

Connecticut State Board of Education
Hartford

Legislation and Policy Development Committee
Wednesday, February 1, 2023, 8:00 a.m.

Committee Members

Malia K. Sieve, Chair
Karen DuBois-Walton, Donald F. Harris, Bonnie E. Burr,
Martha Paluch Prou, Elwood Exley, Jr., and Valli Pendyala

Minutes
(Approved March 1, 2023)

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State, the State Board of Education Legislation and Policy Development Committee met in person on February 1, 2023.

I. Call to Order

Committee Chair Malia K. Sieve called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m. Also present at the opening of the meeting were Committee Members Donald F. Harris, Bonnie Burr, and Valli Pendyala. Committee Member Karen DuBois-Walton joined the meeting in progress. In addition, the following individuals from the CSDE were in attendance: Keith M. Norton, Chief Strategic Planning Officer; Shuana Tucker, Chief Talent Officer, Irene Parisi, Chief Academic Officer; John Frassinelli, Director of School Health, Nutrition, and Family Services; Sharon Fuller, Education Consultant, Talent Office; and Kaylan Ricciardi, Education Consultant, Talent Office; and Sonya Efanayi, Administrative Assistant, Communications Office.

Presenters:

Dr. Shuana Tucker, Chief Talent Officer, CSDE
Sharon Fuller, Education Consultant, CSDE
Kaylan Ricciardi, Education Consultant, CSDE
Valli Pendyala, Student Member, State Board of Education
John Frassinelli, Director of School Health, Nutrition, and Family Services, CSDE

II. Approval of Minutes

Although there were enough Committee members present to open the meeting, there were not yet enough voting Committee members present to approve the minutes, so the Committee deferred action on them pending the arrival of additional Committee members.

III. Review and Discussion: Extension of Teacher-Evaluation Flexibility

Dr. Tucker provided background on the process in which the CSDE has been engaged to revise and update the current guidelines for educator evaluations in accordance with Section 10-151d of the Connecticut General Statutes. Pursuant to Governor Lamont's Executive Order 7C, the CSDE had

implemented flexibilities in the current *Guidelines 2017*, for use during the 2020-2021 school year, which guidelines were revised during the 2021-2022 school year and were extended for the 2022-2023 school year. In seeking to update the evaluation guidelines, the CSDE reconvened the Educator Evaluation and Support 2022 Council [“Council”], which consists of various outside entities involved in public education. Although the Council anticipated submitting its revised, *Guidelines 2023* to the State Board of Education [“SBE”] by early 2023 for implementation during the 2023-2024 school year, the timeline for submission to the SBE has been moved to May 2023, the result of the substantial commitment and collaboration of Council members to ensure that *Guidelines 2023* represent best practices and professional learning for Connecticut educators.

The implementation of *Guidelines 2023* will require the CSDE to draft guidance, develop training, and provide that training to teachers and administrators. Consequently, the Council determined it was appropriate to recommend to the SBE that the current flexibilities in *Guidelines 2017* be maintained through the 2023-2024 school year. Thus, during that time, local and regional school districts would follow their most recent, CSDE-approved educator evaluation and support plans.

Following further discussion, it was recommended that the extension of teacher-evaluation flexibilities be presented to the full SBE at the SBE’s March 1, 2023, regular meeting.

IV. Review and Discussion: Emergency Educator Certification Endorsements for the 2023–24 School Year

Dr. Tucker discussed continuing certain emergency educator certification endorsements that are currently in place through the 2023-2024 school year. The purpose of these emergency endorsements is to temporarily authorize educators who hold either a Provisional Certificate or a Professional Certificate to teach in another area. These emergency endorsements would automatically expire as of July 1, 2024. They would only be available to teachers who hold a Provisional Certificate or a Professional Certificate to ensure that the most experienced teachers would be potentially teaching in another area. These emergency endorsements have been and continue to be a vehicle to address the persistent teacher shortages. After additional discussion, it was recommended that the extension of these emergency educator certification endorsements be presented to the full SBE at the latter’s March 1, 2023, regular meeting.

V. Minutes

The Committee now having a quorum of voting members, Dr. DuBois-Walton moved, and Mr. Harris seconded approval of the November 16, 2022, special meeting minutes, which motion passed unanimously. Dr. DuBois-Walton then moved, and Mr. Harris seconded approval of the December 7, 2022, regular meeting minutes, which motion passed unanimously. Finally, Dr. DuBois-Walton moved, and Mr. Harris seconded approval of the January 11, 2023, regular meeting minutes, which motion passed unanimously.

VI. Review and Discussion: Sex Education Curriculum and its Impact on LGBTQ+ Students

Ms. Sieve noted that student Board member Mx. Pendyala was part of a new group formed by the National Association of State Boards of Education designed to support new students on state school boards. In conjunction with their role as a member of the SBE, as well as of the LPDC, Mx. Pendyala provided the Committee with a detailed presentation on sex education curriculum in public schools and the impact on, and involvement of, LGBTQ+ students, noting in part that public school students are generally not given information on non-heterosexual, gender-minority students. Ms. Sieve thanked Mx. Pendyala for their presentation, and Dr. DuBois-Walton asked whether other states, or even specific districts within Connecticut, had better models. Mx. Pendyala cited New Jersey, Oregon, and Washington as having more forward-thinking approaches, and discussed opt-out versus opt-in models of sex education. Ms. Parisi noted that there was discussion about possible legislation on the topic of sex-education curriculum. Ms. Burr asked whether this information is readily available, and Mx. Pendyala explained that it was all available online.

Mr. Frassinelli noted that some school boards are not providing sex-education instruction. Ms. Sieve cited The Trevor Project and GLSEN in conjunction with student mental health and bullying related to LGBTQ+ students. Ms. Parisi and Mr. Frassinelli advised the Committee that they would confer with each other to identify actions the department could take. Mx. Pendyala suggested that Washington and California could provide good models. Mr. Frassinelli stated that he would connect with Laura Stefon regarding legislative initiatives on these issues.

VII. Review and Discussion: State Board of Education Bylaws

Following up on discussions at prior meetings, the Committee reviewed a draft of the proposed revisions to the SBE's bylaws. Committee members discussed additional modifications, which will be made to the draft document and considered later in Spring 2023.

VIII. Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 9:07 a.m.

The Connecticut State Department of Education is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer.