

# IV.A.

## Connecticut State Board of Education Hartford

### State Board of Education Meeting February 14, 2024

(Approved March 6, 2024)

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, February 14, 2024, in Plaza North Meeting Room C and D of the State Office Building, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Hartford, Connecticut. Public access to the building allowed for public attendance at the meeting.

The meeting can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/iBBZfjZ9bGI>.

#### 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 (attended virtually)  
Bonnie E. Burr  
Erik M. Clemons  
Connor Cowan, Student Member  
Elwood Exley, Jr.  
Donald F. Harris, Jr.  
Yasmeen Galal, Student Member  
Malia K. Sieve  
Allan B. Taylor

Absent: Dr. Rai Kathuria (designee for Terrence Cheng, Ex Officio)  
Patricia M. Keavney-Maruca, Ex Officio  
Martha Prou  
Kelli-Marie Vallieres, Ex Officio  
Seth D. Zimmerman

#### II. Public Participation

1. Leonard Lockhart, president of the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE) and member of the Windsor Board of Education, together with Elizabeth Brown, Immediate Past President and member of the Waterbury Board of Education, represented CABE on the Educator Evaluation and Support (EES) Council. Mr. Lockhart spoke in support of agenda

item VII.D., Adoption of Connecticut Leader and Educator Evaluation and Support Plans 2024.

2. Mary Yordon, president of the Norwalk Federation of Teachers (NFT) and Divisional Vice President of AFT-Connecticut, represented AFT-CT as a member on the EES Council. Ms. Yordon spoke in support of agenda item VII.D., Adoption of Connecticut Leader and Educator Evaluation and Support Plans 2024.

[Board Member Allan Taylor arrived at approximately 9:42 a.m.]

3. Kenneth Joseph, Family and Community Engagement Manager at Booker T. Washington Academy, spoke in support of agenda item VII.A., Renewal of State Charter: Booker T. Washington Academy, New Haven.
4. Samantha Lucky, a member of Elevate Charter Schools, spoke in support of agenda item VII.A., Renewal of State Charter: Booker T. Washington Academy, New Haven.
5. Fran DiFiore, co-president of the Connecticut Federation of School Administrators (CFSA), and represents CFSA on the EES Council, spoke in support of agenda item VII.D., Adoption of Connecticut Leader and Educator Evaluation and Support Plans 2024.
6. Kim Healy, a Wilton resident, an appointed member of the Reading Leadership and Implementation Council, shared her perspective on the implementation of the Right to Read legislation.

### III. Executive Session

No executive session was held.

Chair DuBois-Walton expressed that the agenda would be taken slightly out of order to accommodate time constraints of educators and superintendents who were in attendance.

### IV. Consideration of Minutes:

#### A. January 3, 2024, State Board of Education Meeting

Board Member Harris moved, Board Member Burr seconded, that the Board adopt the minutes of the January 3, 2024, State Board of Education Meeting.

#### VOTE ON

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

Motion carried unanimously.

Chair DuBois-Walton brought the agenda to IX.A., Consent Agenda.

Chair DuBois-Walton asked if there was anyone wishing to remove an item from Consent. Board Member Taylor moved, Board Member Sieve seconded, that the Board approve the following Consent agenda items: IX.A., Approval of Commissioner's Network Extension Year 5, Hartford Public High School, Hartford; IX.B., Approval of Commissioner's Network Extension Year 5, Pulaski Middle School, New Britain; IX.C., Approval of Commissioner's Network Extension Year 5, Slade Middle School, New Britain; and IX.D., Approval of Commissioner's Network Extension Year 5, Smalley Elementary School, New Britain.

**A. Approval of Commissioner's Network Extension Year 5, Hartford Public High School, Hartford**

**Resolved,** That, pursuant to Section 10-223h of the Connecticut General Statutes, the State Board of Education approves the continued participation of Hartford Public High School, Hartford, in the Commissioner's Network for an additional and final year commencing July 1, 2024, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action, including, but not limited to, expending such funds as may be necessary to execute and implement the foregoing.

**B. Approval of Commissioner's Network Extension Year 5, Pulaski Middle School, New Britain**

**Resolved,** That, pursuant to Section 10-223h of the Connecticut General Statutes, the State Board of Education approves the continued participation of Pulaski Middle School, New Britain, in the Commissioner's Network for an additional and final year commencing July 1, 2024, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action, including, but not limited to, expending such funds as may be necessary to execute and implement the foregoing.

**C. Approval of Commissioner's Network Extension Year 5, Slade Middle School, New Britain**

**Resolved,** That, pursuant to Section 10-223h of the Connecticut General Statutes, the State Board of Education approves the continued participation of Slade Middle School, New Britain, in the Commissioner's Network for an additional and final year commencing July 1, 2024, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action, including, but not limited to, expending such funds as may be necessary to execute and implement the foregoing.

**D. Approval of Commissioner's Network Extension Year 5, Smalley Elementary School, New Britain**

**Resolved,** That, pursuant to Section 10-223h of the Connecticut General Statutes, the State Board of Education approves the continued participation of Smalley Elementary School, New Britain, in the Commissioner's Network for an additional and final year commencing July 1, 2024, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action, including, but not limited to, expending such funds as may be necessary to execute and implement the foregoing.

## V. Report of the Chair

Chair DuBois-Walton highlighted the following:

- The opportunity to convene the SBE meetings, and how it provided an opportunity to join in some important committee work.
- Lift up the work of the Connecticut Educator Certification Council on modernizing and revising the alignment of Connecticut’s educator certification process in the state.
- Thanked members of the Board for leading and doing the work of the committees.
- Acknowledged the service of Board members with pending terms of expiration.

Chair DuBois-Walton brought the agenda to VII., Items Requiring Action.

## VII. Items Requiring Action

### A. Renewal of State Charter: Booker T. Washington Academy, New Haven

Chair DuBois-Walton asked for a motion for agenda item VII.A. Board Member Taylor moved, and Board Member Clemons seconded, that the State Board of Education, pursuant to subsection (g) of Section 10-66bb of the Connecticut General Statutes, renews the charter of Booker T. Washington Academy from July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2027, subject to the conditions and recommendations set forth in the Commissioner’s February 14, 2024, memorandum to the State Board of Education, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

Deputy Commissioner Charles Hewes, Chief Academic Officer Irene Parisi, Program Manager Robert Kelly, Middle School Principal Adam Rosenberg, Chief School Officer Christina Ellington, Elevate Charter Schools, and Board Secretary Dave Martin presented to the Board.

VOTE ON

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

Motion carried unanimously.

### B. Approval of New Educator Preparation Program: Quinnipiac University, Master of Arts in Teaching Initial Certification Program in Chemistry 7-12

Chair DuBois-Walton asked for a motion for agenda item VII.B. Board Member Sieve moved, and Board Member Clemons seconded, that the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-145d-9(g)(3)(A) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, grants full approval for the period February 14, 2024, through March 31, 2029, to Quinnipiac University, with annual progress monitoring conducted using Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) annual report data in conjunction with the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) Review Committee until Quinnipiac University’s CAEP Spring 2028 site visit, for the purpose of certifying graduates from Quinnipiac University in the following new certification area and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action:

<b>Program</b>	<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Program Level</b>	<b>Program Type</b>
Chemistry	7-12	Initial	Graduate

Education Consultant Lauren Tafrate, Bureau of Educator Effectiveness and Professional Learning, Talent Office, Christina M. Pavlak, Director of Master of Arts in Teaching, Anna Brady, Associate Dean, and Marion Sparago, Associate Dean, presented to the Board.

**VOTE ON**

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

Motion carried unanimously.

