

**Connecticut Department of Education**

Reading Leadership Implementation Council Meeting

September 19, 2023

1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

**Present:**

- Dr. Michael Coyne, Department Head Educational Psychology and Co-Director for the Center for Behavioral Education and Research (CBER), NEAG School of Education, UCONN
- Dr. Margie Gillis, Founder and President, Literacy How, Inc.
- Ms. Kim Healy, Wilton, CT
- Mr. Steven Hernandez Esq., Executive Director, Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity & Opportunity (CWCSEO)
- Dr. Tamu Lucero, Superintendent, Stamford Public Schools
- Ms. Frances Rabinowitz, Executive Director, Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS)
- Ms. Bianca Rivera, Former Teacher, Fairfield and Bridgeport Public Schools
- Ms. Lisa Thomas, Retired Educator

**Facilitator:**

Dr. Melissa K. Wlodarczyk Hickey, Director of the Center for Literacy Research & Reading Success (Center), Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE).

**Staff Present:**

- Ms. Irene E. Parisi, Chief Academic Officer, Connecticut State Department of Education
- Mrs. Katyria Rivera, Administrative Assistant, Connecticut State Department of Education
- Mrs. Cody Fusco, Associate Education Consultant, Connecticut State Department of Education
- Ms. Candice Laconti, Associate Education Consultant, Connecticut State Department of Education
- Ms. Deirdre Savarese, Associate Education Consultant, Connecticut State Department of Education

**I. Welcome with Roll Call and Introductions of New Members**

The Council's facilitator Dr. Melissa Wlodarczyk Hickey, Director of the Center, CSDE, convened the meeting at 1:05 p.m. and the Council's Clerk called attendance. Dr. Hickey welcomed the Council and introduced two new members to the council Dr. Tamu Lucero,

Superintendent, Stamford Public Schools and Bianca Rivera, Teacher, Fairfield Public Schools.

## **II. Approval of Minutes from May 16, 2023, and June 20, 2023**

Lisa Thomas made a motion to approve the May 16, 2023, minutes and Stephen Hernandez, Esq. seconded the motion. Dr. Margie Gillis made a motion to approve June 20, 2023, minutes, and Executive Director Rabinowitz seconded the motion. No questions or concerns were raised.

## **III. Purpose and Goals of the CT Reading Leadership Implementation Council**

Dr. Hickey gave an overview of the 2023–24 Council Goals. Dr. Hickey made a motion to remove the draft mark on the 2023–24 Council goals and adopt the Council goals for 2023–24. All approved. Dr. Coyne asked a question to clarify if the goals are for the Council or for the Center as he is concerned it may be a heavy lift for Council members. Dr. Hickey clarified that the Council goals are for the Council and will be accomplished together.

## **IV. Update on Draft Center Goals**

Dr. Coyne and Executive Director Rabinowitz shared the work of the small group in creating the draft Connecticut 2023–30 K–3 Statewide Literacy Plan. Dr. Coyne felt the document contained comprehensive goals. Both felt the creation process was informative and collaborative. Executive Director Rabinowitz felt they received answers to their clarifying questions.

Dr. Hickey shared the draft Connecticut 2023–30 K–3 Statewide Literacy Plan. The draft Connecticut 2023–30 K–3 Statewide Literacy Plan shall be shared with Council members for their review. Dr. Hickey reminded the Council to address all edits to her. She shall collect them to share at the November meeting.

The draft Connecticut 2023–30 K–3 Statewide Literacy Plan shall be sent to the CSDE Communications Department for their review and to add graphics.

Ms. Thomas asked if the Council was going to be provided with a list of schools receiving grant funding. Dr. Hickey explained all districts are eligible to receive the ARPA-Right to Read Grant and discussed the difference between the ARPA-Right to Read Grant and the ARP ESSER-Right to Read Small Town Grant. Ms. Thomas asked about the distribution formula. Dr. Hickey shared that the information can be found on the Center website. The ARP-ESSA Grant is not open yet, but is targeted towards smaller towns with a total population of less than 1,000 students.

Executive Director Rabinowitz mentioned that she has received calls from superintendents as they are not sure on how to write their grant as they do not know the outcome of their waiver. Dr. Hickey advised her to have the districts contact her. She has been meeting with districts and charter schools and has been advising them to either wait to complete the ARPA-Right to

Read Grant application until after the district receives their waiver results or indicate in their open-ended questions and budget lines that they have submitted a waiver and that they shall utilize the funds to purchase CT approved, core comprehensive K-3 reading programs and curriculum models and vendor associated professional learning based on the outcome of the waiver application process.

**V. New Business: Hanover Research Resource Review, Irene Parisi, Chief Academic Officer, CSDE**

Ms. Parisi shared the documents from Hanover Research including guidance for districts on piloting curricula and programs. The information includes templates to support districts with piloting, executing, and evaluating their next steps on how to use their curricula.