

IV.A.

Connecticut State Board of Education Hartford

State Board of Education Meeting December 6, 2023

Draft

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 6, 2023, in Hearing Room 1A at the Legislative Office Building, 300 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut. Public access to the building allowed for public attendance at the meeting.

The meeting can be viewed here: <https://youtube.com/live/3ifngr1USpI?feature=share>.

I. Call to Order

Chairperson Karen DuBois-Walton called the meeting to order at 9:34 a.m.

Present: Karen DuBois-Walton, Chairperson
Erin D. Benham, Vice Chairperson
Bonnie E. Burr
Erik M. Clemons
Connor Cowan, Student Member
Elwood Exley, Jr.
Donald F. Harris, Jr.
Yasmeen Galal, Student Member
Patricia M. Keavney-Maruca, Ex Officio
Martha Prou
Malia K. Sieve
Allan B. Taylor

Absent: Dr. Rai Kathuria (designee for Terrence Cheng, Ex Officio)
Kelli-Marie Vallieres, Ex Officio

II. Public Participation

1. State Representative Jeff Currey, Co-chair of the Education Committee, welcomed the Board to the Legislative Office Building, and spoke of the Department's work on the Right to Read legislation and the completion of the Waiver Application process.
2. Imela Barajos, parent of a special needs student read her presentation in Spanish.

[Board Member Erik Clemons arrived at approximately 9:43 a.m.]

3. Sara Swetzoff, read the presentation of Imela Barajos in English. Ms. Barajos, spoke on the difficulties of communicating with her child's school and her inability to advocate for her child due to the language barrier with the district. She spoke in favor of the Parents Bill of Rights for EL/ML.

Commissioner Russell-Tucker requested that Special Education Director Bryan Klimkiewicz meet with Ms. Barajos and Ms. Swetzoff.

4. Sara Swetzoff, read testimony on behalf of her colleague Helen Quinones, with Make the Road CT, in support of Connecticut's new Multilanguage Learner Bill of Rights.
5. Amy Dowell, Executive Director of Education Reform Now Connecticut, spoke regarding the Right to Read legislation. Ms. Dowell is deeply grateful for the legislation to become a reality in CT schools.
6. Senator Patricia Billie Miller, spoke on the Right to Read legislation and the release of the Waiver List. She thanked Commissioner Russell-Tucker and the SDE team for taking on this charge and rolling it out with fidelity.
7. Tom Stringfellow, resident of Manchester spoke on various topics.

V. Report of the Chair

Chair DuBois-Walton highlighted the following:

- Colleagues and staff working on Killingly on 10-4b hearings.
- Thanked team members performing school visits.
- Vice Chair Benham has led the Board member visits to Derby, Waterbury, and Hartford.
- Release of the waiver and the leadership work of the Commissioner.
- Attended the Teacher of the Year Ceremony with Commissioner Russell-Tucker

Chair DuBois-Walton announced that the agenda items would be taken out of order to accommodate the time constraints of guests.

The agenda was brought to XI., Items for Discussion: Recognition of CT's 2023 National Blue Ribbon Schools.

XI. Items for Discussion

A. Recognition of CT's 2023 Blue Ribbon Schools

The U.S. Department of Education named four Connecticut Schools as 2023 National Blue Ribbon Schools. Chief Performance Officer Ajit Gopalakrishnan 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.

- **Marine Science Magnet High School (LEARN), in Groton**
 - Tara Amatrudo, Principal
 - Katherine Ericson, Executive Director, LEARN
- **Philip R. Smith School, in South Windsor.**
 - Tracie Peterson, Assistant Superintendent, Curriculum & Instruction
 - Michelle Dixon, Principal
- **Skinner Road School, in Vernon**
 - Dr. Joseph Macary, Superintendent
 - Bryan Keracksky, Principal
- **Stamford Charter School for Excellence**
 - Dr. Charlene Reid, Executive Director, Stamford Charter School for Excellence
 - Kevin Fischer, Director and Principal

IV. Consideration of Minutes:

A. November 1, 2023, State Board of Education Meeting

Vice Chair Benham moved, Board Member Sieve seconded, that the Board adopt the minutes of the November 1, 2023, State Board of Education Meeting.

