

**STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
Legislation and Bylaws Committee

May 5, 2010  
8:30 a.m.  
State Office Building  
Hartford, CT

**MINUTES**  
**Approved 6-2-10**

**Members Present**

Theresa Hopkins-Staten, Janet Finneran and John Voss.

**Staff Present**

Mark McQuillan, George Coleman, Daniel Murphy, Jennifer Widness and Janice Dinnall.

**I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 8:39 a.m.

**II. Minutes of Last Meeting**

The April 7, 2010, meeting minutes were approved unanimously on a motion by Janet Finneran, seconded by Theresa Hopkins-Staten.

**III. Legislative Update**

Jennifer Widness provided a legislative update. The Race to the Top ("RTTT") bill, Senate Bill ("SB") 438, as amended, was approved in the Senate but then amended in the House and therefore had to go back to the Senate for final passage. The amendment in the House combined SB 438 with House Bill ("HB") 5491, An Act Concerning School District Reforms to Reduce the Achievement Gap in Connecticut. Committee members discussed a key component of this bill which would amend Section 10-223 of the Connecticut General Statutes to require districts to form a parent governance council in failing schools. After two years, the governance council would have the authority to petition the local or regional board of education to reconstitute the failing school, using a number of reform models identified in the bill.

Ms. Widness also noted that the House Amendment to SB 438 moved the Parent Trust Fund to the State Department of Education ("SDE") from the Department of Social

Services. These funds would be available to the Commissioner for the purpose of activities designed to increase parental involvement in education.

An update was also provided on SB 379, An Act Concerning Vocational-Technical Schools. Committee members discussed a provision in the bill which would increase the membership of the State Board of Education from 11 to 13 members and that would require two new members to have trade experience or be an alumni of the technical high school system and one new member must have agricultural experience or be an alumni of a regional agricultural science and technology education center.

Lastly, the Committee discussed a change made to SB 438 in the Senate which eliminated the provision that the secondary school proposal only go into effect if federal funding were received. In its place, new language was included in the bill which would require the Department to issue grants to districts for implementation beginning in FY 2013. In addition, districts would be required to report to the SDE on the status of implementation and the SDE, in turn, is then required to report this information to the General Assembly along with any recommendations on potential changes to the law.

### **RTTT Update**

George Coleman highlighted that the steering committee had reviewed the first draft of the Phase II application. One of the biggest changes made in Phase II will be that every participating district that signs on will be awarded at least \$100,000. In addition, Deputy Commissioner Coleman informed committee members that the RTTT Memorandum of Understanding would be going out to districts this week.

### **Ad Hoc Committee**

Commissioner McQuillan informed the Committee that the first meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on Funding Public School Choice was held and that the group agreed to broaden the scope of its charge to include a review of all funding of public education, including the Education Cost Sharing grant (ECS). The Commissioner acknowledged that the Ad Hoc Committee would likely need more than 9 months to complete this task.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:32 a.m.