

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Legislation and Bylaws Committee

September 2, 2009
8:30 a.m.
State Office Building
Hartford, CT

MINUTES

Members Present

Janet Finneran, John Voss, Kathleen O'Connor, Hunter Kodama

Staff Present

Mark McQuillan, Pamela Bergin, Tom Murphy, Barbara Beaudin, Jennifer Widness and Janice Dinnall

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:34 a.m.

Minutes of Last Meeting

The July 1, 2009 meeting minutes were approved with no changes.

Overview of Committee's Role and Discussion Regarding Supporting Documentation for 2010 Legislative Proposals

Commissioner McQuillan provided a brief overview of the Committee's Role for the Committee's new member, Kathleen O'Connor, by describing the process in which the Board's legislative proposals would be adopted for the 2010 legislative session. The Commissioner briefly reviewed the binder of materials presented to the Committee members at the meeting, which included a brief summary of each legislative proposal as well as background materials to support each proposal. The decision was made that the Department's Administrative Council would discuss these proposals at its meeting on September 8th and then a joint meeting would be held of the Legislative and Bylaws Committee as well as the Policy Committee on September 21st to select approximately the proposals to pursue during the next legislative session.

In selecting the proposals for the 2010 legislative session, the Commissioner noted that the Board should keep in mind the Race to the Top selection criteria and requirements.

Jay Voss suggested that for the purposes of the discussion on September 21st, it would be helpful to know the fiscal impact (if any) of each proposal. Mrs. O'Connor suggested it would be helpful to know whether any of these proposals aligned with the priorities of other stakeholders.

Jennifer Widness briefly described a few of the proposals, including changing the cut-off date for admission to kindergarten, which is currently January 1st of the school year. Connecticut is one of only five states whose admission date is later than December 1st. The Commissioner noted that the proposal suggests that the change be phased in over five years, so that every year the date would be pushed back by one month.

The Commissioner spoke briefly about the Race to the Top application and some of the legislative changes that may be required for Connecticut's application, in order for it to be competitive, such as allowing for more charter schools, changing teacher evaluations, and the need to pass the secondary school reform plan. Mr. Voss suggested that for the purpose of the September 21st meeting, it would be helpful to understand the Department's priorities in order to help guide the discussion. Mrs. O'Connor suggested that the Committee should consider which proposals are feasible and it should work to narrow the list down to the five most critical proposals.

Legislative Update

Ms. Widness provided a brief legislative update. She noted that the legislature passed a budget on September 1st and that Brian Mahoney would provide a more extensive update to the full Board during the meeting. The legislature will be adopting an implementer bill sometime in the next few weeks and that bill will likely include language to establish a new teacher mentoring program, to replace the old BEST program. Ms. Widness noted that the Governor vetoed \$450,000 for Community Plans for Early Childhood, a new line item that was appropriated to the Department.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 a.m.