

# IV.A.

## Connecticut State Board of Education Hartford

### State Board of Education Meeting March 6, 2024

(Approved April 3, 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, March 6, 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/IGRF1h9qr-I>.

#### I. Call to Order

Chairperson Karen DuBois-Walton called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

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

Absent: Erik M. Clemons  
Yasmeen Galal, Student Member  
Dr. Rai Kathuria (designee for Terrence Cheng, Ex Officio)  
Kelli-Marie Vallieres, Ex Officio

#### II. Public Participation

1. Sinyah Carter, a first grader at Capital Preparatory Harbor, Bridgeport, spoke on agenda item, VII.B., Renewal of State Charter: Capital Preparatory Harbor School, Bridgeport and asked for an 11-year renewal.

2. Ronald Hawkins, Principal, Lower School, Capital Preparatory Harbor School, spoke on agenda item, VII.B., Renewal of State Charter: Capital Preparatory Harbor School, Bridgeport, and against the renewal of the school's charter for a four-year period.
3. Wynton Borders, Principal, Upper School, Capital Preparatory Harbor School, spoke on agenda item, VII.B., Renewal of State Charter: Capital Preparatory Harbor School, Bridgeport, and against the renewal of the school's charter for a four-year period.
4. Scott Wojnarowicz, Co-founder and Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, School, spoke on agenda item, VII.B., Renewal of State Charter: Capital Preparatory Harbor School, Bridgeport, and against the renewal of the school's charter for a four-year period.
5. Trevon Garrett, a senior at Capital Preparatory Harbor School, Bridgeport, spoke in support of Capital Preparatory Harbor School.
6. Kyla Geter, spoke in support of Capital Preparatory Harbor School, Bridgeport.
7. Natasha Banks, Chief Talent Officer, Capital Preparatory School, on agenda item, VII.B., Renewal of State Charter: Capital Preparatory Harbor School, Bridgeport, and against the renewal of the school's charter for a four-year period.
8. Elizabeth Cook, a Fairfield resident, spoke on agenda item VII.F., Fairfield Racial Imbalance Update. A copy of Ms. Cook's written statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
9. Greg Bosch, a resident of Fairfield, spoke on agenda item VII.F., Fairfield Racial Imbalance Update. A copy of Mr. Bosch's written material is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
10. Christopher Morrison, a fourth grade illuminator at Capital Preparatory School, and former graduate of Capital Preparatory Magnet School, Hartford, spoke on agenda item, VII.B., Renewal of State Charter: Capital Preparatory Harbor School, Bridgeport.
11. Andrik Reyes, a student, spoke on agenda item, VII.B., Renewal of State Charter: Capital Preparatory Harbor School, Bridgeport, and against the renewal of the school's charter for a four-year period.
12. Garensha John, an illuminator at Capital Preparatory School, spoke on agenda item, VII.B., Renewal of State Charter: Capital Preparatory Harbor School, Bridgeport, and against the renewal of the school's charter for a four-year period.
13. Amore Campbell, a sixth grader, at Capital Preparatory School, Bridgeport, spoke on what her school meant to her.
14. Kareem Polite, a mathematics illuminator at Capital Preparatory School, spoke on agenda item, VII.B., Renewal of State Charter: Capital Preparatory Harbor School, Bridgeport, and against the renewal of the school's charter for a four-year period.
15. Laura Venman, a parent and resident of Fairfield, spoke on agenda item VII.F., Fairfield Racial Imbalance Update.

16. Basma Shaham, a McKinley parent, spoke on agenda item VII.F., Fairfield Racial Imbalance Update.

17. Katie Romeo, a McKinley parent and PTA president, spoke on agenda item VII.F., Fairfield Racial Imbalance Update.

#### **IV. Consideration of Minutes:**

##### **A. February 14, 2024, State Board of Education Meeting**

Board Member Burr moved, Board Member Harris seconded, that the Board adopt the minutes of the February 14, 2024, State Board of Education Meeting.

#### **VOTE ON**

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

Motion carried unanimously.

#### **V. Report of the Chair**

Chair DuBois-Walton highlighted the following:

- Recognized March as being Women’s History Month.
- Shared a Black History moment of her recent trip to Selma, Alabama. Selma was commemorating the 59<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Selma to Montgomery March for voting rights. It was a weekend full of history and celebration. Reflection on the work of the foot soldiers.
- Highlighted a 16 year-old student currently enrolled in Spellman was the person selected to introduce Vice President Harris for the “Bloody Sunday” memorial.
- Quoted the late Congressman John Lewis, who as a teen was bloodied on the Pettus Bridge on “Bloody Sunday.”

Chair DuBois-Walton expressed that it has been an honor to serve on the Board alongside committed members. She shared that she had learned much from her interaction with all Board members, from the most tenured to our student members.

Chair DuBois-Walton reflected that this meeting marked the end of terms for several of our committed members of the Board. She noted that currently, the terms were ending for the following Board members:

- Bonnie Burr
- Erik Clemons
- Martha Prou
- Malia Sieve
- Elwood Exley, Jr.
- Karen DuBois-Walton

Chair DuBois-Walton stated that as a Board, it was important to reflect on all that has been accomplished. She highlighted the following:

- Navigated the uncharted territory of the global COVID-19 pandemic.
- Adoption of a new Five-Year Comprehensive Plan for Education 2023-28: Every Student Prepared for Learning, Life, and Work Beyond School.
- Authorized implementation of the African American, Black, Latino, and Puerto Rican Course of Studies
- Launched the development of the Native American curriculum.
- Authorized implementation of the Right to Read legislation, including the review of researched-based K-3 Universal Screening Readiness Assessments and Waiver Applications.
- Joint Position Statement on Equity and Mathematics Education.
- Adopted of the Parent Bill of Rights for English Learners/Multilingual Learners.
- Addressing the educator shortage through the Approval of Extended Reciprocity.
- Extension of Emergency Certifications.

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

## **VII. Items Requiring Action**

### **A. Approval of New Educator Preparation Program: Capitol Region Education Council, Alternate Route to Certification Program in Mathematics, Middle School, 4-8**

Chair DuBois-Walton asked for a motion for agenda item VII.A. Board Member Burr moved, and Board Member Sieve seconded, that the State Board of Education (SBE), pursuant to Section 10-145d-9(g)(3)(A) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, grants full approval for the period March 6, 2024, through October 31, 2026, to the Capitol Region Education Council (CREC) with annual progress monitoring conducted using CREC's Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) annual report data in conjunction with the CSDE review committee until CREC's CAEP fall 2025 site visit, for the purpose of certifying graduates from CREC 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>
Mathematics	4-8	Initial	Alternate Route to Certification

Chief Talent Officer Shuana Tucker, Education Consultant Lauren Tafrate, Dr. Violet Jiménez Sims, Managing Director of Academics, CREC Resource Group, Ushawnda Mitchell, Managing Director of Residency, presented to the Board.

**VOTE ON**

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

Motion carried unanimously.

Chair DuBois-Walton announced that the Commissioner requested a point of privilege to move the agenda to V.I., Report of the Commissioner with Agency Update.

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

The Commissioner announced that she had to leave the meeting to testify before the Education Committee. She referenced her written report.

Postsecondary Earnings

She invited Chief Performance Officer Ajit Gopalakrishnan to the table to present on a new dashboard that was developed on postsecondary earnings of high school graduates going back to 2007. Chief Gopalakrishnan was joined by Katherine Breslin, Outreach and Engagement Coordinator, in the Data and Analytics Unit, Office of Policy and Management (OPM), and Patrick Flaherty, Director of Research, Department of Labor (DOL). He credited the analysis of the report as being possible due to cross-agency collaboration from P20-WIN. Mr. Gopalakrishnan's presentation covered the average earnings of high school graduates' earnings for each graduating class going back to 2007.

Chair DuBois-Walton noted that this aligned with aspects of our Five-year plan.

The Board engaged in questions and answers.

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

**B. Renewal of State Charter: Capital Preparatory Harbor School, Bridgeport**

Chair DuBois-Walton asked for a motion for agenda item VII.B. Board Member Taylor moved, and Board Member Burr seconded, that the State Board of Education, pursuant to subsection (g) of Section 10-66bb of the Connecticut General Statutes, renews the charter of Capital Preparatory Harbor School, Bridgeport from July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2028, subject to

the conditions and recommendations set forth in the Commissioner's March 6, 2024, memorandum to the State Board of Education, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

Chair DuBois-Walton noted that she presided over the public renewal hearing for Capital Preparatory Harbor.

