

Minutes
State Board of Education Meeting
June 3, 2020
(Approved June 17, 2020)

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State and posted on the agency's Web site, the State Board of Education (hereinafter "Board") met via GoToMeeting on Wednesday, June 3, 2020. This virtual meeting was livestreamed (<https://youtu.be/fUJSIqLijVE>.) to allow for public access.

I. Call to Order

Chairperson Allan Taylor called the meeting to order at 9:43 a.m.

Staff Assistant to the Board, Aldith Dewar, took an attendance roll call.

Present: Allan B. Taylor, Chairperson
 Estela López, Vice Chairperson
 Erin D. Benham
 Bonnie E. Burr
 Milan Chand, Student Member
 Sophia H. Chin, Student Member
 Erik M. Clemons
 Karen DuBois-Walton
 Elwood Exley, Jr.
 Donald F. Harris, Jr.
 Martha Paluch Prou
 Awilda Reasco
 Malia K. Sieve
 Robert J. Trefry, Ex Officio

Absent: Mark Ojakian, Ex Officio

Oath of Office

Attorney Jessa Y. Mirtle, Commissioner of the Superior Court, administered the Oaths of Office to the following Board members: (i) Bonnie E. Burr, (ii) Erik M. Clemons, (iii) Karen DuBois-Walton, (iv) Elwood Exley, Jr., (v) Martha Prou, (vi) Awilda Reasco, and (vii) Malia K. Sieve. Copies of the Oaths of Office are enclosed in the official file of this meeting.

II. Public Participation

Chairperson Taylor stated that public participation had been received online and the public comments were available on the website.

X. Items for Discussion

A. End-of-Year Presentation by the State Student Advisory Council on Education

Chairperson Taylor asked the Board for a motion to take agenda item X.A., End-of-Year Presentation by the State Student Advisory Council on Education, out of agenda order for consideration by the Board at this time.

Mrs. Benham moved, Ms. Burr seconded, that agenda item X.A. be taken out of agenda order for consideration by the Board. The motion passed unanimously.

State Student Advisory Council on Education (SSACE) End-of-Year Presentation

Ms. Cherese Miller, Director of Student Activities, Connecticut Association of Schools, introduced the students who would be presenting SSACE's end-of-year report to the State Board of Education as follows:

1. Aliana Castro – Old Saybrook High School
2. Beth Christensen – Northwestern Regional High School
3. Ashley Duong – Branford High School
4. Nina Faynshtayn – Hall High School
5. Samuel Gibson – East Hampton High School
6. Carolyn Ives – Farmington High School
7. Emmanuel Mokel – South Windsor High School
8. Ciara Ortiz-Diaz – The Sound School
9. Rebecca Wozniak – Orville H. Pratt High School
10. Natalia Wyzkowski – Derby High School
11. Mariam Khan – Hamden High School

Ms. Miller thanked Commissioner Cardona for allowing the students to do the research and for the opportunity to present to the Board. Ms. Miller also thanked to Glen Peterson, and John Sieller for working with the students to get them to where they are today.

For 2019-20, SSACE focused its attention on: (i) School Climate, and (ii) Student Voice. The students presented a PowerPoint that outlined their discussions. The student created four subgroups of (i) Mental Health, (ii) Restorative Justice, (iii) Diversity and Inclusion, and (iv) Student Voice. A copy of the presentation is in the official file of this meeting.

Commissioner Cardona and the members of the Board thanked the SSACE students for their informative and inspiring presentation.

III. Executive Session

The Board did not meet in executive session.

IV. Consideration of Minutes

A roll call vote was taken for the Minutes.

A. May 13, 2020, State Board of Education Meeting

Dr. López moved, Mrs. Reasco seconded, that the Board adopt the minutes of the May 13, 2020, State Board of Education Meeting.

VOTE ON

MOTION:	In favor:	Benham, Burr, Clemons, DuBois-Walton, Exley, Harris, López, Prou, Reasco, Sieve, Taylor
	Opposed:	0
	Abstained:	0
	Absent:	0

Motion carried unanimously.

V. Report of the Commissioner

Commissioner Cardona opened with a special recognition of thanks to the SSACE students. He stated that students will need to be part of the solution of the pandemic and racial injustice, and listening to the SSACE students inspired him with hope and confidence for the future.

Commissioner Cardona provided a summary of some of the activities at the agency.

Race and Anti-racist Strategies. Commissioner Cardona expressed that in addition to COVID, the SDE gave voice to the challenges happening in our country. The SDE has generated resources in print, video, and webinar opportunities for educators across the state to engage in the work of making sure that we have inclusive environments where our students feel safe and comfortable emotionally when they return to school.

