

Connecticut State Board of Education

Hartford

Minutes of the Academic Standards and Assessment Committee Meeting
Monday, November 16, 2020
(Approved February 9, 2021)

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State and posted on the agency's website, the Academic Standards and Assessment Committee (hereinafter "Committee") met virtually on Monday, November 16, 2020 via GoToMeeting. This virtual meeting was [livestreamed](#).

Dr. Estela López called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Present: Estela López
Erin Benham
Awilda Reasco
Malia K. Sieve

Absent: Erik Clemons, Chair
Martha Paluch Prou

Staff Present: Ajit Gopalakrishnan, Chief Performance Officer
Irene Parisi, Chief Academic Officer
Dr. Melissa Hickey, Directory of Literacy/Reading
Dr. Gladys Labas, Director of Equity and Language
Stephen Armstrong, Social Studies Consultant

Guests Present: Ingrid Canady, SERC
Nitza Diaz, SERC
Paquita Jarman-Smith, SERC
Michelle LeBrun-Griffin, SERC

I. Members introduced themselves at the start of the meeting.

II. Approval of Minutes

Ms. Awilda Reasco made the motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Malia Sieve seconded. All voted in favor. Zero opposed. Motion carried.

III. African American/Black and Puerto Rican/Latino Course of Studies

After an introduction by Chief Academic Officer Irene Parisi and Director of Equity and Language, Dr. Gladys Labas, staff from SERC updated committee members on the development of this curriculum and answered many of their questions.

Ms. Paquita Jarman-Smith presented on the units in Semester One: African American/Black History. She gave an overview on the content of the various units and reviewed the framework for each unit, including the learning objectives, the lesson sequence, the materials/resources, and the embedded assessments.

Ms. Nitza Diaz presented on Semester Two: Focus on Puerto Rican/Latino History. She reviewed Unit 4 in depth which is focused on Resistance and Defiance. Topics addressed in this unit, include the Haitian revolution and its impact on other Latin American

countries; revolt, defiance, and resistance from Spain; Puerto Rican resistance and defiance throughout history; and Latino resistance in the USA.

Several individuals affirmed that the content of this course is important not only for students of color but for all students. Social Studies Consultant Steve Armstrong reiterated that the course is designed to be valuable for all students. He spoke about ways the course could be situated within a school and communicated to all educators to increase the likelihood for students to be able to fit this course within their school schedule. He also stressed the importance of professional learning opportunities for teachers so they are well prepared to teach the content and facilitate the difficult conversations that are likely to occur in this course.

Ms. Michelle LeBrun-Griffin concluded the SERC presentation by reviewing a variety of implementation considerations and next steps. Committee members and others were unanimously in favor of the curriculum, the important topics it raised, and the critical need for all students in Connecticut to have the opportunity to participate in an in-depth course on these vital matters. Ms. Awilda Reasco recommended that students of all backgrounds who really want access to this course should come to the State Board meeting and publicly voice their support.

In closing Dr. Estela López stated that the committee fully supports moving the curriculum ahead to the full State Board of Education for approval at its December 2 meeting.

- VI. The meeting was adjourned at 11:09 a.m.
Motion to adjourn Ms. Awilda Reasco. Seconded by Dr.López.

Prepared by: Shondel Edwards