

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford**

POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Janet M. Finneran, Chair
Lynne S. Farrell
Patricia B. Luke

Minutes of August 4, 2009, Committee Meeting

Call to Order

Chairperson Janet Finneran called the meeting to order at 10:23 a.m. The meeting was held at the Department's Middletown Office, Room #MCR 3, Industrial Park Road, Middletown, Connecticut.

Ms. Finneran and Mrs. Patricia Luke were present. Dr. Lynne S. Farrell was absent. Also in attendance were Commissioner Mark K. McQuillan, Deputy Commissioner George A. Coleman, Assistant to the Commissioner Pamela Bergin, Associate Commissioner Charlene Russell-Tucker, Associate Commissioner Marion Martinez, Associate Commissioner Barbara Beaudin, Bureau Chief Mark Linabury and Bureau Chief Deborah Richards.

Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Mrs. Luke, seconded by Ms. Finneran, the committee approved the minutes of the June 3, 2009, Policy Development Committee meeting.

Position Statement on Public School Choice

Associate Commissioner Russell-Tucker and Bureau Chief Linabury highlighted the changes to the draft statement. Mrs. Luke questioned the difference between an interdistrict magnet school and an interdistrict grant program. Mr. Linabury explained that there are 60 magnet schools across the state, serving students on a full-time basis. The interdistrict competitive grant programs include part-time initiatives within a school designed to bring together students from different school districts for a specified project/program.

Ms. Finneran recommended that the words "needs and" follow the word "educational" in the first sentence of the first paragraph. She noted that she found the reference to "Hartford Region Only" in the third paragraph awkward and asked if it could be clarified.

Mr. Coleman suggested that the description of the choice programs not be included in the position statement. The Committee concurred. The Committee agreed that this statement, with the edits noted, should be presented to the full Board for its discussion at the September 2, 2009, State Board of Education meeting.

Position Statement on Measuring Success

Associate Commissioner Beaudin introduced the proposed changes to the statement. Mrs. Luke recommended that the words "and productive" precede the word "lives" in the last sentence of the first paragraph. She also asked the staff revisit the word "facets" in the last sentence of the second paragraph.

Ms. Finneran recommended that the word "most" in the first sentence of the first paragraph under "Setting Standards" be removed. She asked that the phrase "measures of opportunities" on page 2, third paragraph, be clarified, and that the last sentence of the statement, under "Improving Instruction" be edited to clarify what the "the most important step" is concerning use of information.

Mrs. Luke recommended that the first paragraph of the second page be edited (groups of students of different genders, races, economic status, etc., are being reduced).

Mrs. Luke and Ms. Finneran agreed that the section titled "Cautions" be edited by removing the language beginning with "There is a danger that..." through "In addition,". The last sentence would read: No one assessment – state or local – should be the sole basis for promotion, graduation or other important decisions in the education of a student."

Mrs. Luke asked that under "Reporting Results," the following sentence be omitted: "When and where appropriate...district's performance."

This statement will be presented to the Committee after edits have been made.

Revised Statement on English Language Learners

Associate Commissioner Marion Martinez and Bureau Chief Deborah Richards introduced the proposed changes to the draft statement.

Mrs. Luke asked why we refer to "early childhood through Grade 12" in the beginning paragraph, and "kindergarten through Grade 12" on page 2.

It was noted that the title of the statement should be changed to the effect of "Position Statement on the Education of..." or "Position Statement on Programs that Serve Students Who are English Language Learners."

Ms. Finneran questioned the word "meet" in the second paragraph, second sentence. She added that the second bullet under ESL Programming should appear as the first bullet if presented as the primary goal of ESL.

Mrs. Luke suggested that the first sentence under "Bilingual Programming" be reworded to clarify what is intended (also in last paragraph), and the first two bullets under "Bilingual programs will:" should be rewritten to present language development and content learning in English as the primary goal.

Committee members asked that this statement be brought back to the Committee for further discussion.

Draft Position Statement on Educational Leadership

Associate Commissioner Martinez introduced the proposed changes to the statement, noting that CAS had reviewed it.

Ms. Finneran questioned "shared decision-making authority," noting that the leader must be held accountable. Mrs. Luke stated that the concept of a "team" is important, though.

The committee agreed that the statement should be rewritten to focus on what constitutes of effective leadership and recommended that Department staff review policy briefs on leadership written by NASBE. Discussion ensued, including school leaders having strong skills in finance (of the public education system), team building and effective communication.

Dr. Martinez will rewrite the draft statement, and present it to the Committee at a future meeting.

Review of 2008-09 Work and Schedule of Topics, August-December 2009

The Committee reviewed its accomplishment during the past year, and reviewed statements for consideration for the duration of calendar year 2009. Commissioner McQuillan noted that additional time is needed to address the use of the 6.25% indirect funds by the RESCs, and that the statement on "entry age for kindergarten" will be considered via legislation at some point in the future.

The Committee agreed to continue meeting at the conclusion of regular State Board of Education meetings; a decision would be reached at noontime on meeting dates to determine if time allowed the committee to meet that afternoon. If the committee finds itself falling behind or determines there is a need to discuss the policy implications of the Board's legislative proposals, it would schedule a special meeting to do so.

Adjourn

By unanimous consent, the meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Prepared by: Pamela V. Bergin

