

## Connecticut State Board of Education

Hartford

Minutes of the Academic Standards and Assessment Committee Meeting  
Monday, November 18, 2019

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State, the Academic Standards and Assessment Committee met on Monday, November 18, 2019, at the State Department of Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Hartford, Connecticut.

### Call to Order

Committee Chair Erik Clemons called the meeting to order at 9:39 a.m.

Present: Allan Taylor  
Erik Clemons

Absent: Estela López

Staff Present: Ajit Gopalakrishnan  
Cristi Alberino  
David Alexandro  
Melissa Hickey  
Jennifer Michalek  
Renee Savoie

#### I. Approval of the Minutes of February 25, 2019 Academic Standards and Assessment Committee Meeting.

Mr. Alan Taylor moved, Mr. Clemons seconded, that the committee approved the minutes of the February 25, 2019, Academic Standards and Assessment Committee meeting.

Vote:	In Favor:	Clemons, Taylor
	Abstained:	0
	Absent:	Estela López

Motion carried.

#### II. Introduction of individuals in attendance.

Melissa Hickey, Reading/Literacy Director, gave a brief overview on the draft Digital Citizenship, Internet Safety, and Media Literacy Guidelines. She explained that a diverse group of stakeholders was appointed to the Digital Citizenship, Internet Safety, and Media Literacy Advisory Council mandated by State statute. The Council developed these guidelines to assist school districts in building a comprehensive learning system that explicitly supports the safe, ethical, responsible, and effective use of media and technology resources.

She noted that many students do not realize that any information posted on social media is a permanent 'tattoo'. Given the composition of the Council, definitions included in the guidelines are aligned with definitions put forth by the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) and the International Society for Technology Education (ISTE). Mr. Allan Taylor suggested that the Board discuss and potentially adopt the guidelines at a future meeting and eventually disseminate the guidelines to local school boards and superintendents. He recommended changing responsibilities to recommended actions. Mr. Clemons suggested addressing how to handle freedom of speech issues, possibly in the next iteration of these guidelines.

- III. FAFSA completion updates were given by Dr. David Alexandro. He noted that completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) is an important step in the path to postsecondary education and is associated with higher rates of college enrollment. Therefore, the CSDE, in partnership with the Office of Higher Education (OHE) is providing districts with secure access to student-level information regarding FAFSA completion. He also mentioned that the CSDE is offering a webinar focused on FAFSA completion on November 19, 2019. The webinar will be recorded and posted to the CSDE website. Presenters from two districts will review ways for schools to encourage students to complete the FAFSA and provide support in completing the task. Based on the latest available data, 25% of grade 12 students have already submitted the FAFSA. The FAFSA data will be updated weekly for schools. These data are as close to real-time as any data provided to districts/schools by CSDE. Mr. Clemons commented that FAFSA completion is a primary reason that many students do not pursue college. There has been limited guidance provided to these students and the FAFSA process can be a daunting.
- IV. Dr. Renee Savoie explained that the Summer Melt research project, referred to as Text4College, will use a text messaging intervention designed to help students transition from high school graduation to enrollment in post-secondary education. Additionally, one component of the study will be designed to determine whether the intervention can also support persistence in college. Dr. Savoie noted the importance of a strong partnership between the CSDE and the CSCU system. The CSDE will assist with school recruitment. Participating schools will collect email addresses from every Grade 12 student, and the American Institutes for Research (AIR) will email a survey link to all seniors. The brief 15-minute survey, to be completed during the school day, will ask students about their intentions after graduation. If a student indicates that the plan is to attend a 2- or 4-year public college in Connecticut, additional survey questions are administered. Seniors this year and next year will be followed in this research. The text messages sent to students in the treatment group will be customized based on the school that the student will be attending since colleges have different requirements and deadlines. Likewise, the support provided to students who request it will also be differentiated.

One possible reason for non-matriculation is that students cannot afford college. Universities are now assisting students who are first generation students. They are beginning to ask--How do we support these kids? Mr. Gopalakrishnan stated that schools should be supporting students as they transition from one institution to another (e.g., middle school to high school, high school to college).

- V. Interim Assessment/ Lexile and Quantiles were presented by Cristi Alberino and Jennifer Michalek. It was noted the summative assessment and interim assessment blocks are all built from the same item pool. Therefore, items selected for inclusion in the interim assessment system are high quality. The development process for an item takes about a year and a half. Interim assessment items are not secure, but they are not public. These items are not accessible to parents, but there are resources for parents posted on the CSDE Comprehensive Assessment Program Portal so that parents can gain an understanding of what students are expected to do when taking Smarter Balanced. Teachers can use the interim assessment blocks to see how students are doing during the school year. The system is very user friendly. Teachers can download items and student responses and the items can be used in a multitude of ways to identify areas where students may need additional instruction and support and to help teachers design their instruction to meet those needs. The end of year summative assessment is not meant to provide that type of feedback. The interim system incorporates automated scoring, so it gives immediate feedback. Use of the interims is not mandated. If schools choose to use it, they can. The system is designed to be flexible, but most importantly it is free.

The Lexile and Quantile measures were explained as an enhancement to Smarter Balanced summative reporting. Teachers and parents can use the Lexile measure to identify books that are of high interest and appropriate difficulty for students. Quantile measures can be used to target mathematics instruction and support for students based on what the student likely already understands and what the student is ready to learn in the future. Cristi showed where to find the free online resources designed for use by educators and families.

Mr. Clemons recommended dates be sent out for upcoming meetings in 2020.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00a.m., Mr. Taylor motioned and Mr. Clemons seconded.