



Is Past Really Prologue?: *Our Retrospective on 2011*



Only 19 More Shopping Days: *The Clock is Ticking on School Choice*



No More Sugar Coating: *CT's Real College-Going Data Revealed*

1 Is Past Really Prologue?

Our Retrospective on 2011



Here is our retrospective on the key 2011 Hartford education-related events.

The major themes last year were leadership transition and new approaches, as in the case of the Bulkeley High Teacher Prep students' commitment to read to young children throughout the city (see photo above left).

The 2011 transitions went **from**:

- A **Phase 1 superintendent** adamant about reshaping an entire school system . . . **to a successor launching Phase 2 with bold goals** like the 3rd Grade Reading Promise;
- A Mayor appointed by City Council . . . **to** a Mayor winning an election in landslide fashion, and expressing support for education in Hartford;



- Eleventh-hour [politics over the Superintendent succession](#) ... **to** a campaign by the new Superintendent to connect with the community through [public dialogue sessions](#);
- A [budget beginning with a \\$28 million shortfall](#) ... **to** one [balanced, through leadership and partnership](#) (but certainly not without pain);
- A marketing brouhaha over Hartford versus suburban magnet choice ... **to** a [new message about schools built on partnerships](#);
- A [slight slowing of the pace in student achievement gains](#) ... **to** an uptick in [graduation rates](#);
- The successful [implementation of School Governance Councils](#) in almost every school ... **to** a new compact for [reforming teacher evaluation in Hartford](#); and
- One Governor ... **to** a new one, who, with his [break-the-mold Education Commissioner](#) – now has promises to keep.

Throughout all of these transitions (as well as our own leadership change), Achieve Hartford! has remained focused on informing and engaging the community in ways that drive accountability. For reviews of some of these activities, see our:

- Recap of the [Community Input Sessions](#), in which stakeholders described the attributes and qualifications for a new Superintendent;



- [Data reports](#) on the State test results for Grade 3-8 and for Grade 10 students;
- [Evaluation reports](#) on our 2011 Choice Education Program and on the evolution of School Governance Councils;
- [Emphasis to the Mayor](#) about the critical importance of the caliber of the Board of Education – and each of his five forthcoming appointments; and
- The forum on [the status Hartford holds in the national school reform picture](#), especially as a portfolio district increasingly geared to school choice.

As much as 2011 was about leadership transitions ... 2012 seems destined to be about results.

2 Only 19 More Shopping Days

The Clock Is Ticking on School Choice

There are just 19 days before the Hartford Public Schools' deadline on school choice – and only eight before the state's Regional School Choice Office RSCO lottery deadline.

It's all about getting the information you need and submitting your application(s) on time.

[Click here for the RSCO information](#) and [here for the Hartford Public Schools](#). For personal assistance, please email [Lourdes Fonseca](#) at Achieve Hartford! or call 860-244-3333.

3 No More Sugar Coating

CT's Real College-Going Data Revealed

As if lackluster rates of graduation weren't sobering enough, the State Board of Regents has a double whammy: College enrollment isn't all it was cracked up to be.

The statewide four-year graduation rate of 81.8 percent in 2010 compares with a 59.8 percent rate in Hartford – but that proportion slips to 50.6 percent for Hispanic students, 48.8 percent for English Language Learners, and 40.8 for special education students. The school-level rates fluctuate from a high of 98 percent at University High School to a low of 47 percent at the Hartford Public High School Law and Government Academy.

Equally distressing, the number of CT students who actually enroll in college is lower than what students first report – 41 percent – and at least a third of the students who did enroll earned neither a 30-credit certificate nor an Associate's degree after six years. See the [CT Mirror coverage and links here](#).



Upcoming EVENTS



- **Special Hartford Board of Education Meeting** (rescheduled), Thursday, January 12, 2012, 6 p.m., in the Superintendent's Conference Room, 960 Main Street. The meeting will include a workshop session on Common Core Standards followed by an Executive Session (Mid-Year Review).
- **Hartford Parent Organizing Council Parent Retreat Open to All City Parents**, Saturday, January 14, 2012, 8:30 to 1 p.m. (breakfast and lunch will be served), Rawson School, 260 Holcomb Street.
- **Regular Hartford Board of Education Meeting**, Tuesday, January 17, 2012, 5:30 p.m., America's Choice at SAND School, 1750 Main Street.
- **Leading up to the January 20, 2012 [Regional School Choice Office \(RSCO\)](#) lottery application deadline:** Staff from the Greater Hartford Regional Choice Office (RSCO) will be available to provide technical assistance on school choice at the Hartford Public Library, 500 Main Street, in Study Room 6 on the second floor. Dates and times are January 9 (that Monday, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.); January 10 and 17 (these Tuesdays, from 3 to 8 p.m.); January 14 (that Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.); and on January 8 and 15 (these Sundays, from 1 to 5 p.m.).
- **Leading up to the January 31, 2011 Hartford School Choice Deadline:** Please [click here for the application as well as information](#) on when to obtain assistance at schools.
- **2012 Yale Education Leadership Conference**, Friday March 23, 2012, Omni Hotel, 155 Temple Street, New Haven. [Agenda](#) topics include the Teacher Talent Pipeline, The Future of School Choice, and Mandatory Pre-K; [click here to register](#).



News Articles of Interest



- [Malloy Frames Education Reforms as Human Rights Issue](#), Mark Pazniokas, CT Mirror, January 11, 2012
- [Hartford's Capital Prep Close to \\$100 K in Scholarships](#), Vanessa de la Torre, Courant, January 11, 2012
- [Commissioner Stefan Pryor, interviewed by John Dankosky on the WNPR Program "Where We Live"](#), January 10, 2012
- [Pryor Seeking Ethic Opinion on Potential Conflict](#), Kathleen Megan, Courant, January 9, 2012
- [Teachers Deserve Better](#), Gene Budig and Alan Heaps, Charleston Gazette-Op-Ed, January 9, 2012
- [Former Spokesman for State Dept. of Ed. Dies After Battle with Cancer](#), Hilary Federico, January 8, 2012
- [Innovative Programs Can Support School Reform Goals](#), Marlene Ibsen, Courant-Op-Ed, January 7, 2012
- [Reforming Education: 'This is Our Moment,' Says Malloy](#), Kathleen Megan, Courant, January 5, 2012
- [Malloy: More Money Needed for Education](#), Jacqueline Rabe Thiommas, CT Mirror, January 5, 2012



Best Bookmarks



- [Quality Counts 2012](#), Education Week, January 12, 2012
The Global Challenge: Education in a Competitive World
- [The School Principal As Leader](#), Wallace Foundation, January 2012
Guiding Schools to Better Teaching and Learning