or Demonstration Project, the exact details of which will be determined by each district based on state recommendations.

Technology

Offering New Ways to Experience Learning

Technology has an important role in this secondary school reform package for both students and teachers. The use of standard computer-based applications for practicing skills, gathering and analyzing information, producing a variety of products, conducting research on the Internet, and developing portfolios of best work are integral to the lifelong learning process for each student.

Teachers will need to become skilled in using technology to access student performance data to make better-informed instructional decisions. Teachers will use interactive applications for sharing units of study, lesson plans, student work, and online conversations about student performance. And finally, but of the utmost importance, teachers must use technology tools to advance learning. To accomplish these things, technology's use must be an integral part of professional development programs at the pre-service, school, district, regional, and state levels.

Excellent Teaching Practices

Assuring Excellent Teaching Through Pre-service Teacher Training and In-service Professional Development

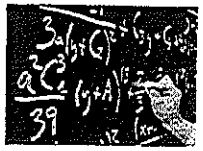
Excellent teaching must be prevalent throughout our schools. This Plan describes high expectations for pre-service teacher training and professional development of experienced teachers and administrators.

State institutions of higher education will help ensure that teacher training programs are preparing teachers in content areas and developmentally appropriate instructional best practices to meet the requirements of this proposal. In particular, higher education will find it necessary to produce larger numbers of certified mathematics, science, and world language teachers, and, at the same time, equip all new secondary teachers with the skills and competencies needed to be equally effective with early adolescent and adolescent students. Further, pre-service programs must stress, throughout their coursework and practicum experiences, the effective use of technology to advance learning.

Expert teachers will participate in the development of the designated model curricula, formative assessments, sample lessons, and final exams for the designated courses. The state will provide training programs for middle and high school mentor/advisors that will provide the instruction and guidance required by the Student Success Plan.

Curricular Requirements

Increasing Credits, Expanding Opportunities



To be prepared for success in college and the workplace, all students must acquire deep understanding in the core areas of English, mathematics, science, and social studies. Additionally, coursework in the fine arts, comprehensive health, and physical education will ensure that our students obtain a balanced and well-rounded education.

The Connecticut Plan requires all students to complete 25 credits. Students will also be required to complete a Capstone Experience, which is a culminating project that allows students to focus on an area of interest and demonstrate skills and understandings mapped to their Student Success Plans.

Recommended Course and Credit Requirements – Total 25 Credits

Cluster 1: Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) – Total 8 Credits

- Math – 4 Credits (Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II or Statistics & Probability, other mathematics)
- Science – 3 Credits (Biological/Life Science, Chemistry/Physical Science, other science)
- STEM Elective - 1 Credit (Science, Mathematics, Engineering or Technology)

Cluster 2: Humanities – Total 11 Credits

- English – 4 Credits (English I, English II, Literature and Composition - American, World, or British Literature, other English course or courses)
- Social Studies - 3 Credits (American History, International/World Studies, 1/2 Credit Civics, 1/2 Credit Social Studies Elective)
- World Languages - 2 Credits (*Note: Requirement may be completed in middle grades; if so, 2 additional "open elective" credits are required*)
- Fine Arts - 1 Credit (Art, Music, Theatre, Dance)
- Humanities Elective - 1 Credit (English, Social Science, Fine Arts or other Humanities courses)

Cluster 3: Career & Life Skills – Total 3.5 Credits

- Comprehensive Health Education - 1/2 credit
- Physical Education - 1 Credit
- Career & Life Skills Electives - 2 Credits (Career and Technical Education, World Languages, English as a Second Language, community service, or other career & life skills course such as Personal Finance, Public Speaking, and Nutrition & Physical Activity)

Open Electives – Total 1.5 Credits

Capstone Experience – Total 1 Credit

Though not included in the recommended course requirements, students have multiple opportunities to take courses with a specific career focus. These can be included in the Student's Success Plan to meet individual goals and interests.

Capstone Experience

Allowing Students to Demonstrate Skills and Pursue Personal Interests

The Capstone Experience is intended to be a culminating experience that provides a way for students to demonstrate knowledge and skills they have acquired during their educational experiences by creating a project in an area of personal interest. As part of the experience, students will demonstrate research skills and communicate findings in written and oral presentations reviewed by the public. The exact details of Capstone Experience requirements will be determined locally.

Capstone Experiences could include special projects, a reflective portfolio of best work, community service and internships. These experiences should demonstrate not only the rigor of what the student is able to do, but clearly provide evidence of 21st century skills attainment.