

**Connecticut State Board of Education  
Hartford**

Accountability and Support Committee

**Thursday, May 19, 2022**

450 Columbus Blvd.  
Plaza North Hearing Room J  
Hartford, Connecticut.

**Minutes**

**(Approved on September 21, 2022)**

**I. Call to Order**

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State, Committee Chairperson Erin D. Benham called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m.

Committee                    Erin D. Benham, Chairperson  
Members Present:        Karen Dubois-Walton (via phone)  
                                  Donald F. Harris, Jr.  
                                  Elwood Exley, Jr.  
                                  Malia K. Sieve

Committee  
Member Absent:

Staff Present:            Lisa Lamenzo  
                                  Irene Parisi  
                                  Leslie Navarrete  
                                  Nicole Jones  
                                  Jennifer Webb  
                                  Greg Dresko  
                                  Iris White  
                                  Margaret Hughes  
                                  Dr. Judy Carson  
                                  Kari Sullivan

Guests Present:         Anne Henderson, Senior Consultant, National Association for Family, School and  
                                  Community Engagement  
                                  Stephen Proffitt, Director for Special Education Programs and Instructional Design, SERC  
                                  Dr. Michelle Baker, Principal, Wilby High School  
                                  Tyrone Elliot, Director/Principal, The Bridge Academy  
                                  Pamela Cavanagh, Principal, Windham High School  
                                  Jody Goeler, Superintendent, Hamden Public Schools  
                                  Michelle Coogan, Principal, Hamden Middle School  
                                  Dr. Leslie Torres-Rodriguez, Superintendent, Hartford Public Schools  
                                  Marjorie Rice, Principal, McDonough Middle School

**II. Approval of Minutes**

Elwood Exley, Jr., moved, Donald F. Harris, Jr., seconded, that the committee approve the minutes of the February 10, 2022, Accountability and Support Committee meeting.

Vote: In Favor: Exley, Benham, Sieve, Dubois-Walton, and Harris  
Abstained: 0  
Opposed: 0  
Absent: 0

Donald F. Harris, Jr., moved, Malia K. Sieve., seconded, that the committee approve the minutes of the April 14, 2022, Accountability and Support Committee meeting.

Vote: In Favor: Exley, Benham, Sieve, Dubois-Walton, and Harris  
Abstained: 0  
Opposed: 0  
Absent: 0

**III. The CSDE High School Community of Practice**

Division Director of the CSDE Turnaround Office Lisa Lamenzo provided an overview of the family and school partnership with respect to the Community of Practice for High Schools. She shared the CSDE High School Community of Practice’s vision statement which centered around participating high schools co-developing and implementing plans with staff, students, and families to strengthen home and school relationship to impact relationships, student achievement, attendance, and graduation rates. Ms. Lamenzo introduced Education Consultant Iris White who provided an overview of the various partners involved in the CSDE High School Community of Practice – the CSDE Turnaround Office, The CSDE Bureau of Special Education, the CSDE Academic Office, the CSDE Charter Office, the CSDE Office of Student Supports and Organizational Effectiveness, SERC, and National Association for Family, School and Community Engagement. Ms. White shared how the Community of Practice idea started during a visit at Wilby High School, Waterbury with Dr. Judy Carson and Anne Henderson. Ms. White introduced Education Consultant Greg Dresko who provided the names of the 7 participating schools – The Bridge Academy, Bridgeport, Hartford Public High School, Hartford, John F. Kennedy High School, Waterbury, New Britain High School, New Britain, New London High School, New London, Wilby High School, Waterbury, and Windham High School, Windham, and spoke on the important role that student and family voices played in the process.

Program Manager for School-Family-Community Partnerships of the CSDE Dr. Judy Carson went on to explain the development and timeline of the Family/School Partnership Community of Practice for High Schools and Senior Consultant for National Association for Family, School and Community Engagement Anne Henderson shared the findings from their site visits and focus groups with the students. Director for Special Education Programs and Instructional Design for SERC Stephen Proffitt proceeded to provide an overview of the technical assistance SERC provided to the Family/School Partnership Community of Practice for High Schools and provided an overview of the action planning for school year 2022-23. Attending principals shared their reflections on what they learned from the student listening sessions and the steps they have taken to implement what they heard.

Chair Benham opened the floor for questions and comments. The committee commended the Community of Practice for High Schools initiative and participating high school principals.

**IV. Hamden Middle School, Hamden**

Division Director of the CSDE Turnaround Office Lisa Lamenzo provided an overview of the Commissioner Network planning year process and the support given to Commission Network planning schools to the Committee. Ms. Lamenzo welcomed Superintendent of Hamden Public Schools Jody Goeler and Hamden Middle School Principal Michelle Coogan to provide an overview of the development of their Turnaround Committee and plan. Hamden Middle School highlighted the CSDE support in the audit process of the Commissioner Network process and the importance of leveraging family voice in their Turnaround Committee and plan.

Hamden Middle School Principal Michelle Coogan went on to describe the school's turnaround plan in the areas of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations. Based on the school's initial audit, the school's Turnaround Committee developed a plan to increase teacher capacity through initiatives like providing continuous high-quality professional development and teachers collaborative planning time. To support the school's Turnaround plan, they plan to restructure student's schedule and offer high-quality instruction, enrichment and intervention opportunities as well as programs that meet student's interests. Additionally, Hamden Middle School has partnered with the YMCA to offer a leadership program to students and aims to strengthen school and family relationships and their positive behavior interventions and support systems.

Chair Benham opened the floor for questions and comments. The committee commended Superintendent of Hamden Public Schools Jody Goeler and Hamden Middle School Principal Michelle Coogan for their work thus far and looks forward to future progress.

**V. McDonough Middle School, Hartford**

Division Director of the CSDE Turnaround Office Lisa Lamenzo welcomed Superintendent of Hartford Public Schools Dr. Leslie Torres-Rodriguez and McDonough Middle School Principal Marjorie Rice to provide an overview of the planning year for McDonough Middle School. Dr. Leslie Torres-Rodriguez provided a high-level overview of the redesigning of Hartford public schools where middle schools such as McDonough now have pathways to Hartford Public High School, a current Commissioner's Network School.

McDonough Middle School Principal Marjorie Rice shared highlights of their school's turnaround plan. Based on the school's initial audit, the school's Turnaround Committee developed a plan to build teacher capacity, strengthen culture and climate, instruction, and operations through enhancing the new teacher academy, providing all staff the opportunity to earn a cross-endorsement in TESOL/bilingual education; refining and implementing a hybrid model of restorative practices and Positive Behavior Intervention Support, implementing school-wide strategies to support attendance, expanding community partnerships; providing teachers ongoing professional learning opportunities on differentiating Tier 1 instruction, implementing a robust multi-tiered system of support and strengthening Tier 1 instruction; and implement a focused school schedule.

Chair Benham opened the floor for questions and comments. The committee commended Superintendent of Hartford Public Schools Dr. Leslie Torres-Rodriguez and McDonough Middle School Principal Marjorie Rice for their work thus far and looks forward to future progress.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:39 p.m.

Prepared by: Leslie Navarrete