

# Connecticut State Board of Education Hartford

## State Board of Education Meeting

December 7, 2022

(Approved January 11, 2023)

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") held a meeting on Wednesday, December 7, 2022, in Plaza North Meeting Room C and D of the State Office Building, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Hartford, Connecticut. Public access to the building allowed for public attendance at the meeting.

The meeting can be viewed here: [CT-N: State Board of Education December 7th Meeting.](#)

### I. Call to Order

Chairperson Karen DuBois-Walton called the meeting to order at 9:37 a.m.

Present: Karen DuBois-Walton, Chairperson  
Erin D. Benham, Vice Chairperson  
Erik M. Clemons  
Elwood Exley, Jr.  
Patricia M. Keavney-Maruca, Ex Officio  
Valli Pendyala, Student Member  
Martha Prou  
Awilda Reasco  
Malia K. Sieve  
Allan B. Taylor  
Prajna Tickoo

Absent: Bonnie E. Burr  
Donald F. Harris, Jr.  
Dr. Rai Kathuria (designee for Terrence Cheng, Ex Officio)  
Kelli-Marie Vallieres, Ex Officio

### II. Public Participation

1. Thomas Stringfellow, of Manchester, spoke on various topics.
2. Yisenia Martinez, spoke concerning bullying issues at a school.
3. Dr. Violent Jiménez Sims, Managing Director of Academics, for the CT Teacher Residency Program, spoke in support of agenda item IX.B., Approval of New Educator Preparation Program: Capitol Region Education Council, Alternate Route to Certification Program in Comprehensive Special Education. A copy of Dr. Jiménez's written testimony is in the Official File of the meeting.

### III. Executive Session

The Board did not meet in executive session.

#### **IV. Consideration of Minutes:**

##### **A. November 2, 2022, State Board of Education Meeting**

Board Member Sieve moved, Vice Chair Benham seconded, that the Board adopt the minutes of the November 2, 2022, State Board of Education Meeting.

###### **VOTE ON**

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

Motion carried unanimously.

##### **B. November 14, State Board of Education Retreat**

Board Member Taylor moved, Board Member Reasco seconded, that the Board adopt the minutes of the November 14, 2022, State Board of Education Retreat.

###### **VOTE ON**

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

Motion carried unanimously.

Chair DuBois-Walton asked the Board to move items, XI.A., Recognition of the 2023 Ann Marie Murphy Paraeducator of the Year Don Askew and Semi-Finalists; and XI.B., Recognition of CT's 2022 National Blue Ribbon Schools, to this point in the agenda. The Board unanimously agreed.

#### **XI. Items for Discussion**

##### **XI.A. Recognition of the 2023 Ann Marie Murphy Paraeducator of the Year Don Askew and Semi-Finalists**

Chair DuBois-Walton individually called the name of each paraeducator and read aloud the bios of each paraeducator into the minutes of the meeting.

- **Roberto Gonzalez:** CT River Academy
  - **Principal:** JT Foster
  - **Executive Director,** LEARN: Kate Ericson

Roberto provides support to scholars in group and one-to-one instruction, as well as in inclusion settings. He assists teachers in assessing student progress and providing them with data to inform implementation of future lesson plans. One of Roberto's greatest accomplishments is to expose students to new experiences outside of the classroom

environment. Specifically, he has taught students about the importance of the CT River Region, has started a fishing club, and is first mate on the school's 40-foot research vessel, The Goodwin Navigator. Roberto has established positive relationships with his students through the activities of his Fishing Club that have enabled them to have confidence in their own skills and abilities.

○ **Madison – Barbara Simos:** Daniel Hand High School

- Principal: Anthony Salutari, Jr.
- Superintendent: Craig Cooke

Barbara supports students in the general education classroom who have identified special education needs. This includes supporting small group instruction, assisting in adapting instructional lessons and activities under the direction of the classroom teacher, and assisting with students' behavioral management programs. Barbara believes in supporting the school community, and has done so by assisting teachers who were working remotely during COVID, chaperoning school proms, proctoring PSAT/SAT exams, and selling tickets for the Athletic Department. She is committed to being a role model for students to be responsible and moral citizens of their communities.

