

**Connecticut State Board of Education
Hartford**

Accountability and Support Committee

Wednesday, May 17, 2023
450 Columbus Blvd.
Plaza North, Meeting Rooms C & D
Hartford, Connecticut

**Minutes
(Approved on June 5, 2023)**

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 3:32 p.m.

Committee

Members Present: Erin D. Benham
Malia K. Sieve
Donald F. Harris, Jr.
Elwood Exley, Jr.
Dr. Karen Dubois-Walton

Committee

Members Absent:

Staff Present:

Irene Parisi
Jennifer Webb
Leslie Navarrete
Margaret Hughes

Guests Present:

Dr. Anthony Gasper, Superintendent, New Britain Public Schools
Alejandro Ortiz, Principal, Pulaski Middle School, New Britain
Andrew Mazzei, Principal, Slade Middle School, New Britain
Andrea Foligno, Principal, Smalley Elementary School, New Britain
Alyshia Perrin, Interim Superintendent, Bridgeport Public Schools
Jacqueline Simmons, Principal, Theodore Roosevelt School, Bridgeport
Christine Booth, Principal, Barnum School, Bridgeport

II. Approval of Minutes

The Accountability and Support Committee tabled the minutes of the April 19, 2023, Accountability and Support Committee meeting.

III. Pulaski Middle School (PMS), New Britain

Irene Parisi, Chief Academic Officer for the CSDE Academic Office, provided a brief overview of the three-year Commissioner's Network Turnaround Plan process. Ms. Parisi welcomed Dr. Anthony Gasper, Superintendent of New Britain Public Schools, and Alejandro Ortiz, Principal of Pulaski Middle School, to provide a progress update.

Dr. Gasper brought forth that the 2022-23 school year will be his first year as the Superintendent of New Britain Public Schools and Principal Ortiz' fourth month as PMS principal. PMS expressed their gratitude to the CSDE for their support throughout the school's three years in the Commissioner's Network. When PMS entered the Commissioner's Network, an approved turnaround plan was developed to address talent, academics, climate/culture, and operations. Some of the improvements around the abovementioned domains that PMS highlighted for the Committee were the provision of professional development focused on lesson design, student engagement, higher order thinking, and student-centered environment, implementation of walkthroughs by instructional leaders, coaches, and administrators to identify instructional trends and support the school's efforts to build teacher capacity; development of a school-wide behavior intervention system with a focus on implementing restorative practices; and expansion of positive interactions and engagement opportunities with the community, family, and school.

If the State Board of Education (SBE) approves the school's request of a one-year extension in the Commissioner's Network, PMS would like to implement a new teacher mentoring program to support teachers new to the district and/or the profession and to support retention efforts; implement a social-emotional learning (SEL) curriculum for students; expand the Multi-Tiered System of Supports through partnerships with community-based organizations; hire a certified reading teacher to provide Tier 2 interventions; and build on the SEL professional development that is offered to teachers, leaders, and staff.

The Chair opened the floor for comments and questions from the Committee.

IV. Slade Middle School (SMS), New Britain

Irene Parisi, Chief Academic Officer for the CSDE Academic Office, welcomed Dr. Anthony Gasper, Superintendent of New Britain Public Schools, and Andrew Mazzei, Principal of Slade Middle School, to provide a progress update.

SMS expressed their gratitude to the CSDE for their support throughout the school's three years in the Commissioner's Network. When SMS entered the Commissioner's Network, an approved turnaround plan was developed to address talent, academics, climate/culture, and operations. Some of the improvements around the abovementioned domains that SMS highlighted for the Committee were the implementation of coaches providing targeted support for teachers in the areas of classroom structures and routines, unpacking curriculum and assessments, and lesson design, and coaches participating in weekly meetings with the administration to monitor progress on coaching cycles and building teacher capacity; the strengthening of tiered supports for the school's positive behavioral support system through the hiring of a climate coach, partnering with external providers, training of staff, conducting walkthroughs, providing timely feedback, creating a system for restorative conversations and the development of a restorative center; and the provision of an afterschool programming to extend learning opportunities.

If the SBE approves the school's request of a one-year extension in the Commissioner's Network, SMS would like to continue the school's afterschool programming, hire a certified reading teacher to provide Tier 2 interventions; continue to build the capacity of teachers to analyze data and use data to guide planning and instruction; and expand the teacher mentoring program to support teachers new to the district and/or the profession and to support retention efforts. The Chair opened the floor for comments and questions from the Committee.

V. Smalley Elementary School (SES), New Britain

Irene Parisi, Chief Academic Officer for the CSDE Academic Office, welcomed Dr. Anthony Gasper, Superintendent of New Britain Public Schools, and Andrea Foligno, Principal, Smalley Elementary School, to provide a progress update.

