

**Connecticut State Board of Education
Hartford**

Accountability and Support Committee

Thursday, October 17, 2024
450 Columbus Blvd.
Plaza North, Meeting Room C & D
Hartford, Connecticut

Meeting Minutes
(Approved on: November 14, 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
Dr. Seth D. Zimmerman

Committee

Members Absent:

All Committee members were present.

CSDE Staff Present:

Dr. Melissa Jenkins
Jennifer Webb
Leslie Navarrete
Robert Kelly
Shakira Jacobs-Vazquez

Guests Present:

Adam Rosenberg, Principal, Booker T. Washington Academy (BTWA), New Haven
Emily Jackson, Chief Operating Officer, Booker T. Washington Academy (BTWA), New Haven
Christina Ellington, Officer Chief Schools, Booker T. Washington Academy (BTWA), New Haven
Laura Main, Chief Academic Officer, Booker T. Washington Academy (BTWA), New Haven
William Linski, Principal, Interdistrict School for Arts and Communication (ISAAC), New London
Tanya Collins, Associate Principal, Interdistrict School for Arts and Communication (ISAAC), New London
Amy Geary, Director of Special Education, Interdistrict School for Arts and Communication (ISAAC), New London
Jill Johnson, Executive Director/Principal, Explorations Charter School, Winsted
Joseph White, Assistant Principal, Explorations Charter School, Winsted

II. Approval of Minutes

Dr. Seth Zimmerman, moved, and Donald F. Harris, Jr., seconded, that the Committee approve the minutes of the September 12, 2024, Accountability and Support Committee meeting.

Vote:

In Favor:	Benham, Harris, Jr., and Zimmerman
Abstained:	Taylor and Record
Opposed:	0
Absent:	0

III. Booker T. Washington Academy, New Haven

Chairperson Benham recognized the meeting agenda item and opened the meeting to Dr. Melissa Jenkins, Chief Turnaround Officer, CSDE. Dr. Jenkins provided an overview of the work to date with BTWA. She welcomed BTWA Principal Adam Rosenberg, Chief Operating Officer Emily Jackson, Officer Chief Schools Christina Ellington, and Chief Academic Officer Laura Main to provide a progress update.

BTWA shared highlights of their progress in their corrective action focus points of academic growth and achievement in the English language arts (ELA) and mathematics and certification compliance. BTWA identified and attributed the charter school's academic progress to the implementation of strategies like high-leverage instruction, differentiated instruction, and increasing capacity for data-based decision making and has noticed growth in BTWA educators' data capacity and an increase in BTWA educators employing data-driven instruction and planning. The charter school also shared that its certification compliance is at 100 percent, which was achieved after the one-pager was submitted to the Committee.

Some recruitment strategies and practices the charter school has implemented to help achieve 100 percent certification compliance are: BTWA training charter school recruitment staff to prioritize fully certified candidates, starting certifications and renewal processes well in advance, and confirming all offer letters for certified roles include a contingency on certification compliance and ensuring newly hired staff are certified. The charter school has also applied a 90 percent pay scale for educators who are not fully certified with the incentive of receiving 100 percent pay scale for their position once the educator is certified.

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

IV. Interdistrict School for Arts and Communication (ISAAC), New London

Dr. Melissa Jenkins, Chief Turnaround Officer for the CSDE, provided an overview of the work to date with ISAAC. Dr. Jenkins welcomed ISAAC Principal William Linski, Associate Principal Tanya Collins, and Director of Special Education Amy Geary to provide a progress update.

ISAAC shared highlights of their progress in their corrective action focus points of academic performance in ELA and mathematics, suspension rate, and human resources policies and procedures. Beginning of the school year, ISAAC administered their baseline diagnostic, Aims-Web/OLSTAT, to identify specific gaps in foundational knowledge of ISAAC students. As a result, ISAAC implemented mathematics for every student every day for 75-minutes.

Some of the highlights ISAAC also shared with the Committee included: interweaving ELA into the 6th grade level curriculum to help students achieve grade level in the subject area; conducting a root analysis and identifying positive behavior strategies and practices to utilize with fidelity across the board; providing all staff professional development on social-emotional learning (SEL), trauma-informed practices, and Advisory lessons; hiring Behavior Academic Officers to support teacher and student relationship and providing all administrators in a supervisory role with Global Compliance Network's (GCN) training on "Conflict Management in the Workplace" and "Diversity Training For Supervisors."

ISAAC continues to work towards increasing family engagement through evidenced-based family engagement strategies like ensuring all teachers make quarterly contact with all families and are sharing weekly newsletters and social media updates with parents/guardians.

The Chair opened the floor for comments and questions from the Committee. The Committee recommended the State Education Center (SERC) to further support ISAAC's efforts to reduce suspension rate.

V. Explorations Charter School, Winsted

Dr. Melissa Jenkins, Chief Turnaround Officer for the CSDE provided an overview of the work to date with Explorations Charter School, Winsted. Dr. Jenkins welcomed Explorations Charter School Executive Director Jill Johnson, and Explorations Charter School Principal Joseph White, to provide a progress update.

Explorations Charter School shared highlights of their progress in their corrective action focus points of academic performance of ELA and mathematics, chronic absenteeism, and college and career readiness program of studies. Highlights included: conducting attendance meetings with incoming students and parents/guardians to review school attendance; conducting beginning of the year meetings with students who have been chronically absent or at the cusp to celebrate highlights, progress in school attendance, and identify ways to continue improving attendance for the incoming school year; and providing professional learning communities (PLCs) continuous professional development and opportunities for collaboration to grow their capacity in data and instruction, and in areas of growth identified by PLCs.

Explorations also shared that it currently has five students participating in the Career Accelerated program. The charter school will continue to place high focus on growing the data capacity of the PLCs to drive instruction.

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

VI. Adjourn

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

Prepared by: Leslie Navarrete