○ **Montville – Jennifer Lynn Kelley:** Mohegan Elementary School

- Principal: William Klinefelter
- Superintendent: Laurie Pallin

Jennifer provides direct instruction to students with autism, significant medical needs, and behavioral and academic challenges. She consistently collects data that informs academic and behavioral plans, and provides social, behavioral and academic support to students in the general education classroom. She is proud of the relationship she has with the teacher she supports, and is grateful for their collaboration and the positive impact they have had on students with challenges who become contributing members of the school community. Jennifer was asked by school administrators to become a Handle with Care instructor, a behavior management system used in crisis intervention, and has been an instructor in the district for the past 7 years.

○ **Naugatuck – Cassandra Ortiz:** Early childhood Center

- Nicole Reinhardt, Director of Special Services
- Superintendent: Christopher Montini

As a pre-school paraeducator, one of Cassie's greatest accomplishments is supporting students in their earliest years of development, including self-care life skills. She takes pride in her ability to know when to 'step up' and support her students when they experience a challenge, and knowing when to 'step back' when students need the opportunity to grow and achieve success on their own. Cassie is a Board member of the CT Partnership for Children, Inc., and has continued her professional learning by completing a Parent Leadership Training course. Her message to her Paraeducator colleagues is that each student is different, and regardless of their path, all students can aspire to the vision of the graduate.

### **2023 Anne Marie Murphy Paraeducator of the Year:**

- **Meriden – Don Askew:** Frances T. Maloney High School

- Principal Jennifer Straub
- Assistant Superintendent of Student Supports Sullivan-Kowalski

Don supports students in the Transition Learning Center, a classroom where the focus is on teaching high school students functional life skills and assisting them in earning a high school diploma or a certificate of completion. In his role, he supports students with autism, learning disabilities, intellectual disabilities, behavioral challenges and assists feeding students who are medically fragile. Don is committed to providing a safe place for students to receive instruction on proper hygiene and overall wellness needs. Don credits his close family, and specifically his grandmother, for instilling the value of making a difference in the lives of others. He has been engaged in AmeriCorps, the Boys Club, and the YMCA. Together with his family, they provide a holiday meal for those who may not be able to celebrate the holidays with their family.

Vice Chair Benham acknowledged Chief Talent Officer Shuana Tucker and Education Consultant Sharon Fuller for their work on the Anne Marie Murphy Paraeducator program.

### **XI.B. Recognition of CT's 2022 National Blue Ribbon Schools**

The U.S. Department of Education named four Connecticut Schools as 2022 National Blue Ribbon Schools. Chief Performance Officer Ajit Gopalakrishnan presented and introduced the four Blue Ribbon Schools with their superintendents and principal or school-level representative.

Mr. Gopalakrishnan provided an overview of the Blue Ribbon Process. Each school team was welcomed to the table and shared their success story and highlights of their uniqueness.

- **Booth Hill School in Trumbull**

- Dr. Martin Semmel, Superintendent, Trumbull Public Schools
- Kim Lombardi, District Math Coordinator

- **E.O. Smith High School in Regional School District 19** (Ashford, Columbia, Coventry, Eastford, Mansfield, Willington, and Windham).