**C. Report on Agricultural Science and Technology Education Graduates Five Years After Graduation**

Chair DuBois-Walton asked for a motion for agenda item VII.C. Board Member Sieve moved, and Board Member Harris seconded, that the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-65a (b) of the Connecticut General Statutes, receives the Report on Agricultural Science and Technology Education Graduates Five Years after Graduation.

Chief Academic Officer Irene Parisi, Education Consultant Harold Mackin, and guest Robert "Robbie" Eselby, Horticulture Technician, University of Connecticut, College of Agriculture, Health, and Natural Resources (CAHNR) Class of 2025.

Mr. Eselby opened by stating that agriculture education changed his life. From middle school to high school, he wanted to be a physicist until he discovered agriculture and determined that he liked working with plants. He is a junior at the University of Connecticut majoring in horticulture with a future ambition of becoming a college professor of horticulture. He further noted the importance of agriculture education, as well as the transferability of agriculture education skills set to careers that are not agriculturally related. Mr. Eselby concluded by stating that it is vital to continue funding and supporting agriculture education in Connecticut so that agricultural programs can be expanded to bring more kids into agricultural education.

The Board engaged Mr. Eselby with questions.

**VOTE ON**

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

Motion carried unanimously.

#### **D. Adoption of Connecticut Leader and Educator Evaluation and Support Plans 2024**

Chair DuBois-Walton asked for a motion for agenda item VII.D. Board Member Taylor moved, and Board Member Sieve seconded, that the State Board of Education adopts the Connecticut Leader and Educator Evaluation and Support Plans 2024, as recommended by the Educator Evaluation and Support (EES) Council, codified in Connecticut General Statutes 10-151d, as the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC), and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

Deputy Commissioner Sinthia Sone-Moyano, and Education Consultant Sharon Fuller presented to the Board.

#### **VOTE ON**

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

Motion carried unanimously.

#### **VIII. Financial Matters**

Commissioner Russell-Tucker introduced the presentation of a high-level overview on the proposed budget and update on ESSER investments. She announced that Chief Performance Officer Ajit Gopalakrishnan has taken on the state director role of our ESSER Plan.

##### Governor Lamont's Budget:

Chief Gopalakrishnan provided highlights from Governor Lamont's Budget that showed Fiscal Year 2024 (Estimated) and Fiscal Year 2025 (Adjusted).

##### ESSER II Update

Chief Gopalakrishnan presented the status of the \$443,183,812 ESSER II formula grant with an obligation deadline of September 30, 2023.

##### ARP Update

Chief Gopalakrishnan presented the status of the \$996,026,991 ARP formula grant to districts with an obligation deadline of September 30, 2024, and a current liquidation deadline of January 28, 2025.

Board members engaged in questions and answers.

## **X. Committee Reports**

### **A. Academic Standards and Assessment**

Chair DuBois-Walton reported on behalf of Committee Chair Clemons that the committee's February 13, 2024, meeting was canceled due to the snowstorm, and the next meeting is scheduled for March 19, 2024.

### **B. Accountability and Support**

Committee Chair Benham reported that the committee will meet on February 21, 2024.

### **C. Finance, Audit, and Budget**

Committee Chair Harris reported that the next quarterly meeting will be held on February 29, 2024.

### **D. Legislation and Policy Development**

Committee Chair Sieve reported that the committee met this morning. They discussed the Adoption of Connecticut Leader and Educator Evaluation and Support Plans 2024. She reported that both Fairfield and Greenwich have been invited to the full Board for their Racial Imbalance updates.

### **E. Connecticut Technical Education and Career System Board**

With Chairperson Patricia Keavney-Maruca's absence, no report was presented.

### **F. NASBE**

Vice Chair Benham reported on NASBE, and encouraged Board members to register for NASBE webinars.

### **G. SERC**

Vice Chair Benham referenced her written report and noted that SERC continues to work and collaborate with the SBE.

