

## Questions for State Board of Education Nominees

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### State Board of Education ([CGS §§ 10-1, 10-3a & 10-4](#))

- Consists of nine voting members who serve staggered four-year terms; the president of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities, the chairperson of the technical education and career system board, and the chief workforce officer, all of whom serve as nonvoting ex-officio members; and two nonvoting student members who serve one-year terms.
- Recommends a candidate for education commissioner to the governor.
- Has general supervision and control of the educational interests of the state, including preschool, elementary, and secondary education; special education; adult education; and vocational education. As defined by law, the educational interests of the state are to ensure that (1) each student has an equal opportunity to receive a suitable program of educational experiences; (2) each school district finances at a reasonable level, at least equal to the state's minimum expenditure requirement, an educational program designed to achieve this end; (3) in order to reduce racial, ethnic, and economic isolation, each school district provides educational opportunities for its students to interact with students and teachers from other racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds and may provide such opportunities with students from other communities; and (4) statutory mandates within the State Board of Education's (SBE) jurisdiction are implemented.
- Sets state educational policy in collaboration with the governor and the General Assembly; works with the State Department of Education (SDE), which serves as its administrative arm.
- Authorizes charter and interdistrict magnet schools.
- Adjudicates complaints against local boards of education that fail to implement the state's educational interests.

- Serves as the final administrative appeal board for issuing and revoking teaching certificates and other educational credentials needed to work in Connecticut public schools.

## Questions

1. What issues do you believe SBE should prioritize during your term?
2. How would you explain curriculum design to parents and guardians who have questions about the creation of public school curricula? What advice would you give to those who seek more input in the curriculum design and oversight process in their local district?
3. Last session, the legislature made significant changes to the teacher certification laws and created the Connecticut Education Preparation and Certification Board with a broad charge of developing proposals to update Connecticut's laws and regulations to attract and retain more educators. How will these laws affect the teacher shortage? How will SBE work with the newly created board to make further improvements? What else can be done to address the shortage?
4. This session, the legislature created a select committee on special education. One of the major issues schools face when serving this population of students is the shortage of special education teachers and paraprofessionals. What more can SBE and SDE do to attract and retain them? Do you have recommendations for what the committee should consider?
5. What role should SBE have in addressing students' social emotional development, especially in light of ongoing social and mental health issues following the post-COVID return to school?
6. In recent years, the legislature passed laws aimed at encouraging the recruitment and retention of teachers who are racial or ethnic minorities. What role do you think SBE should play in addressing this issue? Do you have additional legislative recommendations on this issue?
7. In recent years, the issue has grown over whether libraries and school districts should ban certain books as inappropriate for some age groups. Does SBE have a role in creating a policy for school districts to address requests to ban books in school libraries?
8. Connecticut public school students have been assessed using the Smarter Balanced Assessments and the Next Generation Science Standard Assessments for several years now. How has SBE used the data from these assessments to inform its policy? To your knowledge, has the board reviewed the usefulness of these assessments and their frequency?
9. Connecticut has an array of school choice options, ranging from the magnet schools to charter schools and Open Choice seats in participating districts. How should the state measure the success of these programs? Where is there room for improvement?

10. Last session, the legislature passed a law requiring the education commissioner to develop a plan to convert SBE to an advisory body and empower the commissioner to become department head ([PA 24-81](#), § 121). Under current law, SBE is the head of SDE, and it has the authority to recommend a candidate for commissioner to the governor for appointment. What impact do you think this change will have on public education in Connecticut?

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