

Reading Leadership Implementation Council Meeting
October 14, 2025
Meeting Minutes

Connecticut Department of Education

Reading Leadership Implementation Council Virtual Meeting

450 Columbus Boulevard, Hartford, CT

October 14, 2025

1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Present:

- Dr. Matthew Conway, Superintendent Derby Public Schools
- Dr. Michael Coyne, Professor, Neag School of Education the University of Connecticut
- Dr. Margie Gillis, Founder and President, Literacy How, Inc.
- Steven Hernandez
- Dr. Melissa K. Wlodarczyk Hickey, Director of the Center for Literacy Research & Reading Success (Center), Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE)
- Gary Highsmith, Superintendent, Hamden Public Schools
- Yasmin Ithier-Vicenty, Teacher, Hartford Public Schools
- Dr. Tamu Lucero, Superintendent, Stamford Public Schools
- Dr. Ashley Oldham, Assistant Professor of Education, Department of Special Education, University of Saint Joseph
- Shandra Scott-Brown, Principal CREC Museum Academy
- Dr. James Zavodjancik, Chief Academy Officer, Fairfield Public Schools

Facilitator:

Dr. Ellen Stoltz, Educational Leadership Consultant, ImproveYourSchools

I. Welcome and Roll Call

M. Hickey convened the meeting at 1:00 p.m., following a delay due to technical issues.

II. Minutes from June 17, 2025, and August 19, 2025

E. Stoltz opened the floor and made a motion for approval of the minutes from June 17, 2025, and August 19, 2025. S. Hernandez and T. Lucero approved the motion to accept June 17, 2025, minutes. M. Conway and M. Gilis approved the motion to accept August 18, 2025, minutes.

III. Council Member Comments and Insights

No action or discussion occurred under this agenda item as Council members did not request to share comments or insights. M. Hickey shared with Council members that Kim Healy has stepped down from her role, M. Hickey also shared email that former Council member Kim Healy sent.

IV. Connecticut State Department of Education's K-12 Model Curriculum

Council members were asked to answer the following questions

- What questions do you have “circling” in your mind?
- What “square” with you and reinforce your understanding?
- What are three key points or important parts you want to share with others?

Discussion ensued.

V. K-3 Reading Curriculum Models and Programs Review Cycles

M. Hickey shared with Council members the steps the Center has taken in collecting districts reports of implementation. The Council was informed that the Center notified Superintendents and Charter School Director to complete survey that was developed by the Center, confirm programs were accurately recorded, and collected reports from districts. The floor was open for questions. S. Scott-Brown asked what the next steps are after districts report what they are using. M. Hickey shared that we are mandated to provide independent random reviews. To ensure fairness and objectivity in the review process the participating LEA's are selected at random, this guarantees they have an equal opportunity.

VIII. Meeting Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 2:31 p.m.

The next Council meeting will be held virtually on December 16, 2025, from 1:00 p.m. –2:30 p.m.