

**Connecticut State Board of Education
Hartford**

Accountability and Support Committee

Thursday, April 11, 2024
450 Columbus Blvd.
Plaza North, Meeting Rooms C & D
Hartford, Connecticut

**Minutes
(Approved on May 15, 2024)**

I. Call to Order

Pursuant to the notice filed with the Secretary of the State, Committee Chairperson Erin D. Benham called the meeting to order at 3:31 p.m.

Committee

Members Present: Erin D. Benham
Donald F. Harris, Jr.
Allan B. Taylor
Dr. Seth D. Zimmerman

Committee

Members Absent:

Staff Present: Irene Parisi
Jennifer Webb
Margaret Hughes
Iris White

Guests Present: Dr. Carmela Levy-David, Superintendent of Bridgeport Public Schools, Bridgeport
Linda Bagoly, Principal, Columbus School, Bridgeport
Dr. Madeline Negrón, Superintendent of New Haven Public Schools, New Haven
Eugene J. Foreman, Jr., Principal, Augusta Lewis Troup School, New Haven

II. Approval of Minutes

Donald F. Harris, Jr., moved, and Dr. Seth D. Zimmerman, seconded, that the Committee approved the minutes of the **October 19, 2023**, Accountability and Support Committee meeting.

Vote: In Favor: Benham, Taylor, Zimmerman, and Harris
Abstained: 0
Opposed: 0
Absent: 0

Donald F. Harris, Jr., moved, and Allan B. Taylor, seconded, that the Committee approved the minutes of the **March 20, 2024**, Accountability and Support Committee meeting.

Vote: In Favor: Benham, Taylor, Zimmerman, and Harris
Abstained: 0
Opposed: 0
Absent: 0

III. Augusta Lewis Troup School, New Haven

Jennifer Webb, Bureau Chief for the CSDE Turnaround Office, provided an overview of the Commissioner's Network program and the planning process for schools interested in participating in the Commissioner's Network, including drafting a Commissioner's Network Turnaround Plan (Turnaround Plan). Up to 25 schools can participate in the Commissioner's Network. Currently, 15 schools participate in the Commissioner's Network, and there are four planning Commissioner's Network schools scheduled to present to the State Board of Education (SBE) Accountability and Support Committee for recommendation to the full SBE. Iris White, Education Consultant for the CSDE Turnaround Office, provided an overview for the Committee on the work to date with Augusta Lewis Troup School (ALTS), New Haven.

On May 25, 2023, the Commissioner of Education initially selected ALTS for possible participation in the Commissioner's Network and approved the school for one year of planning to develop a Turnaround Plan. Following the initial selection, ALTS and the New Haven Board of Education appointed members to serve on the school's Turnaround Committee, and the CSDE conducted an Operations and Instructional Audit on September 27, 2023. The Turnaround Committee developed the Turnaround Plan for ALTS.

Ms. White explained that the ALTS' Turnaround Plan aims to improve staff knowledge of instructional practices with writing across content areas to ensure increased rigor, student engagement, and student outcomes. Some of the proven, high-leverage strategies that ALTS will implement to support the Turnaround Plan: High-quality professional learning to ensure staff understands the components of high-quality Tier I instruction; quality rigorous mathematics instruction; using data to differentiate and target instruction for students; and building and maintaining meaningful and productive relationships between students, families, and staff.

Ms. White added the school's participation in the Commissioner's Network will support the professional development of ALTS' teaching staff, coaching opportunities in literacy and numeracy, expansion of the data-driven decision-making process, and additional learning opportunities for students. Ms. White welcomed Dr. Madeline Negrón, Superintendent of New Haven Public Schools, and Eugene J. Foreman, Principal of Augusta Lewis Troup School, to provide a progress update.

ALTS expressed its gratitude to the CSDE for their support throughout the planning process of the Commissioner's Network. The school's Turnaround Plan was developed to address talent, academics, climate/culture, and operations. The Turnaround Plan aligns with the district's vision for New Haven public schools and leverages resources and partnerships with entities such as SERC and Commissioner's Network schools such as North End Middle School of Waterbury.

