

CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford

Minutes
State Board of Education Meeting
April 7, 2021
(Approved May 5, 2021)

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State and posted on the agency's Web site, the members of State Board of Education (hereinafter "Board") met on Wednesday, April 7, 2021, in Plaza North Meeting Room C and D of the State Office Building, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Hartford, Connecticut, and via GoToWebinar. A GoToWebinar registration link was provided to allow for public attendance to the virtual meeting. This virtual meeting was livestreamed (<https://youtu.be/B-qaVY57EkY>.) to allow for public access.

I. Call to Order

Vice Chairperson Estela López called the meeting to order at 9:34 a.m.

Present: Estela López, Vice Chairperson
Erin D. Benham
Bonnie E. Burr (via GoToWebinar)
Dr. Karen DuBois-Walton (via GoToWebinar)
Elwood Exley, Jr. (via GoToWebinar)
Donald F. Harris, Jr.
Martha Paluch Prou
Awilda Reasco (via GoToWebinar)
Malia K. Sieve (via GoToWebinar)
Robert J. Trefry, Ex Officio

Absent: Erik M. Clemons
Dr. Jane Gates, Ex Officio

II. Public Participation

Vice Chair López stated that three written submissions were received for Public Participation via (i) e-mail communication submitted to SDE.StateBoard@ct.gov, and (ii) two webinar registrations as a speaker at the meeting. All written communications received were shared with the Board and will be posted on the Board's Web site.

1. Jane M. Gangi, Ph.D., submitted a written statement on stopping standardized testing in a pandemic and going forward.

2. Ann Marie Mulready, Ph.D., Connecticut Association for Reading Research (CARR), spoke on H.B. 6620, *An Act Concerning the Right to Read and Addressing Certain Opportunity Gaps*.
3. Chris Drewry, Treasurer, American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, (AACTE-CT Chapter) and Associate Dean, School of Education and Professional Studies Eastern Connecticut State University, spoke on AACTE-CT Educator Preparation Programs.

III. Executive Session

The Board did not meet in executive session.

IV. Consideration of Minutes

A. March 3, 2021, State Board of Education Meeting

Board Member Benham moved, Board Member Harris seconded, that the Board adopt the minutes of the March 3, 2021, State Board of Education Meeting.

VOTE ON

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

Motion carried unanimously.

B. March 26, 2021, State Board of Education Retreat

Board Member Benham moved, Board Member DuBois-Walton seconded, that the Board adopt the minutes of the March 26, 2021, State Board of Education Retreat.

VOTE ON

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

Motion carried unanimously.

V. Report of the Commissioner

Acting Commissioner Charlene Russell-Tucker referenced her written report that was distributed to the Board. She highlighted the following items:

- Health and Safety Tuesdays continue weekly, averaging over 600 participants.
- The DPH and CSDE partnered to issue the **Finish Strong** guidance identifying continued priorities for the 2020-21 academic year and into the summer
- Joint DPH and CSDE Guidance on Interim Considerations for Spring 2021 End-of-Year School Events
- Accountability Waiver submitted to USED
- Chief of Staff/Legislative Liaison Laura Stefon has been monitoring 300 proposals for the Agency in 19 legislative committees
- Launched AccelerateCT Education Taskforce
- Launched SEL Assessment System
- Launched Special Populations Roundtable
- Launched an Employee Advisory and Diversity Committee

VI. Items Requiring Action

There were no Items Requiring Action on the agenda.

VII. Report of the Chair

Vice Chairperson López provided a tribute to former Chairperson Allan Taylor. He was appointed to the State Board of Education in 1994 and appointed chairman in 2005. Vice Chair López wanted to recognize Mr. Taylor and honor his 16 years of leadership as chair.

VIII. Financial Matters

No report was presented.

IX. Consent Agenda

Vice Chairperson López asked for a motion for the Consent agenda.

Board Member Benham moved, Board Member Harris seconded, that the Board approve the following Consent agenda items: IX.A., Approval of Commissioner's Network Extension for Wexler-Grant Community School, New Haven, IX.B., Approval of Commissioner's Network Extension for New Britain High School, New Britain, and IX.C., Approval of Commissioner's Network Extension for Windham High School, Windham.

A. Approval of Commissioner’s Network Extension for Wexler-Grant, Community School, New Haven

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-223h of the Connecticut General Statutes, approves continued participation of Wexler-Grant Community School, New Haven, in the Commissioner’s Network for an additional year commencing July 1, 2021, and directs the Acting Commissioner to take the necessary action, including, but not limited to, expending such funds as may be necessary to execute and implement the foregoing.

B. Approval of Commissioner’s Network Extension for New Britain High School, New Britain

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-223h of the Connecticut General Statutes, approves continued participation of New Britain High School, New Britain, in the Commissioner’s Network for an additional year commencing July 1, 2021, and directs the Acting Commissioner to take the necessary action, including, but not limited to, expending such funds as may be necessary to execute and implement the foregoing.