VOTE ON

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

Motion carried unanimously.

VI. Report of the Commissioner and Agency Update

The Commissioner opened the Agency Update by highlighting that three reports would be presented.

K-3 Reading Waiver Update

Deputy Commissioner Dr. Charles Hewes, Chief Academic Officer Irene Parisi, and Director of the Center for Literacy Research and Reading Success Dr. Melissa Hickey presented. They provided an in-depth overview on the following:

- Science of Reading & Connecticut Context
- "Right to Read" Legislation Summarized
- Application Requesting a Waiver of Connecticut Approved K-3 Reding Curriculum Models or Programs (Waiver) Process
- Waiver Review Process
- Waiver Outcomes & Results
- Bright Spots and Next Steps

Bureau of Special Education Update

Special Education Division Director Bryan Klimkiewicz presented on the 8 components of General Supervision Systems around general monitoring and supervision.

- State Performance Plan
- Integrated Monitoring
- Sustaining Compliance & Improvement
- Policies & Procedures
- Data Systems
- Fiscal Management
- Dispute Resolution
- Technical Assistance & Professional Development

He also provided updates on the following:

- Office of Special Education Program (OSEP) – Special Education Determination
 - Connecticut Meets Requirements
- System to Address Credible Allegations
- CT-SEDS
 - Autumn Pulse Survey Response Totals
 - IEP Quality Training

Talent Office - Recruitment/Retention Initiatives

Chief Talent Officer Dr. Shuana Tucker presented on:

- What's New In Certification
 - Certification Council
 - Certification System
- Enhanced Reciprocity
 - Phase One
 - Phase Two
- Educator Evaluation and Support (EES) Council
- Grants for Educator Preparation Program Impact (G4EPP)
- The Connecticut 6-16 Pipeline
- Connecticut Educators Rising Program
- The Aspiring Educators Diversity Scholarship
- Connecticut Teachers Apprenticeship Program
- Public Act 23-167 Section 10 Mandate: Increasing Educator Diversity Plans

The Commissioner referenced her written report in the Board's Supplemental Folders. She highlighted the following Shoutouts.

SHOUTOUTS:

- CT Teacher of the Year Ceremony
- Annual CABE/CAPSS Convention
- State Personnel Development Grant

VIII. Financial Matters

Chair DuBois-Walton stated that there were no financial matters.

X. Committee Reports

A. Academic Standards and Assessment

Committee Chair Clemons reported that the next meeting will be held on December 11, 2023.

B. Accountability and Support

Committee Chair Benham reported that due to the many school visits that have been occurring, a December meeting would not be held.

C. Finance, Audit, and Budget

Committee Chair Harris reported that the committee held a meeting on December 5, 2023, and was updated on several audits. A 2024 meeting schedule is in place.

D. Legislation and Policy Development

Committee Chair Sieve reported that the committee met this morning. Legislative Liaison/Chief of Staff Laura Stefon presented legislative proposals.

E. Connecticut Technical Education and Career System Board

Chairperson Patricia Keavney-Maruca reported that technical schools hosted their 8th Annual Thanksgiving Dinner with over 100 community members in attendance. Applications for admissions for grades 9 and 10 are open for students interested in trade education. Dr. Solek does a talk on Succeeding in the Modern Workforce.

F. NASBE

Vice Chair Benham reported on NASBE's webinar on chronic absenteeism, and Connecticut's decline was mentioned on a national platform.

G. SERC

Vice Chair Benham referenced the SERC report placed in the Supplemental Folders. She highlighted that SERC has a new podcast and newsletter.

Vice Chair Benham had each student member speak on an initiative they are working on with the Communications Office.

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

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

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