

# CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

## Hartford

Mastery Examination Task Force

Monday, November 23, 2015

### I. Call to Order and Approval of Minutes from October 27, 2015, Meeting

Chairperson Commissioner Dianna R. Wentzell called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m.

#### Approval of Minutes

Patrice McCarthy moved to approve the minutes for October 27, 2015

Don Williams seconded the motion

Minutes from the meeting on October 27, 2015, approved.

### II. Introductions

Present: Dianna R. Wentzell, Commissioner of Education, Chairperson  
Allan Taylor, Connecticut State Board of Education, Chair  
Mary Anne Butler, Connecticut State Department of Education  
Dr. Joseph Cirusuolo, CAPSS  
Marcia Ferreira, CEA  
Patti Fusco, AFT  
Kathy Greider, CAPSS  
Cathy Hill, CAS  
Abe Krisst, Connecticut State Department of Education  
Patrice McCarthy, CABA  
Richard Murry, Killingly, CABA  
Dr. Karissa Niehoff, CAS-CIAC  
Don Romoser, CT PTA  
Jeffrey Villar, CCER  
Don Williams, CEA  
Stephen Wright, Connecticut State Board of Education

Absent: Jim Accomando, CT PTA  
Dr. Stephen Hegedus, SCSU  
Jan Hochadel, AFT-CT  
Ed Leavy, AFT-CT

### III. Summary of Charges & Deadlines (PA 15-238)

- Handout: Summary of Charges (labeled A through F) and Deadlines.
- There is an ongoing discussion about the interim report that will be due on or before 2/15/16, and the final report that is due on or before 1/15/17.

#### Survey

- To help satisfy the task force charges, it was decided that many of the constituent groups would survey their membership to learn about the impact of the statewide mastery exam on teaching, on students and on student learning time.
- CAS, CEA, CABA, CT PTA, CAPSS and CSDE will collect stakeholder feedback.
- Some of the groups will provide feedback prior to the December meeting and some prior to the January meeting. Each group will share their information with the rest of the committee using a “flip the classroom” approach so group members will be able to study the results prior to the target meeting. This way the meeting time will be devoted to discussion.
- If the committee agrees, it will be possible that a group will be called to provide more information at future meetings based on the discussions.

- The tentative schedule of return of materials:
  - By December 7, (for December 14, 2015, committee meeting): CAS, CAFE, and CSDE
  - By January 3, (for January 10, 2016, committee meeting): CT PTA, CEA, and CAPSS
- One of the members cautioned that since these surveys are not scientific, the anecdotal data should be considered, but policy decisions should not be based exclusively on these survey results.

### **Advanced Organizer**

- It is suggested that an “advanced organizer” be presented with all presentations to aid committee members in organizing questions and thoughts that will be used in the future meeting.

### **Online Testing**

- The discussion continued about Charge B, which relates to the administration of the statewide mastery exam on computers and other devices. It was agreed that many of the groups will be addressing this topic. It was also agreed that the CSDE may be able to provide some additional information on this topic from Smarter Balanced resources, as well as from other states that have done online testing.

### **Appropriateness**

- For Charge C, which relates to whether the statewide mastery exam is an appropriate student assessment, it was decided that it is also likely that this topic will be covered by the information that will be addressing Charge A.

### **Assessing Students with Special Needs**

- For Charge D, which relates to student needs, Special Education and ELL students, student progress, content alignment, and federal requirements, it was decided that some of the language has to be checked for legislative intent, some information will be gathered by CSDE, as well as this topic will be covered by the information that will be addressing Charge A.

### **Reducing Testing Time**

- For Charge E and F, which relate to the feasibility of reducing testing time, as well as ways to facilitate timely communication between the CSDE and local BOE’s, it was decided that that some of the language has to be checked for legislative intent, some information will be gathered by the CSDE, and that these topics will be discussed at future meetings.

## **IV. Topics Identified by Members**

- A study of SAT issues was suggested as a future topic.
- An update on ESEA was also discussed as a future topic.

## **V. Adjourn**

- Kathleen Kennedy moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:41 a.m. and Don Rosmoser seconded the motion.

**NOTE:** This meeting was interrupted by a building fire drill from about 9:20 a.m. to 9:45 a.m.