Some of the improvements around the abovementioned domains that ALTS aims to achieve through the implementation of the school's Turnaround Plan: Improving the data team processes by implementing Data Wise protocols to improve teachers' ability to assess, analyze data, and plan instruction; developing a professional learning plan that reflects the needs of both teachers and students, aimed at enhancing teachers' understanding of standards-based curriculum and strategies across all subject areas; providing support and coaching to teachers in designing lesson plans that meet the needs of students in both whole and small group settings, ensuring effective Tier I instruction; and implementing a mathematics block comprising planned whole group instruction, targeted small groups, and mathematics centers.

ALTS added that some of the other improvements that the school plans to achieve through the implementation of the Turnaround Plan include promoting widespread positive and goal-oriented branding to convey positive messaging and create a more welcoming environment for students and families, and redesigning Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) and providing Restorative Practices training for all staff to help reduce suspension rates. The Turnaround Plan for ALTS also supports the school's efforts to reduce chronic absenteeism. The district and school expressed strong commitment and investment in the Turnaround Plan. The school added that with the support of the district and board of education, ALTS teaching staff was given an overview of the Turnaround Plan and the opportunity to opt out from working at ALTS.

The Chair opened the floor to the Committee. The Committee recommended Augusta Lewis Troup School of New Haven to the full State Board of Education.

IV. Columbus School, Bridgeport

On May 25, 2023, the Commissioner of Education initially selected Columbus School (Columbus) for possible participation in the Commissioner's Network. The school was approved for one year of planning to develop a Turnaround Plan. Following the initial selection, Columbus and the Bridgeport Board of Education appointed members to serve on the school's Turnaround Committee, and the CSDE conducted an Operations and Instructional Audit on September 20, 2022. The school's Turnaround Committee developed the Turnaround Plan for Columbus.

Both Jennifer Webb, Bureau Chief for the CSDE Turnaround Office, and Margaret Hughes, Associate Education Consultant for the CSDE Turnaround Office, explained that the Columbus Turnaround Plan aims to improve teaching and learning by utilizing strategies, methods, and best practices that have proven to be effective in improving student academic performance. Additionally, high-quality professional learning, curricula, and assessments aligned with the Connecticut Core Standards, and building and maintaining meaningful and productive relationships between students and staff are some of the proven, high-leverage strategies that Columbus plans to implement.

Dr. Carmela Levy-David, Superintendent of Bridgeport Public Schools, and Linda Bagoly, Principal of Columbus School, were welcomed and provided a progress update.

Columbus expressed its gratitude to the CSDE for its support throughout the planning process of the Commissioner's Network. The school's Turnaround Plan was developed to address talent, academics, climate/culture, and operations.

Some of the improvements around the abovementioned domains that Columbus aims to achieve through the implementation of the school's Turnaround Plan include creating a coaching system to build teacher efficacy and capacity; enhancing Tier 1 instruction through the implementation of standards-based Tier 1 instruction that aligns with the school's professional learning and curricular resources; developing Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) for attendance and behavior; and creating a focused instructional school schedule to maximize instructional and MTSS time.

The district and school expressed commitment and investment in the Turnaround Plan. Dr. Levy-David also highlighted the approval and support of the Bridgeport Board of Education for the Turnaround Plan for Columbus School.

The Chair opened the floor to the Committee. The Committee recommended Columbus School of Bridgeport to the full State Board of Education.

The Committee thanked the Commissioner's Network school teams for ALTS of New Haven and the Columbus School of Bridgeport. Chair Erin D. Benham expressed to the Commissioner's Network school teams that she looked forward to seeing them at the SBE meeting on May 1, 2024, where the SBE will vote for the approval of these Commissioner's Network schools' Turnaround Plans.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:44 p.m.

Prepared by: Leslie Navarrete