Summer School Guidance. Commissioner Cardona reported that the summer school guidance has been distributed to school districts and the Board. The rules for summer school provides for more specificity and it is important that the message is that health and safety is our primary measure to engage students.

Fall Reopening. Guidance. Commissioner Cardona stated that the CSDE is working on guidance with daily conversations with stakeholders and the Department of Public Health taking place. The health and safety of our communities is going to be driving every decision that is made.

He highlighted the following agency activities:

- o Agency meetings with the Reopen Committee.

- Regional advisory teams with input from families, teachers, superintendents, and school leaders providing feedback on ways to reopen.
- Weekly educational partner calls with presidents of AFT, CEA, CAPSS, CABE, and CAS.
- Agency participation calls with the Council of Chief State School Officers.
- Conference calls with Commissioners from different states.
- Commissioner Cardona visited two districts over the last week to see how they were distributing food and books.
- The Educational Supports and Wellness area of our agency has supported the serving of approximately over 7 million meals in the State of Connecticut since the pandemic took place.
- CSDE is focusing on making social emotional learning a part of our strategy in Connecticut with increased efforts to provide social emotional support and guidance support to districts.
- CSDE's professional support series for districts and families is up to the fourth version of professional development opportunities for districts. The SDE is promoting district best practices.
- The laptops and books are being distributed.
- Partnering with CPTV to get public television to be a partner in the process as we think about creative strategies.
- Participating in different roundtables and education workforce committee meetings.
- Created a Thought Exchange to get student voice.
- A heavy focus on Special education guidance and support. We are continuing to work with our partners in special education to see how we can best support our special needs learners.
- Talent Office continues to thrive for the diversity in our teaching ranks. A virtual career fair was held recently under the leadership of Dr. Shuana Tucker. The EdRising efforts to get our students to think about a career in teaching is underway.
- The creation of four resource guides with updates on professional learning opportunities for families and districts to engage with students for academic learning with free resources for districts.

Student Voice Update

Commissioner Cardona called Equal Employment Opportunity Director Levy Gillespie and Chief Performance Officer Ajit Gopalakrishnan for their reports on developing student voice.

Mr. Gopalakrishnan reported that at the request of the Commissioner, the SDE reached out to the RESC Alliance and established a Thought Exchange. A Thought Exchange allows students to express their thoughts in their own words. Mr. Gopalakrishnan reported that over 17,000 students across the state have participated in the Exchange and a summary of what students are saying in terms of how things should be different when school reopens will be reported.

Mr. Gillespie reported that he was to capture student voice through conversation. He has collaborated with SERC to establish a student voice focus group. As information is collected, it will be reported to the Commissioner and SDE leadership.

Commissioner Cardona concluded his report by stating that the SDE will continue work on student voice as a regular practice as a way for districts to engage and to build strategies.

The Board members then engaged Commissioner Cardona in discussion on student voice.

VI. Items Requiring Action

A. Appointment to the State Education Resource Center Board of Directors

Dr. López moved, Mrs. DuBois-Walton seconded, that the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-357a (b) (1) (B) of the Connecticut General Statutes, appoint Erin D. Benham to the State Education Resource Center Board of Directors for a term coterminous with that of the Governor or until a successor has been appointed and qualified, whichever is longer, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

VOTE ON

MOTION:	In favor:	Benham, Burr, Clemons, DuBois-Walton, Exley, Harris, López, Prou, Reasco, Sieve, Taylor
	Opposed:	0
	Abstained:	0
	Absent:	0

Motion carried unanimously.

VII. Report of the Chair

Chairperson Taylor did not provide a report.

VIII. Financial Matters

Chief Financial Officer Kathy Demsey gave notice that we were in the process of closing the fiscal year and getting out all federal funding for COVID, and a report would not be provided.

IX. Consent Agenda

Chairperson Taylor asked the Board members if any report was being requested removed from the Consent agenda.

Mrs. Sieve requested that agenda IX.F., Renewal of State Charter – Interdistrict School for Arts and Communication, New London, be removed from the Consent agenda for discussion.

Mr. Harris moved, Ms. Burr seconded, that the Board approve the following Consent agenda items: IX.A., Approval of State Board of Education Committee Assignments, IX.B., Renewal of State Charter – Booker T. Washington Academy, New Haven, IX.C., Renewal of State Charter – Highville Charter School, New Haven, IX.D., Renewal of State Charter – Capital Preparatory Harbor School, Bridgeport, IX.E., Renewal of State Charter – Jumoke Academy Charter School, Hartford, IX.G., Approval of Commissioner’s Network Extension for Pearson School, Winchester, IX.H., Approval of Commissioner’s Network Extension for Clinton Avenue School, New Haven, IX.I., Approval of Commissioner’s Network Extension for Batcheller Early Education Center, Winchester, IX.J., Approval of Commissioner’s Network Turnaround Plan: Michael F. Wallace Middle School, Waterbury, IX.K., Approval of Commissioner’s Network Turnaround Plan: North End Middle School, Waterbury, IX.L., Approval of Commissioner’s Network Turnaround Plan: West Side Middle School, Waterbury, IX.M., Approval of Commissioner’s Network Turnaround Plan: Derby Middle School, Derby, and IX.N., Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) State Plan.

