

CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford

Minutes
State Board of Education Meeting
November 4, 2015
(approved December 2, 2015)

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State, the State Board of Education (hereinafter "Board") met on Wednesday, November 4, 2015, in Room 1D of the Legislative Office Building, 300 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut.

I. Call to Order

Chairperson Allan Taylor called the meeting to order at 9:41 a.m.

Present: Allan Taylor, Chairperson
Theresa Hopkins-Staten, Vice Chairperson
Susannah M. Beyl, Student Member
William P. Davenport
Terry Jones
Timothy J. Noel-Sullivan, Student Member
Robert J. Trefry, Ex Officio
Joseph J. Vrabely, Jr.
Stephen Wright

Absent: Erin D. Benham
Estela López
Maria Mojica
Mark Ojakian, Ex Officio

II. Public Participation

1. Katie O'Callaghan, Chair of the Education and Educational Psychology Department at Western Connecticut State University, spoke on behalf of AACTE-CT on the topic of continuous improvement in education preparation programs through the accreditation cycle, and the importance of holding all preparation pathways to the same rigorous process. A copy of Ms. O'Callaghan's prepared statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
2. Alyssa Marino, graduate student in elementary education at Quinnipiac University, expressed her concerns about the Praxis II Multiple Subjects assessment, stating that the examination assesses content not taught in the classroom. She noted that the test is difficult to pass and is costly to students, and the test schedule is

not user-friendly. A copy of Ms. Marino's prepared statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.

3. Harry Rosvally, K-12 STEM Administrator in the Danbury Public Schools, adjunct professor at Western Connecticut State University, and grandfather of two children, thanked State Department of Education science consultant Liz Buttner and expressed his support for the adoption of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). A copy of Mr. Rosvally's prepared statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
4. Tamre Mockus, K-12 Science Instruction Specialist, Norwalk Public Schools, expressed her support for the adoption of the NGSS. Ms. Mockus stated that the standards will promote quality science instruction for all students. A copy of Ms. Mockus's prepared statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
5. Richard Therrien, K-12 Science Supervisor, New Haven Public Schools, expressed support for the adoption of the NGSS, and requested that the State Board of Education consider giving guidance to the State Department of Education concerning an adoption timeline that is delayed by one year, in order to allow time for teacher training, curriculum development, review of instructional materials, budgeting, and purchasing. A copy of Mr. Therrien's prepared statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
6. Doug Edwards, founder and Program Director of Real Dads Forever, spoke about the importance of a father's involvement in his child's education. He spoke in support of the adoption of the NGSS, as well as the learning and engagement opportunities provided for boys via the NGSS.
7. Blair Fontaine, graduate student in the MAT Program in Elementary Education at Quinnipiac University, stated that performance on the Praxis II Multiple Subjects test does not represent her ability to become a good teacher. She stated that the test is based on rote memorization, and students cannot prepare for the test. A copy of Ms. Fontaine's prepared statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
8. Ann Dichele, Professor at Quinnipiac University, asked the Board to rescind the passage of the Praxis II Multiple Subjects examination as a requirement for certification. She expressed her opinion that the test is not a valid assessment and is poorly designed, as it assesses knowledge of low-level, isolated facts. A copy of Dr. Dichele's prepared statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
9. Michael J. Bednarz, Director of Curriculum and Instruction in the Stafford Public Schools, and member of the District Advisory Council on the NGSS, expressed his support for the adoption of the NGSS, noting that it helps close opportunity gaps. A copy of Mr. Bednarz's prepared statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.

10. Angela Bhushan, Director of Science, Bridgeport Public Schools, expressed support for the adoption of the NGSS. She noted that NGSS will spark student interest and result in students becoming critical thinkers. Ms. Bhushan commended the inclusive and transparent vetting process. A copy of Ms. Bhushan's prepared statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
11. Dr. Cindy Kern, Director, Bristol-Myers Squibb Center for Science Teaching and Learning, and Professor of Science at Quinnipiac University, expressed support for the adoption of the NGSS. She expressed concerns about the Praxis II Multiple Subjects assessment, noting that it measures only a minimal amount of discrete content knowledge and does not assess teachers' integrated understanding of science. A copy of Dr. Kern's prepared statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
12. Dr. Monica Cavender, Professor, Masters of Art in Teaching, School of Education, Quinnipiac University, stated that while elementary mathematics teachers must have a deep understanding of the content they teach, they must also need to be flexible in their thinking and have tools and strategies to support a wide variety of learners. An assessment of teacher candidates must require them to demonstrate deeper conceptual understandings of mathematics and a reformed approach for teaching. A copy of Dr. Cavender's prepared statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
13. Hank Gruner, Vice President of Programs, Connecticut Science Center, spoke in support of the adoption of the NGSS. He noted that Connecticut's K-12 science curriculum demands a 21st Century learning approach. A copy of Mr. Gruner's prepared statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
14. Terry Contant, immediate Past President of the Connecticut Science Teachers Association (CSTA), presented the CSTA's statement in support of the adoption of the NGSS. CSTA encourages the State Board of Education to adopt the standards, and proceed with a gradual, phased-in implementation plan designed to make NGSS an integral part of the educational experience of the next generation of Connecticut citizens. A copy of Mr. Contant's prepared statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
15. Nick Balisciano, STEM Program Manager, Connecticut Science Center, Science Education Consultant at the Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology, and a part-time faculty member at Central Connecticut State University, spoke about the professional development on the NGSS that he has delivered and the subsequent positive results in the classroom. He noted that the NGSS will continue to inspire students in STEM fields. A copy of Mr. Balisciano's prepared statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.

