

**Connecticut State Board of Education
Hartford**

Accountability and Support Committee

Thursday, September 12, 2024

450 Columbus Blvd.

Plaza North, Hearing Room J

Hartford, Connecticut

Minutes

(Approved on: October 17, 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 3:32 p.m.

Committee

Members Present:

Erin D. Benham

Donald F. Harris, Jr.

Kristen A. Record

Allan B. Taylor

Committee

Members Absent:

Dr. Seth D. Zimmerman

CSDE Staff Present:

Dr. Melissa Jenkins

Jennifer Webb

Leslie Navarrete

Robert Kelly

Guests Present:

II. Approval of Minutes

Erin D. Benham, moved, and Donald F. Harris, Jr., seconded, that the Committee approve the minutes of the May 15, 2024, Accountability and Support Committee meeting.

Vote:

In Favor | Benham, Harris, Jr., and Taylor
Abstained | Record
Opposed | None
Absent | Zimmerman

Donald F. Harris, Jr., moved, and Kristen A. Record, seconded, that the Committee approve the minutes of the June 13, 2024, Accountability and Support Committee meeting.

Vote:

In Favor | Harris, Jr., Taylor, and Record
Abstained | Benham
Opposed | None
Absent | Zimmerman

III. Commissioner's Network (CN) Overview and Update

Chairperson Benham recognized the meeting agenda item and opened the meeting to Dr. Melissa Jenkins, Chief Turnaround Officer, CSDE and Jennifer Webb, Turnaround Office Bureau Chief, CSDE to provide an update on the Commissioner's Network program.

Ms. Webb provided an overview of the Commissioner's Network program. Up to 25 schools can participate in the Commissioner's Network program, and upon the State Board of Education's (SBE) approval, eligible schools may continue for up to two additional years in the program.

She also mentioned in her overview that there is a total of five Commissioner's Network planning schools scheduled to present to the SBE Accountability and Support Committee for recommendation to the full SBE – **Norwich**, Teachers' Memorial Global Studies Magnet Middle School and Kelly STEAM Magnet Middle School; **Ansonia**, Prendergast School; and **Waterbury**, Crosby High School and Kennedy High School. Additionally, schools in the Year 3 Cohort of the Commissioner's Network program who are requesting an additional year extension were encouraged to dive deeper into their Commissioner's Network Turnaround Plan and reflect on their past years in the program to identify areas of further growth in Talent, Academics, School Climate, and Operations (TACO) and to leverage the technical support of the CSDE Turnaround Office and Cross Divisional Team. Tiered level of support is provided to Commissioner's Network schools.

The following Commissioner's Network schools are applying for an additional year in the Commissioner's Network program:

- New London — Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School and New London High School;
- Hartford — McDonough Middle School;
- Hamden — Hamden Middle School;

Chairperson Benham opened the floor for comments and questions from the Committee. The Committee thanked Dr. Jenkins and Ms. Webb for an update on the 11th year initiative, the Commissioner's Network.

IV. Charter School Update

Chairperson Benham moved to the next meeting agenda item and opened the meeting to Dr. Jenkins and Mr. Robert Kelly, Charter School Programs Manager, CSDE.

Mr. Kelly provided an overview of the charter school program. There are 21 charter schools operating in the State of Connecticut. Mr. Kelly went on to share the list of charter schools scheduled to present to the SBE Accountability and Support Committee for recommendation to the full SBE in the 2024-25 school year and invited the Committee to the scheduled charter renewal site visits:

- Bridgeport – New Beginnings Family Academy and The Bridge Academy Charter School;
- Manchester – Odyssey Community School; and
- Stamford – Stamford Charter School for Excellence.

He added that the CSDE Charter School Office is planning site visits to those charter schools for next month, October, and public hearings in late October and November. He added that there is a substantial amount of charter school renewal for year 2027.

V. Planning Meeting

Chairperson Erin Benham recognized the next meeting agenda item and opened the meeting to Dr. Jenkins and Ms. Jennifer Webb. They briefed the Committee on the tentative 2024-25 site visit calendar for the Commissioner's Network schools.

Site visits will be conducted for the following Commissioner's Network schools:

- New London — Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School and New London High School;
- Hartford — McDonough Middle School;
- Hamden — Hamden Middle School; and
- Bridgeport — Columbus School and Great Oaks Charter School;
- Canton – Canton Middle School; and
- New Haven – Augusta Lewis Troup School.

Chairperson Benham, Dr. Jenkins, Mrs. Webb, and Mr. Kelly will work together on a site visit calendar for the upcoming site visits for the abovementioned schools. They went on to update the Committee on the agenda items for October's meeting. The Chair opened the floor for comments and questions from the Committee.

The Committee was delighted and looks forward to the school site visits.

VI. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

Prepared by: Leslie Navarrete