A roll call vote was taken for the Consent agenda.

A. Approval of State Board of Education Committee Assignments

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to Article II, Section 4, of its Bylaws, approves the following assignments to the State Board of Education standing committees:

Academic Standards and Assessment Committee

Erik M. Clemons, Chair

Estela López

Martha Paluch Prou

Awilda Reasco

Malia K. Sieve

Accountability and Support Committee

Estela López, Chair
Erin D. Benham
Bonnie E. Burr
Elwood Exley, Jr.
Donald F. Harris, Jr.

Finance, Audit, and Budget Committee

Allan B. Taylor, Chair
Karen DuBois-Walton
Martha Paluch Prou
Robert J. Trefry

Legislation and Policy Development Committee

Erin D. Benham, Chair
Bonnie E. Burr
Karen DuBois-Walton
Elwood Exley, Jr.
Donald F. Harris, Jr.
Malia K. Sieve
Robert J. Trefry

and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

B. Renewal of State Charter – Booker T. Washington Academy, New Haven

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to subsection (g) of Section 10-66bb of the Connecticut General Statutes, renews the charter of Booker T. Washington Academy from July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2023, subject to the Commissioner's June 3, 2020, memorandum to the State Board of Education, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

C. Renewal of State Charter – Highville Charter School, New Haven

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to subsection (g) of Section 10-66bb of the Connecticut General Statutes, renews the charter of Highville Charter School from July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2023, subject to the Commissioner's June 3, 2020, memorandum to the State Board of Education, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

D. Renewal of State Charter – Capital Preparatory Harbor School, Bridgeport

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to subsection (g) of Section 10-66bb of the Connecticut General Statutes, renews the charter of Capital Preparatory Harbor School from July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2023, subject to the Commissioner's June 3, 2020, memorandum to the State Board of Education, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

E. Renewal of State Charter – Jumoke Academy Charter School, Hartford

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to subsection (g) of Section 10-66bb of the Connecticut General Statutes, renews the charter of Jumoke Academy Charter School from July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2023, subject to the Commissioner's June 3, 2020, memorandum to the State Board of Education, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

G. Approval of Commissioner's Network Extension for Pearson School, Winchester

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-223h of the Connecticut General Statutes, approves continued participation of Pearson School, Winchester, in the Commissioner's Network for an additional year commencing July 1, 2020, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action, including, but not limited to, expending such funds as may be necessary to execute and implement the foregoing.

H. Approval of Commissioner's Network Extension for Clinton Avenue School, New Haven

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-223h of the Connecticut General Statutes, approves continued participation of Clinton Avenue School, New Haven, in the Commissioner's Network for an additional year commencing July 1, 2020, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action, including, but not limited to, expending such funds as may be necessary to execute and implement the foregoing.

I. Approval of Commissioner's Network Extension for Batcheller Early Education Center, Winchester

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-223h of the Connecticut General Statutes, approves continued participation of Batcheller Early Education Center, Winchester, in the Commissioner's Network for an additional year commencing July 1, 2020, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action, including, but not limited to, expending such funds as may be necessary to execute and implement the foregoing.

J. Approval of Commissioner's Network Turnaround Plan: Michael F. Wallace Middle School, Waterbury

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-223h of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended by Section 258 of Public Act 15-5, adopts and approves the Turnaround Plan for Michael F. Wallace Middle School in Waterbury for the Commissioner's Network, subject to the conditions noted in the Commissioner's June 3, 2020, Executive Summary to the State Board of Education, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action, including,

but not limited to, expending such funds as may be necessary to execute and implement the foregoing.

K. Approval of Commissioner's Network Turnaround Plan: North End Middle School, Waterbury

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-223h of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended by Section 258 of Public Act 15-5, adopts and approves the Turnaround Plan for North End Middle School in Waterbury for the Commissioner's Network, subject to the conditions noted in the Commissioner's June 3, 2020, Executive Summary to the State Board of Education, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action, including, but not limited to, expending such funds as may be necessary to execute and implement the foregoing.