16. Sandra Inga, STEM Director, Hartford Public Schools, spoke in favor of the adoption of the NGSS. She noted that the cross-cutting concepts within the standards lend themselves to student engagement and are applicable to real-world situations. She added that the structure of the NGSS is supportive of diverse learners.
17. Don Romosser, Immediate Past President of the Connecticut Parent-Teacher Association, spoke in support of the adoption of the NGSS. He noted that the standards are relevant to business and industry's needs for workers with skills in STEM areas. They provide students with relevant, real-world skills and promote a collaborative approach.
18. Talitha Coggins, parent of a student attending Achievement First Hartford, expressed her concerns about disciplinary practices at Achievement First, and the negative impact such practices have had on her child.
19. Grisell Myers, parent of six children, expressed her support for the Board's adoption of the NGSS. Ms. Myers stated that science education is a need on a statewide basis, and she is pleased that it is now being given due attention.
20. Heather Greene, parent of two students in the Waterbury Public Schools, described her 11th grade daughter's excitement about a science experiment. Ms. Greene noted that the NGSS will allow students to engage in hands-on, action-oriented activities. She added that parental engagement is a key to students' success, and support for parental engagement should not be cut from the budget.
21. Bob Hannafin, Dean, Graduate School of Allied Professions, Fairfield University, spoke in support of the Board's adoption of agenda item VI.B., Amendment to Prior Action to Authorize Commissioner to Review Applications for New Educator Preparation Programs, and provided an example of a proposed program at Fairfield University that would warrant the Commissioner's review.
22. Tom Stringfellow, resident of Manchester, spoke regarding the meaning of Veteran's Day and the importance of honoring the Merchant Marines who served in World War II, as well as the contributions Native Americans have made to our country. Mr. Stringfellow recommended several articles. A copy of his prepared remarks is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
23. A written statement by Alexis Thoma, a graduate student in the Master of Arts in Teaching Program at Quinnipiac University, expressing concerns about the Praxis II Elementary Education Multiple Subjects test, is enclosed in the official file of this meeting. Ms. Thoma was unable to attend the meeting but requested that her statement be placed on record.

III. Consent Agenda

Mrs. Hopkins-Staten moved, Mr. Vrabely seconded, that the Board approve the following consent agenda item III.A., Appointment to Accountability and Support Committee.

A. Appointment to Accountability and Support Committee

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to Article II, Section 4, of its Bylaws, approves the appointment of William P. Davenport to the State Board of Education Accountability and Support Committee, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

VOTE ON

MOTION:	In favor:	Davenport, Hopkins-Staten, Jones, Taylor, Vrabely, Wright
	Opposed:	0
	Abstained:	0
	Absent:	Benham, López, Mojica

Motion carried unanimously.

IV. Executive Session

The Board did not meet in Executive Session.

V. Consideration of Minutes

A. October 7, 2015, State Board of Education Meeting

Mr. Vrabely moved, Mr. Wright seconded, that the Board adopt the Minutes of the October 7, 2015, State Board of Education meeting.

VOTE ON

MOTION:	In favor:	Davenport, Jones, Taylor, Vrabely, Wright
	Opposed:	0
	Abstained:	Hopkins-Staten
	Absent:	Benham, López, Mojica

Motion carried unanimously.

VI. Items Requiring Action

A. Approval of Legislative Proposals

Mrs. Hopkins-Staten moved, Mr. Vrabely seconded, that the State Board of Education adopts the 2016 Legislative Proposals and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

VOTE ON

MOTION:	In favor:	Davenport, Hopkins-Staten, Jones, Taylor, Vrabely, Wright
	Opposed:	0
	Abstained:	0
	Absent:	Benham, López, Mojica

Motion carried unanimously.

