

**Connecticut State Board of Education  
Hartford**

**The Legislation and Policy Development Committee**

Wednesday, November 3, 2021, 8:30 a.m.

Malia K. Sieve, Chair

Donald F. Harris, Jr., Bonnie E. Burr, Karen Dubois-Walton, Robert Trefry, Elwood Exley, Jr., and  
Martha Paluch Prou

**Minutes**

*(Approved December 1, 2021)*

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State, the Board of Education Legislation and Policy Development Committee met in person on November 3, 2021.

**I. Call to Order**

Committee Chair Malia K. Sieve called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. Also present were Committee members: Bonnie E. Burr, Karen DuBois-Walton, Elwood Exley, Jr., Donald F. Harris, Jr., Robert J. Trefry, and Student Board Members Rishabh Bhandari and Natalie Bandura.

Also present were the following Department of Education staff members: Michael McKeon, Director of Legal and Governmental Affairs; Irene Parisi, Chief Academic Officer; Keith Norton, Chief Strategic Planning Officer; Laura Anastasio, Attorney, Legal and Governmental Affairs Office; and Eric Scoville, Communications Director.

**Committee Member Absent:** Martha Paluch Prou

**Presenters:**

Administrative school staff from Fairfield Public Schools - Mike Cummings, Superintendent, Dr. Zakia Parrish, Fairfield Public Schools Executive Director of Operations and Processes; Christine Vitale, Board of Education Chair and Nick Aysseh, Board Vice-Chair

**II. Approval of Minutes – September 1, 2021**

The Committee unanimously voted to approve the minutes for September 1, 2021.

**III. Approval of Minutes – October 6, 2021**

The Committee unanimously voted to approve the minutes for October 6, 2021.

**IV. Review and Discussion: Fairfield Board of Education Proposed Amended Racial Imbalance Plan**

Representatives from the Fairfield Public Schools met with the Committee regarding the status of their plan to remediate racial imbalance within its district. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Fairfield Board of Education, as well as the Superintendent of the Fairfield Public Schools, discussed actions the Board had taken to address this issue. They added that they had been moving forward with additional steps but that their efforts were stalled by the COVID pandemic and consequent closing of schools. The Fairfield representatives advised that since the reopening of schools, they have been focused on what they termed a return to “normalcy.” They emphasized their ongoing commitment to attain greater racial balance, but they requested additional time to effectuate next steps. There was discussion about possible redistricting, although the Fairfield representatives cited the inherent concerns and lengthy process it entails. The Committee expressed concerns that this process had been ongoing for a number of years, noting that Fairfield had previously appeared before it on this same topic. The Committee urged Fairfield to move forward, and, to that end, the Committee requested that Fairfield provide a detailed plan of action with a timeline of events and to return and meet with the Committee again in May 2022.

**V. Adjournment**

The Committee adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

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