Deputy Commissioner Dr. Charles Hewes, Program Manager Robert Kelly, with Dr. Steve Perry, Founder and Head of Schools, Dr. Ayanna Carter, Assistant Superintendent for School Leadership CT, and Pastor Kenneth Moales, founding Board member, presented to the Board.

The Capital Preparatory School team spoke in opposition to the CSDE's four-year renewal recommendation and made appeals for consideration of a five-year renewal term.

Board Member Taylor questions the SDE team regarding the four-year renewal as opposed to the granting of a five-year renewal. Dr. Hewes responded to the inquiry.

Vice Chair Benham spoke in agreement with Dr. Hewes. She also voiced her concerns on the suspension rate and that certification continues to not be in compliance from the school's last renewal. She reminded fellow Board members of the four standards being applied to renewals.

The Capital Preparatory Harbor School team engaged in discussions with the Board.

Chair DuBois-Walton called for a vote on the resolution for four-year recommendation. She reminded the Board members that they can act on the resolution, and they also have the ability to amend the resolution if there is a desire.

Board Member Taylor moved, Board Member Prou seconded for an amendment to change the recommendation to a five-year renewal period.

Chair DuBois-Walton requested a vote on the amendment.

VOTE ON

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

Motion to amend failed.

Chair DuBois-Walton returned to the original motion for the recommendation of a four-year renewal period. She called for a vote.

VOTE ON

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

Absent: Clemons

Motion carried unanimously.

Chair DuBois-Walton granted Assistant Superintendent Ayanna Carter permission to make post voting comments.

**C. Renewal of State Charter: Great Oaks Charter School, Bridgeport**

Chair DuBois-Walton asked for a motion for agenda item VII.C. Board Member Burr moved, and Board Member Sieve seconded, that the State Board of Education, pursuant to subsection (g) of Section 10-66bb of the Connecticut General Statutes, renews the charter of Great Oaks Charter School, Bridgeport from July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2027, subject to the conditions and recommendations set forth in the Commissioner’s March 6, 2024, memorandum to the State Board of Education, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

Deputy Commissioner Dr. Charles Hewes, Chief Academic Officer Irene Parisi, Program Manager Robert Kelly, with Robert Carlson, Board Chair, John Scalice, Executive Director, and Latoya Hubbard, Chief Operating Officer, presented to the Board.

Vice Chair Benham raised a question regarding the hiring of a bilingual educator. Board Member Prou, who presided over the public hearing renewal, commented on her appreciation of the school’s history and growth and noted that the students were impressive, community support at the renewal hearing was quite substantial, and encouraged them to keep up the work.

**VOTE ON**

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

Motion carried unanimously.

Chair DuBois-Walton moved the agenda to III., Executive Session.

**A. Personnel Matter (Discussion of Agenda Item VII.E.)**

Chair DuBois-Walton asked for a motion for agenda item, III.A. Board Member Harris moved, and Board Member Sieve, seconded, that the Board move into executive session. At approximately 11:55 a.m., the Board went into executive session. Present in executive session were Chair DuBois-Walton, Vice Chair Benham, Board Members Bonnie Burr, Elwood Exley, Jr., Donald F. Harris, Jr., Patricia M. Keavney-Maruca, Martha Prou, Malia K. Sieve, Allan B. Taylor, Seth Zimmerman, and student members Connor Cowan and Yasmeen Galal. Also, present were Chief Strategic Planning Officer, Keith Norton, candidate Monique Coates, and Staff Assistant Aldith Dewar.

At approximately 12:06 p.m., the Board reconvened the regular meeting. Chair DuBois-Walton asked for a motion to exit executive session. Board Member Prou moved, and Board Member Burr seconded, that the Board exit executive session and reconvene the regular meeting.

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

**E. Personnel Appointment: Director of the Office of Internal Audit**

Chair DuBois-Walton asked for a motion for agenda item VII.E. Board Member Harris moved, and Board Member Taylor seconded, that the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-3a of the Connecticut General Statutes and Article IV of its Bylaws, approves the appointment of Monique Coates, Director, Office of Internal Audit, effective March 22, 2024, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

Board Member Harris, Chair of the Finance, Audit, and Budget Committee, introduced Monique Coates, for the appointment of Director, Office of Internal Audit.

Ms. Coates spoke on her 25 years of experience.

**VOTE ON**

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

Motion carried unanimously.

