

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford**

Accountability and Support Committee Meeting

Estela Lopez, Chairperson
Charles Jaskiewicz III
Patricia M. Keavney-Maruca

July 30, 2014, 10 -11:30 am

**Minutes of Meeting
(Approved 12.12.14)**

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State and posted on the State Department of Education's Web site, the State Board of Education Accountability and Support Committee met on July 30, 2014, in room 307A of the State Office Building, 165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut.

I. Call to Order

Chairwoman Estela Lopez called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m. Present were Dr. Lopez, and Patricia M. Keavney-Maruca (via telephone). Charles Jaskiewicz was absent.

Also present for all or part of the meeting from the CSDE were Commissioner Stefan Pryor, Mr. Morgan Barth, Pamela Charland, Nassir Qadree, Kelly Mero, Megan Alubicki, Michael Kent and Sallie Toussaint.

II. Update on Commissioner's Network

Mr. Morgan Barth introduced himself and welcomed the Committee. Mr. Morgan then stated he has had continuous reflection of the phenomenal opportunities where there were none before. He began the Program Overview by noting that the Commissioner's Network programming has growth and evolved in the two years since the inception of the Network. The improvements include school improvement and major collaboration by visiting schools bi-monthly, conducting mid-year audits and having quarterly meetings. Substantial principal and school leadership programs have also been implemented such as LEAD CT, as well as intensive training and planning over the summer. In addition, meetings with stake holders in the communities (Waterbury was used as an example in this success) and visiting schools nationally that had impoverished systems with low performance, but turned around their schools were also a great learning experience for the Turnaround Office. A holistic approach is recommended for results.

Mr. Barth also noted that the work of school turnaround is very complicated and that some schools are not yet on target to meet their goals. Mr. Barth spoke of Waterbury re-starting the Turnaround Committee process at Crosby High School and the need to change plans at Dunbar and Milner schools which were previously managed by FUSE.

Commissioner Pryor then complemented Mr. Barth and Sarah Barzee on their consorted efforts to put in these key parts and have high quality results in improvements. He also stated that the big idea or “Mantra” of the school is very important.

Chairperson Lopez stated that she had concerns with perceptions of how things are being handled. She suggested that next meeting there should be people who have had experiences of successful results give their advice and testimonies.

Mr. Barth stated that some of the results of 2013-2014 were great and some were disappointing and surprising. Partnership improvements are being implements to bring fruitful results to schools. For example Wilbur Cross using dual language provided by International Schools has been successful.

Commissioner Pryor stated that there are two major thresholds. The first is reached because we are better involved with schools. The second is not reached yet because if each of the schools has higher standards, they will all do better.

Mr. Barth continued his presentation by stating that the Commissioner’s Network and SIG Schools are treated the same and will all be a part of the Commissioner’s Network services.

Patricia M. Keavney-Maruca on the phone then asked about progress in Waterbury. Mr. Barth then replied that he would get back to her on that.

CREC was mentioned of successfully helping schools that need a lift; CREC is working with the Clark School in Hartford; and CES is working with Marin in Bridgeport. These are two examples of RESCs participating in school turnaround.

Mr. Barth showed data on attendance, suspensions and academic performance at all 11 Network schools. He said the purpose of reviewing data is not just to monitor but to find best practices that can be replicated across the Network.

III. Alliance Districts

Mr. Barth explained the systems of support in place for the Alliance Districts such quarterly progress monitoring, quarterly Alliance Convening and the support of a Turnaround Office. The quarterly Convenings have been an opportunity for the leadership of all 30 districts to come together to discuss best practices. This has been a venue for CSDE leadership and outside experts to present best practices in district improvement.

Mr. Barth walked through the grants that have been distributed to turnaround schools across the 30 districts. The CSDE distributed the following awards:

- 1003(a) Title I School Improvement Grants
- 1003(g) Title I School Improvement Grants
- Commissioner’s Network Grants
- High School Design Bond Money

Mr. Barth concluded that the work of summer was to build better systems. Mr. Barth also said he wanted to end on a note of celebration; he shared the list of the 2013 Schools of Distinction.

Dr. Lopez stated that the Turnaround Office should do more to explain what is working in schools and districts and more to share best practices with the Board and with the state.

IV. **Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted: *Sallie Toussaint*
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