

**CT Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators  
Stakeholder Advisory Group Meeting**

**Institute of Technology and Business Development  
185 Main Street  
New Britain, CT**

**June 2, 2016  
1:00-3:00**

**Present:** Robert Rader, CABE; Kim Wachtelhausen, CSDE; Kim Traverso, CSDE; Paul Stringer, CFSA; Casey Cobb, UCONN; Jen Buckley, CAS; Alexis Yao; TFA, Meredith Burdick, TFA, Jennifer Benevento, AFT CT; Anne McKernan, CSDE; Teresa Boyd Cowles, CSDE; Claire Fabian, TFA; Dr. Donna Merritt, SERC

**Minutes:**

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. Donna Merritt, meeting facilitator, set the context for the two hour session by outlining the committee's membership, its purpose, its meeting schedule and its role in relation to the eight CT Equity Districts and the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE). Donna Merritt explained to the stakeholders that the CT Equity Districts were attending the second session of a full-day workshop focused on improving teaching conditions and that stakeholders would have a chance to observe the work in progress during the second hour of today's meeting. The teaching conditions workshops have been facilitated by the Center for Great Teachers and Leaders and the Northeast Comprehensive Center on March 22 and today.

Dr. Merritt outlined progress over the last year to reorient stakeholders to the progress made to date. The facilitator then reintroduced the stakeholders to the equity gaps identified in the 2015 CT Equity Plan and the eight Equity Districts.

Dr. Merritt introduced the agenda for the day which included: providing updates and discussing feedback regarding the work completed in 2015-2016 school year, a walkthrough of the teaching conditions workshop held in an adjoining room with representatives from the Center on Great Teachers and Leaders, and a discussion of the challenges to implementation of the CT Equity Plan and opportunities for the 2016-2017 school year.

Participants were divided into three small groups and rotated through learning stations outlining the work of the Equity Districts this year. At the first station, Anne McKernan introduced strategies which were shared across the equity districts during the 2015-2016 school year. These strategies included the Hartford Public Schools' creation of a school based human capital dashboard to track key indicators related to human capital management, the Bridgeport Public Schools' creation of a new competency based hiring procedure and the New London Public Schools' work to redesign the district's exit interview protocol and reporting procedures. At the second station, stakeholders met with Raymond Martin of the CSDE Performance Office who presented individual district equity gap data. At the third learning station, Kim Wachtelhausen provided an overview of the March 22, 2016 Teaching Conditions Workshop

which introduced districts to the eight teaching conditions presented by the Center on Great Teachers and Leaders at the March 22, 2016 workshop.

From 2:10-2:30, participants visited one of two breakout sessions. The workshops were entitled: Improving Teaching Conditions through High-Leverage Professional Development Practices and Effective Stakeholder Engagement and Communication.

From 2:30-3:00, stakeholders engaged in a roundtable discussion regarding feedback on the work this year and suggestions for next year.

Anne McKernan expressed concern that the Equity Districts have not attended all of the meetings this year and acknowledged the challenges districts face in fitting this work into their schedules. This challenge has also been reported on the national level. CSDE staff members have heard similar comments from state education leaders throughout the U.S. on the Equitable Access Support Network's monthly conference calls. Jen Buckley suggested the stakeholder group could discuss ways that the various organizations could support the districts in the work. Casey Cobb suggested that we need to think about how to make this work more coherent and meaningful to the districts. Paul Stringer voiced concerns about those not participating. Meredith Burdick spoke of ways to access parent and student voice to put positive pressure on districts and asked if we in CT are cultivating a talent mindset. She also asked what districts are doing to invest in teacher leadership and school leadership so that teachers feel more valued and are more likely to be retained. Kim Wachtelhausen mentioned that in reviewing the Alliance District plans, the Talent section had metrics solely devoted to student outcomes and this is the place where teacher and principal retention and experience metrics could be included. Meredith Burdick posed the idea of looking at how other sectors view workforce engagement and offered the resource- Great Places to Work survey as an idea to research. Kim Traverso discussed mapping and aligning the work across the CSDE. Anne McKernan suggested, one of the first steps to align the work of the CSDE was to offer the equity work as a strand at each Alliance District convening. She reported that Desi Nesmith, Chief Turnaround Officer, agrees with this approach.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:10.