B. Amendment to Prior Action to Authorize Commissioner to Review Applications for New Educator Preparation Programs

Mr. Vrabely moved, Mr. Davenport seconded, that the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-145d-9(g) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, grants an extension of approval for educator preparation programs scheduled for continuing approval visits during the academic years 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 and imposes policy restrictions on new program proposal applications filed prior to July 1, 2017, limiting them to only those that can demonstrate an enrollment base of 10 or more candidates per year and can specifically address the Connecticut State Department of Education's designated shortage areas as reported by the Department in the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 academic years, or those that, in the judgement of the Commissioner, demonstrate the potential to advance other priorities of the State Board of Education and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

VOTE ON

MOTION:	In favor:	Davenport, Hopkins-Staten, Jones, Taylor, Vrabely, Wright
	Opposed:	0
	Abstained:	0
	Absent:	Benham, López, Mojica

Motion carried unanimously.

C. Adoption of Next Generation Science Standards

Mrs. Hopkins-Staten moved, Mr. Vrabely seconded, that the State Board of Education approves the adoption of the Connecticut Next Generation Science Standards and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

VOTE ON

MOTION:	In favor:	Davenport, Hopkins-Staten, Jones, Taylor, Vrabely, Wright
	Opposed:	0
	Abstained:	0
	Absent:	Benham, López, Mojica

Motion carried unanimously.

VII. Items for Discussion

There were no agenda items under Discussion.

VIII. Report of the Chair

Chairperson Allan Taylor referred Board members to the "Report of the Chair" in the Board's Supplemental Materials folder. He urged the Board to review NASBE's "Five Top Takeaways from NASBE's Annual Conference 2015." Mr. Taylor invited the Board to consider serving on one of NASBE's committees. A copy of the Chair's written report is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.

IX. Report of the Commissioner

Commissioner Dianna R. Wentzell referred Board members to the "Report of the Commissioner" in the Board's Supplemental Materials folder. Commissioner Wentzell's report summarized several meetings that support the work and goals of the State Department of Education, including internal and external operations, meetings and discussions of education issues with the Office of Policy and Management and the Governor's Office. Commissioner Wentzell reported meetings with SDE staff and education partners; and her involvement at numerous statewide meetings and activities: Making It Real: Girls Manufacturing Expo; Reading Conference; Connecticut Association of the Gifted Conference; Annual Connecticut Council for the Social Studies Conference; and Connecticut Art Education Association Conference.

X. Financial Matters

A. Budget Reallocation Options

Mr. Wright moved, Mr. Jones seconded, that the State Board of Education, pursuant to the directive from the Office of Policy and Management, submits Budget Reallocation Options for Fiscal Year 2016-17, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

VOTE ON

MOTION:	In favor:	Davenport, Hopkins-Staten, Jones, Taylor, Vrabely, Wright
	Opposed:	0
	Abstained:	0
	Absent:	Benham, López, Mojica

Motion carried unanimously.

B. Budget Reduction Options

Mr. Vrabely moved, Mr. Jones seconded, that the State Board of Education, pursuant to the directive from the Office of Policy and Management, submits Budget Reduction Options for Fiscal Year 2016-17, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

VOTE ON

MOTION:	In favor:	Davenport, Jones, Taylor, Vrabely, Wright
	Opposed:	Hopkins-Staten
	Abstained:	0
	Absent:	Benham, López, Mojica

Motion carried.

XI. Committee Reports

A. Academic Standards and Assessment

Mr. Wright reported that he was meeting with Chief Academic Officer Mary Anne Butler today to review a list of potential agenda items and to set a meeting schedule.

B. Accountability and Support

No report was given.

C. Finance, Audit and Budget

Mr. Taylor reported that the committee will be meeting on November 18, 2015.

D. Legislation and Policy

Mrs. Hopkins-Staten reported that the committee did not meet this morning, but will be meeting next month.

E. Connecticut Technical High School System

Mr. Trefry reported on presenting (i) the Strategic Plan progress report; and (ii) NASBE Study Group on College/Career Readiness to the Board in December 2015.

F. NASBE

Mr. Taylor reported that the NASBE Annual Conference, "States Charting A Course For Change", was held on October 22-24, 2015. He reported that Mr. Trefry, and Mr. Wright attended the conference. Mr. Taylor reiterated NASBE's "Five Top Takeaways from NASBE's Annual Conference 2015."

Adjourn

By unanimous consent, the meeting was adjourned at 12:43 p.m.

Prepared by:

Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell, Secretary
State Board of Education