**D. Renewal of State Charter: Common Ground Charter School, New Haven**

Chair DuBois-Walton asked for a motion for agenda item VII.D. Board Member Burr moved, and Board Member Sieve seconded, that the State Board of Education, pursuant to subsection (g) of Section 10-66bb of the Connecticut General Statutes, renews the charter of Common Ground High School, New Haven from July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2027, subject to the conditions and recommendations set forth in the Commissioner's March 6, 2024, memorandum to the State Board of Education, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

Deputy Commissioner Dr. Charles Hewes, Chief Academic Officer Irene Parisi, Program Manager Robert Kelly, with Executive Director Monica Maccera-Filppu, and High School Director, Cherry Pacquette Emmanuel, presented to the Board.

**VOTE ON**

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



Motion carried unanimously.

## **F. Fairfield Racial Imbalance Update**

Chair DuBois-Walton called for a motion for agenda item VII.F. Board Member Burr moved, and Board Member Harris seconded, the resolution as follows:

**Whereas**, the Fairfield Board of Education submitted a plan to address the racial imbalance at McKinley School that included the development of a redistricting plan; and

**Whereas**, the Fairfield Board of Education has indicated that it will not pursue a redistricting plan; and

**Whereas**, Section 10-226a(a) of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) and Section 10-226e-5(a) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies (Regulations) requires a board of education to develop and implement a plan to address racial imbalance; and

**Whereas**, the Fairfield Board no longer has a plan in place that is reasonably calculated to reduce the racial imbalance at McKinley School; now, therefore, be it

**Resolved:** That in accordance with Section 10-226d of the C.G.S. and Section 10-226e-7(b) of the Regulations, the State Board of Education hereby requires the Fairfield Board of Education to submit an amendment to its Racial Balance Plan within 120 days of this day and no later than July 3, 2024.

Legal Director Mike McKeon and CSDE Attorney Laura Anastasio, with representatives from the Fairfield Board of Education and Fairfield Public Schools were in attendance to present to the Board. Superintendent Michael Testani, Board Chair Jennifer Jacobsen, Vice Chair Nick Aysseh, presented to the Board to address the Proposed Racial Imbalance Plan Update.

Superintendent Testani highlighted scenarios and spoke on the challenges of a viable solution, including the new kindergarten legislation.

The Board engaged Fairfield with questions and answers.

### **VOTE ON**

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

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 Sieve moved, Board Member Prou seconded, that the Board approve the following Consent agenda item: IX.A., Approval of the 2024-25 Concussion and Head Injury Annual Review For Coaches.

**A. Approval of the 2024-25 Concussion and Head Injury Annual Review For Coaches**

**Resolved**, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to Subsection (b)(2) of Section 10-149b of the Connecticut General Statutes, approves the 2024-25 Concussion and Head Injury Annual Review for Coaches, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

VOTE ON

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

Motion carried unanimously.

**VIII. Financial Matters**

There were no matters to report.

**X. Committee Reports**

**A. Academic Standards and Assessment**

In the absence of Committee Chair Clemons, no report was presented.

**B. Accountability and Support**

Committee Chair Benham reported that the committee will meet on March 20, 2024.

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

Committee Chair Harris highlighted the appointment of Monique Coates as the Director of the Office of Internal Audit. He reported that the committee held a meeting on February 29, 2024. Chair Harris announced that the next quarterly meeting will be held on June 4, 2024.

**D. Legislation and Policy Development**

Chair DuBois-Walton commended Committee Chair Sieve and acknowledged her shepherding of the committee's policy topics. Committee Chair Sieve reported that the committee did not meet this morning.

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

Chairperson Patricia Keavney-Maruca reported that the board held a well-attended meeting on February 21, 2024. Electric buses were purchased for production work and school transportation. 2818 notices of acceptance has been sent to applicants. The superintendent search is progressing.

**F. NASBE**

Vice Chair Benham reported on NASBE working on school board engagement.

**G. SERC**

Vice Chair Benham reported on an updated with the African American, Black, Latino, and Puerto Rican Course of Studies curriculum with presentations from those in the field. SERC will have event dates coming up.

**XI. Items for Discussion**

There were no Discussion items on the agenda.

Commissioner Russell-Tucker commended the work of Board members and all they have accomplished.

The Commissioner stated that she had certificates for all the Board members with ending terms. She thanked them for serving with distinction and selfless dedication on behalf of our students.

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

Chair DuBois-Walton adjourned the meeting at 1:08 p.m.

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