

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Hartford**

Draft Minutes of Special Meeting  
December 20, 2012

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State, the State Board of Education (hereinafter "Board") met on Thursday, December 20, 2012, via telephone conference call. A speaker phone was stationed in room 307 of the State Office Building, 165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut.

**I. Call to Order**

Chairman Taylor called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m.

Present in person: Allan Taylor, Chair  
Theresa Hopkins-Staten, Vice-Chairperson

Participating via telephone: Ellen Camhi  
Terry Jones  
Patricia Luke  
Joseph Vrabely  
Charles Jaskiewicz  
Robert Trefry  
Patricia Keavney-Maruca

Absent: Andreea Dinicu  
Estela Lopez  
Ferdinand Risco  
Rebecca Salustri  
Stephen Wright

Chairperson Taylor called for a moment of silence in memory of the victims of the Sandy Hook Elementary School tragedy.

**II. Report of the Commissioner**

Commissioner Pryor and Chief Financial Officer Brian Mahoney presented the Board with an update on state budget rescissions and their impact on the State Department of Education's budget (copy in official file).

Commissioner Pryor then provided a status report on legislation, noting that the Board's package of technical legislative proposals has been submitted to the Office of the Governor. Additional proposals are also being considered in consultation with the Governor's Office.

### **III. Update on Newtown Support Efforts**

Commissioner Pryor summarized the efforts of the Department of Education and its partner agencies to support Newtown in its recovery from the tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School, as well as to assist other Connecticut school districts in their responses to the tragic events. These efforts have included:

- Working with DMHAS, DCF and DPH on the provision and training of mental health counselors who will provide support to Newtown teachers and staff.
- Working with Dr. David Schonfeld of the National Center for School Crisis and Bereavement to familiarize district staff with emotional and psychosocial issues that may arise as a result of Friday's events, and to provide prompts for how to begin to address them.
- Working with Newtown district staff and the State Department of Construction Services as well as other State colleagues to offer initial advice and assistance for both Newtown and nearby Monroe regarding the identification and activation of a replacement building.
- The provision of general advice, communications support and other types of assistance to Superintendent Janet Robinson and her team.
- Making connections with Newtown student support staff, helping to identify particular needs, and providing supports.
- Working in coordination with the American Federation of Teachers (on the district, state, and national levels) to ensure coordination on recovery activities.
- Through correspondence with superintendents and district leaders statewide, the dissemination of resources for classroom educators on ways to speak about the tragedy, as well as information for districts regarding school safety and addressing trauma, violence, and grief.
- Via phone, CSDE staff have triaged and answered requests from the field for information.
- In the hours immediately following the tragedy, CTHSS professionals provided support to individual family members of the victims, both adults and children.

### **IV. Reaccreditation of Sanford-Brown College**

Mrs. Luke moved, Mr. Jaskiewicz seconded, that the Board, pursuant to Public Act 11-48, Section 244, accept the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools assessment and grant accreditation for the purpose of allowing a teach-out of Sanford-Brown College, for a period required to complete the teach-out but no longer than two years, until December 31, 2014. The institution will provide quarterly progress reports on the status of the teach-out.

VOTE:	In Favor:	Camhi, Hopkins-Staten, Jaskiewicz, Jones, Keavney-Maruca, Luke, Taylor, Vrabely
	Opposed:	0
	Abstained:	0
	Absent:	López, Risco, Wright

Motion carried unanimously.

**V. Executive Session**

The Board did not meet in Executive Session.

**VI. Appointment of Interim Superintendent – Technical High School System**

Mrs. Luke moved, Mrs. Hopkins-Staten seconded, that the Board, pursuant to subsection (c) of Section 69 of Public Act 12-116 and its Bylaws, accepts the joint recommendation of the Technical High School System Board and the Commissioner of Education, and appoints Nivea L. Torres, Ph.D., as Interim Superintendent of the Connecticut Technical High School System, effective January 1, 2013, until such time as the position of Superintendent of Schools is filled permanently.

VOTE:	In Favor:	Camhi, Hopkins-Staten, Jaskiewicz, Jones, Keavney-Maruca, Luke, Taylor, Vrabely
	Opposed:	0
	Abstained:	0
	Absent:	López, Risco, Wright

Motion carried unanimously.

**VII. Adjourn**

By unanimous consent, the Board adjourned the meeting at 11:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted: \_\_\_\_\_  
Stefan Pryor, Secretary