

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
Hartford**

**Ad Hoc Committee to Study Education Cost Sharing  
and Choice Funding**

**Minutes of June 28, 2010, Committee Meeting**

I. Welcome and Introductions

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of State, Chairman Taylor called the meeting to order at 9:36 a.m. The meeting was held in Room 307, State Department of Education, 165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut. Mr. Taylor welcomed the committee. Members and designees, and those in attendance introduced themselves.

Committee members present: Joseph Brennan; Jared Schmitt, designee for State Representative Vincent Candelora; Sharon Palmer, HFT; Sherri DiNello, School Business Officials; Kachina Walsh-Weaver, designee for James Finley of CCM; Leah Grenier, designee for Kathy Guay of OPM; State Representative Deborah Heinrich, Jennifer Alexander Harmon, designee for Alex Johnston of CONNCan; Patrice McCarthy, CAFE; Fred McKinney, Northeast Minority Supplier Development Council; Mark Waxenberg, designee for John Yrchik of CEA; Commissioner of Education Mark McQuillan; State Board of Education Member Theresa Hopkins-Staten; State Board of Education Chairperson Allan Taylor; Deputy Commissioner of Education George Coleman, State Representative Douglas McCrory; and Dudley Williams, Designee for Governor's Commission on Achievement Gap

Committee members absent: Joseph Cirusuolo, CAPSS, Kathleen O'Connor, SBE

II. Approval of Minutes of June 7, 2010, Committee Meeting

On a motion by Ms. McCarthy, seconded by Ms. DiNello, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the June 7, 2010, committee meeting.

III. Analysis of Education Funding

George Raphael, Connecticut Conference of Municipalities, provided an overview of the FY2011 State Budget, highlighting PK-12 public education grants, state and federal funding for the Education Cost Sharing (ECS) grant, the Special Education Excess Cost Grant, and the state's share of PK-12 education costs, representing a 2.8% decrease from FY 2010. Additional information was requested of CCM, including (1) more detailed information about the disparities in state and local funding; and (2) figures by county. Mr. Taylor asked Mr. Waxenberg to provide data showing impact on data after factoring in social security or teachers' retirement.

IV. Discussion of Funding for Choice Programs

Mr. Mahoney presented an overview of the 2009-10 Choice Programs, excluding the interdistrict cooperative programs, but including charter schools, magnet schools (Sheff host schools; Sheff regional schools; and all other host and regional magnets); Open Choice, Agricultural Science and the Connecticut Technical High School System.

Discussion ensued regarding a myriad of approaches to funding choice programs and variations in the ECS benefit to participants. Committee members discussed the relationship between the value placed on providing choice programs and a consistent funding model to support them, as well as the need to look at the erosion of funding for public education overall. The disparate funding mechanisms applied to transportation to the various choice programs were also stated as an area in need of repair.

Committee members expressed their views regarding support for “successful” schools and how that is defined (academic success; parental choice; value of a particular theme; diverse environment) and how best to apply those successes overall to the public education system. The waiting list for choice programs was attributable to capacity and budgetary constraints. Committee members agreed that there would be a great benefit to a collaborative approach, working together on a regional basis, and establishing partnerships to help defray duplicative costs affiliated with choice programs (e.g., transportation).

Superintendent Patricia Ciccone presented an overview of the technical high schools and those schools that participate in Sheff. Mr. William Davenport, Ellis Clark Regional Agri-Science and Technology Program, presented an overview of the agri-science programs and presented a comparison of school choice funding (FY 2008), noting the inconsistencies in state support, transportation, and sending town responsibility among the choice programs.

#### I. Potential Candidates to Assist Ad Hoc Committee

Commissioner McQuillan stated that the discussions held thus far help shape the context of the committee’s work. It is now important to define what our core values are, and then to delineate on a priority basis what we wish to accomplish. Toward this end, he suggested that a subgroup of the committee convene to develop a proposal for the full committee, and to inform the decision to hire a consultant to facilitate the work. Volunteers included Allan Taylor, Jennifer Harmon (representing Alex Johnston, ConnCAN); Dudley Williams, Brian Mahoney, Kachina Walsh-Weaver (representing James Finley, CCM), and Joseph Brennan.

#### II. Response to Requests for Information

Committee members were provided with detailed information regarding per pupil expenditures, school construction, average teacher salaries by town, mill rate by town, an analysis of state, local and federal share for education and the actual entitlement vs. fully-funded ECS amount.

Leah Grenier, OPM, representing Kathy Guay, said she would provide the committee with additional information about the equalized municipal mill rate.

#### VII Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 11:47 a.m. The next committee meeting will be held on Monday, July 19, 2010.