C. Approval of Commissioner’s Network Extension for Windham High School, Windham

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-223h of the Connecticut General Statutes, approves continued participation of Windham High School, Windham, in the Commissioner’s Network for an additional year commencing July 1, 2021, and directs the Acting Commissioner to take the necessary action, including, but not limited to, expending such funds as may be necessary to execute and implement the foregoing.

VOTE ON

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

Motions carried unanimously.

X. Items for Discussion

A. CAPSS Blueprint to Transform Connecticut’s Public Schools

Fran Rabinowitz, Executive Director, Connecticut Association of Public Schools (CAPSS), and Paul Freeman, Superintendent, Guilford Public Schools, presented the ***CAPSS Blueprint to Transform Connecticut’s Public Schools***.

The *CAPSS Blueprint* articulates a comprehensive set of 30 recommendations that CAPSS believes will move Connecticut closer to assuring that every child receives the high-quality teaching and learning which they are owed.

Ms. Rabinowitz and Mr. Freeman requested the Board consider and incorporate the CAPSS recommendations into the framework of developing the SBE's next five-year plan.

B. Agency Update

Acting Commissioner Russell-Tucker introduced and described subject matters that would be presented under the Agency Updates.

CSDE's American Rescue Plan Allocations

Chief Financial Officer Kathy Demsey reported that Connecticut would receive \$1.1 billion under the American Rescue Plan (ARP).

ESSER II Update

Deputy Commissioner Desi Nesmith provided an update and thanked CAPPS for the partnership to provide Technical Assistance Administrators (TAA) to work directly with district superintendents regarding their federal funding.

Procurement of Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA)

Acting Commissioner Russell-Tucker shared that the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) had entered into a partnership with Aperture Education to provide a statewide SEL assessment for K-12 schools. Division Director Glen Peterson provided an overview.

Learning Models

Chief Performance Officer Ajit Gopalakrishnan reported that the period of March 29-April 2, 2021, over 70 percent of districts, about 197 districts, are now operating in a predominately fully in-person model; and five districts are operating fully remote. There are only two districts that have not operated in a hybrid or in-person model this year.

Professional Learning Opportunities for Families and Districts

- Implementing African American/Black and Puerto Rican/Latino Studies in High Schools, to support Social Studies Curriculum Leaders
- Self-Care and Social Emotional Learning (SEL) for Parents and Caregivers (presented in English and Spanish).

Shoutout!

- *Commissioner's Network Ignite Session – March 26, 2021*. The Turnaround Office brought together 19 schools across 9 districts to highlight impactful strategies from the field celebrating school's to improve outcomes.
- *Comprehensive Center Virtual Learning Series (CCNETWORK)*. Topic: How State Departments of Education can leverage principles of design thinking to create an

ecosystem of support for teaching and learning during a period of rapid transformation.

- *1st Annual Statewide Educators Rising Conference – March 31, 2021*. Chief Talent Office Shuana Tucker stated that Connecticut launched its own EdRising model in September 2020 and at this first conference there were more than 580 participants.

AccelerateCT Education Task Force

Director of Innovation and Partnerships, Chris Soto presented an overview. AccelerateCT Education Task Force is co-chaired by the CSDE in parallel with the Office of the Governor (OTG). The Task Force will develop a statewide blueprint and programming for school districts and communities to consider as they implement learning acceleration strategies and programs in the short- and long-term.

XI. Committee Reports

A. Academic Standards and Assessment

Vice Chair López reported that the committee is scheduled to meet on April 13, 2021.

B. Accountability and Support

Vice Chair López reported that the committee did not meet in March and would not meet in April.

C. Finance, Audit, and Budget

Vice Chair López reported that the committee did not meet.

D. Legislation and Policy Development

Board Member Benham reported that the committee met and had two updates. One from Division Director John Frassinelli on the Healthy and Balanced Living Curriculum Framework. The second update was by Chief of Staff/Legislative Liaison Laura Stefon on the legislative bills and meetings with committees.

E. Connecticut Technical Education and Career System Board

Superintendent Wihbey reported that they were gearing up for the reopening of all CTECS schools in May. CTECS did a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) Analysis of what needs to be thought about to reopen. CTECS will be working on trade remediation over the summer to include graduating students. Mr. Wihbey reported on the status of the enrollment process for next fall.

F. NASBE

Vice Chair López also provided further tribute for former Chairperson Allan Taylor's NASBE leadership. Mr. Taylor was elected as the Northeast Area Director of NASBE in 2014-15 and 2008-09, president-elect of NASBE (2010), and served as NASBE president in 2011. Mr. Taylor was selected by NASBE as a recipient of the 2014 Distinguished Service Award.

Board Member Exley reported that Board members Benham, Reasco, and Exley attended the NASBE Virtual 2021 Legislative Conference held on March 22-23, 2021, and had sent a report to members of the Board.

G. SERC

Board Member Benham reported that SERC had applied for the W.K. Kellogg's Foundation Racial Equity Grant for 2030 and it has been moved to the next phase.

Vice Chairperson López adjourned the meeting at 11:55 a.m.

Prepared by: _____
Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Secretary
State Board of Education