

CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
Hartford

**Ad Hoc Committee on Accountability**

Ellen Camhi, Chair  
Estela López  
Allan B. Taylor

Minutes of Meeting  
April 20, 2011

**Call to Order**

Ellen Camhi called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. The meeting was held in room 305 of the State Office Building, 165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut. Present were Ms. López and Mr. Taylor. Also present were Acting Commissioner George A. Coleman, Associate Commissioner Dr. Marion H. Martinez, Bureau Chief Lol Fearon, Assistant to the Commissioner and State Board of Education Pam Charland, Attorney for the Legal and Governmental Affairs Laura Anastasio.

**Approval of Minutes of the March 24, 2010 Committee Meeting**

Minutes were tabled.

**Partner Districts: Selection Criteria**

There was an orientation for the new State Board of Education members on the selection criteria for becoming a Partner District. There are 18 Partner Districts. The handout about the districts and their Year of Improvement was discussed. Lol stated that these districts have not met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for three consecutive years. Their reading and math benchmarks have not been met. The goal is set for the whole district to be 100 percent proficient by 2014. Thirty-five percent of all school children are in these Partner Districts. Each Partner District needs to have a District Improvement Plan (DIP). Once a Partner District is identified, it is assigned to a Technical Assistance (TA) team. A handout was given with the list of districts and their assigned TA team. The TA team and the district work together as a team. The external consultant is a retired superintendent. The team leaders coordinate the work with the districts and are the district's contact person. The monitoring person helps with the TA work with the district by setting processes and protocols to meet goals and student goals. We do not have the capacity to work with the schools so we work with the district.

There is a District Data Team (DDT) at each district, which is created by the district and chaired by the superintendent. They usually meet monthly. Federal and state law states that districts have a DIP when in need of improvement. There is extensive training on data with the DDTs with interventions being discussed.

An annual monitoring report is done by the Bureau of Accountability and Improvement staff. This report is a collaborative effort with the district. The Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) and the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) results are part of the report. The report is reviewed by Lol Fearon, Marion H. Martinez and George A. Coleman. Once approved it is then sent to the district.

The DIP is written by the district and presented to and approved by the State Board of Education. The DIP process is a partnership with the Bureau of Accountability and Improvement.

Ms. López wanted to know what can make a difference to get these districts off the list. What helps the district? How do we speed up this process? The answer is that the districts communicate these plans to the schools and alignment is extremely important.

### **CALI Overview**

The TA team takes a look at the professional development (PD) through Connecticut's Accountability for Learning Initiative (CALI) and provides technical assistance. This is provided to paraprofessionals, teachers, administrators and boards of education. Training is offered statewide.

Connecticut Association of Schools (CAS) provides executive coaches who work directly with principals. There is, also, Data Team Facilitators (DTF). These work with principals and the School Data Team to help the school to be more effective and more efficient in the use of data. District, school and instructional level teams focus on student achievement.

We now have data for four years to compare CMT and CAPT data for the Partner Districts to the rest of the state. With this information we are helping the district's board of education to understand the data and participate in the process. District board of education training is offered through the Lighthouse Project.

We have a growth model that now covers data over four years, which indicate that CALI is working in the districts to improve student achievement.

The CALI training is based on the specific needs of the district. The questions that are asked to each district are: (1) the efficacy of teaching can make a difference, knowledgeable content of teaching and skills; and (2) implementation of plans – evidence of skills in improving instruction.

The three charts that were handed out were discussed. Allan Taylor would like the charts to show student data at or above goal as well as proficiency.

Ms. López expressed if there was anything that could be done to speed up the process. Lol's response was that the districts need more focus and leadership on student achievement. Partner Districts which are also Priority School Districts offer after school and summer school sessions.

It was suggested by Ms. Camhi that the committee talk to the Governor about the need for pre-school opportunities statewide.

The three new districts (Hamden, West Haven and Windsor) will present to this committee their DIP before going to the full Board in the fall. The twelve original districts have their DIPs expiring this year. They will present their new DIPs later in the fall.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nadine Dube