SES expressed their gratitude to the CSDE for their support throughout the school's three years in the Commissioner's Network. When SES entered the Commissioner's Network, an approved turnaround plan was developed to address talent, academics, climate/culture, and operations. Some of the improvements around the abovementioned domains that SES highlighted for the Committee were the development of an extended learning model through the school's afterschool programming to support students in academics and social-emotional learning and increase attendance; implementation of tiered supports for attendance, including the initiatives of a student-run "attendance squad," monthly challenges, kindergarten parent meetings, and parent workshops; and establishment of an assessment system with an established calendar and protocols.

The focus of the three years in the Commissioner's Network has been the development of a shared and common vision for essential instructional practices and of leadership structures, practices, and systems to support SES' vision for effective instruction; the establishment of content coordinators to support targeted and intentional planning and to provide feedback and coach to staff; facility upgrades to promote collaborative spaces; and the revitalization of the school's Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and restorative practice frameworks. SES also shared that instructional leaders, coaches, and administrators provide timely and actionable feedback to teachers to ensure fidelity of implementation of professional learning and adherence to the instructional vision.

If the SBE approves the school's request of a one-year extension in the Commissioner's Network, SES would like to improve the school's data culture through weekly data teams with a focus on common formative assessments and analyzing student work samples; use Commissioner's Network funding to expand community-based afterschool programming; and build teacher capacity around the implementation of the science of reading.

The Chair opened the floor for comments and questions from the Committee.

VI. Theodore Roosevelt School (Roosevelt), Bridgeport

Irene Parisi, Chief Academic Officer for the CSDE Academic Office, welcomed Alyshia Perrin, Interim Superintendent, Bridgeport Public Schools, and Jacqueline Simmons, Principal, Theodore Roosevelt School, to provide a progress update.

Roosevelt expressed their gratitude to the CSDE for their support throughout the school's four years in the Commissioner's Network and in the school's one year of planning to develop their turnaround plan. When Roosevelt entered the Commissioner's Network, an approved turnaround plan was developed to address talent, academics, climate/culture, and operations. Roosevelt brought forth to mind that the school's first year in the Commissioner's Network started during the COVID-19 pandemic; therefore, the school utilized Commissioner's Network funds to provide students and their families with essential resources to continue learning for students. Some of the improvements around the abovementioned domains that Roosevelt highlighted for the Committee were structuring common planning sessions to focus on academic, behavioral, attendance, and instructional strategies; strengthening family-school partnerships through the hiring of a parent engagement coordinator, before school and afterschool programs for student academic and social support, including translation/interpretation services and educational materials for home to support learning; the provision of professional development in Tier 1 instruction in the areas of Next Generation Science Standards, mathematics, English language arts (ELA) and Scientific Research Based Intervention; and the provision of professional learning that focuses on planning, data analysis, accelerating learning.

If the SBE approves the school's request of a one-year extension in the Commissioner's Network, Roosevelt would like to continue to implement instructional framework, including the implementation of Connecticut Core standards aligned curricular resources; further improve the culture and climate; and implement a Multi-Tiered System of Supports for the protocols and accountability of interventionists.

The Chair opened the floor for comments and questions from the Committee.

VII. Barnum School (Barnum), Bridgeport

Irene Parisi, Chief Academic Officer for the CSDE Academic Office, welcomed Alyshia Perrin, Interim Superintendent, Bridgeport Public Schools, and Christine Booth, Principal, Barnum School, to inform the Committee on the school's Commissioner's Network Turnaround Plan which the SBE will vote for approval on June 14, 2023.

Barnum expressed their gratitude to the CSDE for their support in the school's one year of planning to develop their turnaround plan. The Commissioner's Network Turnaround Plan for Barnum School, pending the vote for approval of the SBE, is developed to address talent, academics, climate/culture, and operations. If Barnum's turnaround plan is approved, some of the proposed improvements around the abovementioned domains that Barnum plans to carry out are the implementation of an instructional coaching model for literacy and mathematics to support the improvement of Tier 1 instruction and the implementation of professional learning; the development and implementation of a Multi-Tiered System of Supports to improve student attendance and provide proactive interventions across the tiers; the provision of professional learning in research-based strategies and implementing schoolwide instructional protocols around the common instructional framework and lesson planning; and the creation and implementation of a school schedule that maximizes instructional time and staff time. The goals of Barnum's turnaround plan are to improve teaching and learning by utilizing strategies and best practices that have proven to be effective in improving student academic performance in order to exit the Turnaround School category.

The Chair opened the floor for comments and questions from the Committee. The Committee thanked the Commissioner's Network school teams from New Britain and Bridgeport. Chair Erin D. Benham expressed to the Commissioner's Network school teams from New Britain and Bridgeport that she looked forward to seeing them at the SBE meeting on June 14, 2023, where the SBE will vote for the approval of these Commissioner's Network schools' request for a one-year extension in the Commissioner Network and for the approval of Barnum School's Commissioner's Network Turnaround Plan.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:49 p.m.

Prepared by: Leslie Navarrete