

Series 2001-2002
CIRCULAR LETTER C - 17

TO: Superintendents of Schools

FROM: Theodore S. Sergi,
Commissioner of Education

DATE: February 25, 2002

REF: Public School Choice Options

The Connecticut State Board of Education, through its Position Statement on Public School Choice, adopted on October 6, 1999, challenges each school district to ensure "the highest possible achievement level for every Connecticut student in a creative and flexible environment that values each student's unique abilities, talents, interests, learning styles and backgrounds." The Position Statement goes on to state that Choice programs, such as

- **magnet schools,**
- **charter schools,**
- **the OPEN CHOICE program,**
- **vocational agricultural centers** and
- **vocational-technical schools,**

directly and positively influence the level of both parental involvement and student motivation.

Connecticut General Statute Section 10-220d, *Student recruitment by regional and interdistrict specialized schools and programs*, specifically directs districts to provide full access for the recruitment of students attending district schools. To assist school districts with this mandate, and as part of the student recruitment programs of the magnet, charter and OPEN CHOICE programs, the Division of School Improvement has published "*Public School Choice in Connecticut, A Guide for Students and Their Families*" and provided copies to every school in the state.

In his Circular Letter C-17 of January 1999 (attached), the Commissioner wrote, "(Y)ou should arrange for printed material to be sent home to parents of children eligible for choice, magnet or charter school programs to be followed by an opportunity for the school or program to personally contact the family."

The Division of School Improvement, having oversight responsibility for Magnet and Charter Schools and for the OPEN CHOICE Program, recognizes that continual changes in school administration and local Boards of Education necessitate reiterating that each school district has the responsibility to ensure that full access is provided to choice school staff for the recruitment of students who can be best served by these educational choice options. Full access includes providing printed materials to parents and families.

Helping students match their interests with educational programs that are challenging, motivating and rigorous should be the goal of each district. If you have questions regarding this letter, please feel free to contact Joan Martin at 713-6591.

Attachment