



Ned Lamont
Governor
Susan Bysiewicz
Lt. Governor

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD



February 11, 2022

Larry Schall, Ph.D.
President, New England Commission of Higher Education
3 Burlington Woods Drive, Suite 100
Burlington, MA 01803-4514

Dear Dr. Schall and Members of the New England Commission of Higher Education,

Over the last several years, the Office of Early Childhood has partnered with the CSCU system office and its twelve community colleges to enhance early childhood education programs and expand the colleges' Lab Schools that serve young children. These programs provide an invaluable asset to the state. Our success has been possible because of systemwide leadership and a consistent vision and set of priorities, as well as consistent operating procedures across campuses. Working with CT State as a single entity will maximize our efforts to engage campus leaders, childcare staff and early childhood faculty and students.

As one of the state's primary agencies serving low-income families, we welcome the opportunity to have a streamlined approach to working with what will be one of Connecticut's largest institutions for higher education with 12 campus that offer customized access in every corner of the state.

As a former State Senator and chair of both the Appropriations Committee and the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee, I am well aware of the fiscal challenges facing the community colleges and their underperformance on completion, retention, and recruitment efforts compared to their New England peer institutions. This is despite the years of hard work by dedicated faculty, staff and administrators. I am also well aware of the difficulty in making a structural change of this magnitude. I believe the community college consolidation will also allow the colleges to stabilize and focus on its mission with renewed energy. Through CT State Community College, I am confident we can sustain and grow programs in early childhood education and explore other partnerships for the benefit of young children in our state.

Sincerely,

Beth Bye
Commissioner
Office of Early Childhood