- Sharon Cournoyer, Superintendent, RSD #19 Public Schools
- Louis DeLoreto, Principal, RSD #19

- **Great Plain School in Danbury**

- Kevin Walston, Superintendent, Danbury Public Schools
- Dr. Keisha Smith-Davis, Principal

- **Whiting Lane School in West Hartford**

- Andrew Morrow, Interim Superintendent
- Dr. Karen Kukish, Principal

## **V. Report of the Chair**

Chair DuBois-Walton highlighted Board Member activities as follows:

- The Board met on November 14, 2022, for a Retreat.
- Announced the appointment of the Killingly Hearing Panel consisting of Vice Chair Benham, Board Member Erik M. Clemons, and Board Member Allan B. Taylor. Student Member Praja Tickoo will participate on the panel with a nonvoting role.
- Attended the CBE/CAPSS Annual Conference with Commissioner Russell-Tucker, Vice Chair Benham, and Board Member Harris.
- Presided over the Achievement First Bridgeport Academy charter school public hearing on November 29, 2022.
- Highlighted points of interest: reading curricula and its implementation and waiver process; teacher shortage and consideration of the pipeline development.
- Attended the press conference highlighting the Department's announcement of a collaboration and process to develop the Native American studies model curriculum with recognized Tribal Nations.

## **VI. Report of the Commissioner and Agency Update**

The Commissioner referenced her written report and highlighted the following items:

- New legislatively mandated offices: the Center for Literacy Research and Reading Success under the leadership of Dr. Melissa Hickey and the Office of Dyslexia and Reading Disabilities under the leadership of Dr. Jule McCombes-Tolis.
- Remarks at the Second Annual Increasing Educator Diversity Symposium.
- Provided luncheon remarks at the CBE/CAPSS Convention. She thanked SDE staff Irene Parisi, Paul Castiglione, and Jennifer Michalek who participated on panels.

### School-Family-Community Partnerships Update

Division Director John Frassinelli and Dr. Judy Carson presented on the CT adopted definition of family engagement, guiding principles, and best practices. Dr. Carson highlighted the national recognition of the Commissioner's Roundtable being featured in a convening at the Hunt Institute and shared various network building programs and high impact practices for school-family-community engagement.

### Enrollment Data

Chief Performance Officer Ajit Gopalakrishnan provided an update on enrollment trend data for the 2022-2023 by Race and Ethnicity trends for Alliance vs. Non-Alliance Districts.

### Grade 3 Achievement

Chief Performance Officer Ajit Gopalakrishnan presented on Grade 3 achievement in English Language Arts that included a Matched Student Analysis from Grade 3 to 6 and the percentage of students below proficiency in Grade 6 based on their Grade 3 Achievement Level.

### **Special Recognition**

- The CSDE and Connecticut Native American Tribal Partnership to develop Statewide Native American Studies Model Curriculum.

### **Shoutouts!**

- Chief Talent Officer Shuana Tucker presented an update on the Second Annual Increasing Educator Diversity Symposium hosted in partnership with Quinnipiac University.

### **Congratulations!**

- Board Member Donald F. Harris, Jr. was the Philip S. Fenster Distinguished Service Award Recipient.

## **VII. Items Requiring Action**

### **A. Approval of Legislative Proposals**

Chair DuBois-Walton asked for a motion for agenda item VII.A. Board Member Sieve moved, Board Member Reasco seconded, that the State Board of Education adopts these 2023 Legislative Proposals and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

Chief of Staff/Legislative Liaison Laura Stefon introduced the agency's 2023 Legislative Proposals.

The Board engaged in questions and answers.

#### **VOTE ON**

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

Motion carried unanimously.

## **VIII. Financial Matters**

There was no financial report.

## **IX. Consent Agenda**

Chair DuBois-Walton called for a motion on the Consent agenda. Board Member Sieve moved, Board Member Prou seconded, that the Board approve the following Consent agenda items: IX.A., Approval of New Educator Preparation Program: Sacred Heart University, Advanced Certification Program in School Counseling, and IX.B., Approval of New Educator Preparation Program: Capitol Region Education Council, Alternate Route to Certification Program in Comprehensive Special Education.