### **H. Killingly 10-4b Impartial Hearing**

Vice Chair Benham provided an update on Killingly. She reported that both the scheduled January 17, 2024, and the February 6, 2024, hearings were postponed due to (i) the Killingly Board changing its legal counsel, and (ii) a scheduling conflict for their next witness. The next hearing date is scheduled for March 26, 2024.

## **XI. Items for Discussion**

### **A. 2022-2023 Report on Student Discipline in Connecticut Public Schools**

Chief Performance Officer Ajit Gopalakrishnan and Division Director John Frassinelli, School Health, Nutrition, and Family Services, presented the annual report on the analyses of data trends in student disciplinary behaviors in Connecticut public schools. Mr. Gopalakrishnan introduced the disciplinary data and Mr. Frassinelli explained the grouping of districts into tiers that is used to identify districts in order to provide systems of support and targeted action planning.

Members of the Board engaged in discussion.

## **VI. Report of the Commissioner and Agency Update**

The Commissioner referenced her report.

She highlighted work and efforts that are in alignment with the State Board Plan.

- Served as speaker and panelist at New Haven Public Schools Press Conference at John Daniels School of International Communication to celebrate the progress in reducing chronic absenteeism rates.
- Attended the Governor's State of the State Address at the Capitol with teacher apprentice Tanner Callahan, a junior at CCSU in the NextGen Educators Program transitioning into Waterbury Public Schools for the Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Program as an elementary education candidate.
- Participated in the inaugural meeting of the Connecticut Interagency Council on Homelessness, responsible for collaborating on a multi-agency approach that strengthens the state's homelessness prevention and response efforts.
- Engaged in critical conversations about literacy at the Connecticut Education Forum on Literacy: A State & National Conversation
- Press conference at Hill crest Elementary School in Wethersfield to announce investment of \$4M for educator projects through our Connecticut Educator Support Funds Initiative: Helping our Teachers with Classroom Expenses, in partnership with DonorsChoose.
- Provided remarks at the Kid Governor Inauguration Ceremony at the Old State House in Hartford.
- Panelist at the White House Domestic Policy Council event, Improving Student Achievement.

### **Talent Office Updates**

Deputy Commissioner Sinthia Sone-Moyano presented the following Talent Office updates on behalf of Chief Talent Officer Dr. Shuana Tucker.

#### **Phase Two: Enhanced Reciprocity**

- Ten additional midwestern and southern states have been added to the current pathway for educators to obtain certification through the enhanced reciprocity agreement, effective March 1, 2024.
- Enhanced Reciprocity by the Numbers: April 2022 through January 25, 2024.

#### **CT Paraeducator Requirements**

- Paraeducator Defined
- Paraeducators employed in a school that receives Title I funds must meet the federal Law requirements
- SDE Standard for CT Requirements



Accepting Paraeducator Assessments from Other States

- Qualifications for School Paraeducators in Other States
- Para Pro Assessment
- Public Act 18-34: An Act Concerning Minority Teacher Recruitment and Retention
- Paraeducator Flexibility of Accepting Educator Certification Assessments from Other States

Public Act 23-167 10 Mandate: Increasing Educator Diversity Plans

- Increasing Educator Diversity Plan Updates
- To date, we have held five recorded webinars (with PowerPoints)

Increasing Educator Diversity Plan Update: Reformatted Plan Template

- Displayed Reformatted Plan Template in response to plan template user requests for a template format with easier views and expanded viewing.

The Board engaged with questions.

SHOUTOUTS:

- CT Supporting Educators Fund Initiative: Helping our Teachers with Classroom Expenses
- CT Education Forum on Literacy
- Improving Student Achievement
- 2024 Kid Governor Inauguration
- School is Better With You
- Governor's State of the State Address

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

Chair DuBois-Walton adjourned the meeting at 11:53 a.m.

Prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_

Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Secretary  
State Board of Education