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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Consolidated School District of New Britain to be a potential beneficiary of proposed bill that would enroll minority students in a teacher preparation program under a pilot program

NEW BRITAIN, CONNECTICUT – A public hearing will be held on Wednesday, March 2 as the State of Connecticut Education Committee, in consultation with the Board of Regents for Higher Education, is proposing to establish and administer a teacher pathways pilot program to encourage and recruit minority students to pursue a career in education.

According to the proposed bill, which will take effect on July 1, 2016, minority students under the pilot program who are enrolled in a high school located in a participating school district shall enroll in courses in the teacher preparation program offered at the partnering state universities for college credit.

The proposed bill states that the Department of Education and the Board of Regents for Higher Education shall coordinate such teacher preparation courses between the participating school districts and state universities and provide minority students with access to postsecondary education in such teacher preparation programs, including financial assistant awarded under the Governor's Scholarship program, pursuant to section 10a-173 of the general statutes.

The Board of Education for the New Britain School District will be one of the beneficiaries of this pilot program in partnership with Central Connecticut State University. Other beneficiaries include the Board of Education for the New Haven School District in partnership with Southern Connecticut State University and the Board of Education for the Windham School District in partnership with Eastern Connecticut State University. These universities, according to the proposed bill, shall expend funds appropriated to such state universities for minority student recruitment for purposes of implementing the pilot program.

Nancy Sarra, who will take over as superintendent on April 1, is looking forward to the partnership with Central Connecticut State University and the opportunity to provide minority students with this great opportunity.

“This is an amazing opportunity not only for our students but for our school district as a whole. I am excited to strengthen our partnership with Central Connecticut State University. It will provide support for our minority student population as they pursue education in a post-secondary setting. And of course, it is our hope that they come home to give back to their community. It has been a priority of our Board Members and Staff in New Britain to strengthen our Strategic Plan to create a diverse talent pipeline for both students and staff.”

Sharon Beloin-Saavedra, president of the New Britain Board of Education, said that the New Britain Board of Education is committed to the recruitment and retention of certified minority staff.

“Several years ago, we established a ‘grow our own’ partnership with CCSU whereby NBHS students take a college level credit bearing exploratory course in education. For one semester, students participate in our high school level Teacher Cadet course and for another semester, students participate in the college course. This bill seeks to bring our partnership to the next level – creating a direct enrollment pipeline from high school to college. The New Britain Board of Education believes it is important for our students to see themselves in our adult educators and role models. I am currently serving on CBE's diversity task force and this is one of our priorities. I am hopeful our State legislators will see the value of this

bill and pass it. I want to thank Rep. Bobby Sanchez for bringing this issue forward in the Legislative Committee on Education."

State Representative Bobby Sanchez (D-New Britain), who is the vice-chairman of the Education Committee, believes the pilot program will lead to more minority teachers in the state of Connecticut.

"I have heard from several sources that recruiting minority teachers in our state can be challenging. This pilot program would be a pathway and an incentive to high school students interested in the teaching profession to prepare for Connecticut's teaching programs. I am encouraged by this public hearing on my proposal and the possibility of expanding the number of partnering schools in the near future so more high school students can participate."

The proposed bill defines minority students as those whose race is defined as other than white, or whose ethnicity is defined as Hispanic or Latino by the federal Office of Management and Budget for use by the Bureau of Census of the United States Department of Commerce. The public hearing will be held on Wednesday, March 2 at 10:30 AM in Room 2C of the Legislative Office Building at the State Capitol in Hartford, Connecticut.

About the Consolidated School District of New Britain

The Consolidated School District of New Britain features 17 sites housing 19 programs with over 10,000 students throughout the city. The mission of the district is to provide a rigorous and relevant, high-quality, research-based, data-driven education that meets the intellectual, physical, moral, and social developmental needs of every child.

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