### **A. Approval of New Educator Preparation Program: Sacred Heart University, Advanced Certification Program in School Counseling**

**Resolved**, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-145d-9(g)(3)(A) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, grants full approval for the period December 7, 2022, through March 31, 2026, to Sacred Heart University (SHU), with annual progress monitoring conducted using Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) annual report data

in conjunction with the CSDE Review Committee until Sacred Heart University’s CAEP spring 2025 site visit, for the purpose of certifying graduates from Sacred Heart University in the following new certification area and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

<b>Program</b>	<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Program Level</b>	<b>Program Type</b>
School Counselor	PreK-12	Advanced	Graduate

**B. Approval of New Educator Preparation Program: Capitol Region Education Council, Alternate Route to Certification Program in Comprehensive Special Education**

**Resolved**, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-145d-9(g)(3)(A) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, grants full approval for the period December 7, 2022, through October 31, 2026, to the Capitol Region Education Council (CREC) with annual progress monitoring conducted using CREC’s Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) annual report data in conjunction with the CSDE review committee until CREC’s CAEP fall 2025 site visit, for the purpose of certifying graduates from CREC in the following new certification area and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

<b>Program</b>	<b>Grades</b>	<b>Certification</b>	<b>Program Type</b>
Comprehensive Special Education	K-12	Initial	Alternate Route to Certification

**VOTE ON**

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

Motions carried unanimously.

**X. Committee Reports**

**A. Academic Standards and Assessment**

Committee Chair Clemons reported that the committee will be meeting on January 9, 2023.

**B. Accountability and Support**

Committee Chair Benham reported that the committee will be meeting on December 14, 2022.

**C. Finance, Audit, and Budget**

In the absence of Committee Chair Harris, Chief Financial Officer Kathy Demsey reported that the committee will be meeting on December 16, 2022.

**D. Legislation and Policy Development**

Committee Chair Sieve reported that the committee met earlier in the morning. The LPDC reviewed the Bylaws for language reference and clarification of the State Board of Education’s role in pre-school. She concluded that LPDC have identified a number of areas

of interest. Chair Sieve noted that the committee meeting time was changed to start at 8:00 a.m. commencing with the January 11, 2023, meeting.

**E. Connecticut Technical Education and Career System Board**

CTECS Chairperson Patricia Keavney-Maruca reported that the communications team will roll out a campaign with renewed focus on marketing to target 8<sup>th</sup> graders; the CTECS leadership is continuing its work with CSCU to explore future opportunities for collaboration, partnerships and cutting edge education and trade-based areas. CTECS Board will meet on December 14, 2022.

**F. NASBE**

Board Member Exley reported that NASBE has been quiet following the 2022 Annual Conference.

**G. SERC**

Committee Member Benham referenced her SERC report in the Supplemental Folders. She highlighted that SERC continues to work on the IEP quality training. On December 5, 2022, she observed a lesson at Cheshire High School on the African American/Black and Puerto Rican/Latino Course of Studies.

**XI. Items for Discussion** (continued)

**XI.C. Position Statement on Joint Equity in Mathematics Education**

Chief Academic Officer Irene Parisi and Math and Computer Science Education Consultant Jennifer Michalek presented. Chief Parisi introduced the joint position statement on equity and mathematics education and highlighted the primary authorship of this position statement as being the CSDE in collaboration with AMTEC, ATOMIC, and CCLM. Chief Parisi concluded that the position statement was being brought to the Board to continue the discussion on how best to continue the work to improve mathematics education and student achievement across all Connecticut schools.

Education Consultant Michalek presented on three central commitments to transform education policies and practices to engage our learners in mathematics. Ms. Michalek concluded that the position statement pushes to ensure opportunity is afforded to all CT students. Ms. Michalek recognized and thanked her colleagues from AMTEC, ATOMIC, CCLM.

Board members engaged in questions and answers.

Chair DuBois-Walton asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting, Board Member Sieve moved, Vice Chair Benham seconded.

Chair DuBois-Walton adjourned the meeting at 12:18 p.m.

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