L. Approval of Commissioner's Network Turnaround Plan: West Side Middle School, Waterbury

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-223h of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended by Section 258 of Public Act 15-5, adopts and approves the Turnaround Plan for West Side Middle School in Waterbury for the Commissioner's Network, subject to the conditions noted in the Commissioner's June 3, 2020, Executive Summary to the State Board of Education, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action, including, but not limited to, expending such funds as may be necessary to execute and implement the foregoing.

M. Approval of Commissioner's Network Turnaround Plan: Derby Middle School, Derby

RESOLVED, RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-223h of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended by Section 258 of Public Act 15-5, adopts and approves the Turnaround Plan for Derby Middle School in Derby for the Commissioner's Network, subject to the conditions noted in the Commissioner's June 3, 2020, Executive Summary to the State Board of Education, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action, including, but not limited to, expending such funds as may be necessary to execute and implement the foregoing.

N. Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) State Plan

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education approves the Draft Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) State Plan and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

VOTE ON

MOTION: In favor: Benham, Burr, Clemons, DuBois-Walton, Exley, Harris,
López, Prou, Reasco, Sieve, Taylor
Opposed: 0
Abstained: 0
Absent: 0

Motions carried unanimously.

IX.

F. Renewal of State Charter – Interdistrict School for Arts and Communication, New London

Mrs. Sieve read a prepared statement to acknowledge the experiences and concerns of students, staff, and parents regarding Dr. Nicholas Spera. A condition was requested that ISSAC appear before the Accountability and Support Committee on an annual basis throughout the length of its charter.

Dr. López moved, Mr. Harris seconded, that the Board approve agenda item IX.F., Renewal of State Charter – Interdistrict School for Arts and Communication, New London.

A roll call vote was taken for agenda item IX.F.

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to subsection (g) of Section 10-66bb of the Connecticut General Statutes, renews the charter of Interdistrict School for Arts and Communication, from July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2023, subject to the Commissioner's June 3, 2020, memorandum to the State Board of Education, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

VOTE ON

MOTION: In favor: Benham, Burr, Clemons, DuBois-Walton, Exley, Harris,
López, Prou, Reasco, Sieve, Taylor
Opposed: 0
Abstained: 0
Absent: 0

Motion carried unanimously.

X. Items for Discussion

There were no further Discussion agenda items for consideration.

XI. Committee Reports

A. Academic Standards and Assessment

Mr. Clemons reported they were trying to confirm a June meeting, but there was a confirmed meeting for September 14, 2020.

B. Accountability and Support

Dr. López reported that the committee met twice in May to review the charter renewals and Commissioner Networks. Also, Bonnie and Woody were welcomed as new committee members. Dr. López made an invitation to fellow Board members to attend the committee meetings.

C. Finance, Audit, and Budget

Chairperson Taylor reported that the committee did not meet, but would now be able to schedule a meeting.

D. Legislation and Policy Development

Mrs. Benham reported that the committee did not meet that morning. Mrs. Benham confirmed that the committee would be meeting on June 17th before the Board meeting.

E. Connecticut Technical Education and Career System Board

CTECS Chairman Trefry reported on the CTECS graduation. He stated that each school is coming up with its own graduation plans within the state guidance. There are creative in-person by trade areas, virtual ceremonies, drive-in celebrations, social media campaigns, and the delivering of lawn signs. For school reopening, they are working with Commissioner Cardona and unions. Summer school is being planned for in person and virtual. Freshman orientation will be virtual. Mr. Trefry reported on a new program for protective service at Vinal Tech. They set up command centers and provide weekly information reports to the feds. The students are getting live experience in the process.

F. NASBE

No report was presented.

Conversation on Race

Mr. Clemons spoke on the need to continuing to think deeply on the death of George Floyd and the aftermath in this country. Mr. Clemons shared that as a black man walking in this world how he has always had to prepare himself and strategize to not become like George Floyd, and now he must explain this to his daughters. Mr. Clemons stated that we will have students going

to school with this trauma. We need to think deeply as to what our response to these children will be. A discussion followed on race and equity in education.

Commissioner Cardona stated that there are overt acts and covert acts of racism. There is a role for everyone to connect. He stated that we have a responsibility to be just as fed up with this form of institutional racism. We need to be outraged and continue to be focused on this. We must advocate every day for education and rule out these systems. This has to become the fabric of what we do in public education.

Deputy Commissioner Charlene Russell-Tucker invited the Board members to a presentation on Tuesday, June 16, 2020, on Dr. Daren Graves's book titled, *Schooling or Critical Consciousness: Engaging Black and Latinx Youth in Analyzing, Navigating, and Challenging Racial Justice*.

Chairperson Taylor adjourned the meeting at 11:59 a.m.

Prepared by: _____
Dr. Miguel A. Cardona, Secretary
State Board of Education