

Connecticut State Board of Education Hartford

State Board of Education Meeting

May 1, 2024

(Approved June 5, 2024)

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State and posted on the agency's website, the members of State Board of Education (hereinafter "Board") held a meeting on Wednesday, May 1, 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/o9i4MRIIEKQ>.

I. Call to Order

Vice Chairperson Erin Benham called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m.

Present: Erin D. Benham, Vice Chairperson
Bonnie E. Burr
Erik M. Clemons
Connor Cowan, Student Member
Donald F. Harris, Jr.
Patricia M. Keavney-Maruca, Ex Officio
Kristen A. Record
Juan C. Salazar
Allan B. Taylor
Seth D. Zimmerman

Absent: Yasmeen Galal, Student Member
Terrence Cheng, Ex Officio
Kelli-Marie Vallieres, Ex Officio

Oath of Office

Attorney Michael P. McKeon, Commissioner of the Superior Court, administered the Oaths of Office to the two newly appointed Board members: (i) Kristen A. Record, and (ii) Juan C. Salazar, and the two reappointed Board members (iii) Bonnie E. Burr and (iv) Erik M. Clemons. Copies of the Oaths of Office are enclosed in the official file of this meeting.

Introduction of New Board Members

Vice Chair Benham congratulated and welcomed the two newly appointed and two reappointed Board Members to the Board. She asked the two new Board Members to provide an introduction of themselves.

- Board Member Record shared that she teaches Physics at Bunnell High School in Stratford for the past 24 years; that she was the 2011 Connecticut Teacher of the Year; and in 2023, she was inducted to the National Teachers Hall of Fame.
- Board Member Salazar shared that he is a pediatrician trained in pediatric diseases. He is currently the Physician-in-Chief at the Connecticut Children's Medical Center, Professor and Chair of the Department of Pediatrics and Professor of Pediatrics, University of Connecticut School of Medicine.

II. Public Participation

1. Commissioner Beth Bye, Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, spoke in support of agenda item VII.C., Approval of New Educator Preparation Program: University of Saint Joseph, Integrated Early Childhood Elementary Education N-3 and Special Education N-K, Undergraduate Level.
2. Richard J. Buturla, an attorney with the Law Firm of Berchem Moses, PC, representing clients of Waterbury Board of Education and the New Haven Board of Education, spoke in opposition to agenda item VII.A., Consideration of Declaratory Ruling – Brass City Charter School.
3. Doreen Biolo, Chief Financial Officer, Waterbury Public Schools, spoke regarding agenda item VII.A., Consideration of Declaratory Ruling – Brass City Charter School.
4. Dr. Darren Schwartz, Deputy Superintendent, Waterbury Public Schools, spoke regarding agenda item VII.A., Consideration of Declaratory Ruling – Brass City Charter School.
5. Wendy Johns, Director of Pupil Services, Waterbury, Public Schools, spoke regarding agenda item VII.A., Consideration of Declaratory Ruling – Brass City Charter School.
6. Dr. Verna Ruffin, Superintendent, Waterbury Public Schools, spoke regarding agenda item VII.A., Consideration of Declaratory Ruling – Brass City Charter School.
7. Deborah Adams, Education Consultant, Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, spoke in support of agenda item VII.C., Approval of New Educator Preparation Program: University of Saint Joseph, Integrated Early Childhood Elementary Education N-3 and Special Education N-K, Undergraduate Level.
8. Christine Rebstock, of Middletown, Executive Director of Media Communications for LGBT'S United, spoke of her concerns with Title IX changes for the CIAC's eligibility for transgender girls.
9. Elizabeth Sked, Education Issues Specialist, Connecticut Education Association, and former kindergarten teacher and instructional coach in New London Public Schools, spoke in support of agenda item VII.C., Approval of New Educator Preparation Program: University of Saint Joseph, Integrated Early Childhood Elementary Education N-3 and Special Education N-K, Undergraduate Level.
10. Tom Stringfellow, resident of Manchester, spoke on various topics.

11. Typhanie Jackson, Executive Director of Student Services for Special Education, New Haven Public Schools, spoke in opposition to agenda item VII.A., Consideration of Declaratory Ruling – Brass City Charter School.
12. Barbara Ruggiero, Ph.D., executive director, Brass City Charter School, Waterbury, spoke in support of agenda item VII.A., Consideration of Declaratory Ruling – Brass City Charter School.
13. Katie Roy, attorney with the firm of Nonprofits Council, representing the petitioners, Brass City Charter School and Booker T. Washington Academy, spoke in support of agenda item VII.A., Consideration of Declaratory Ruling – Brass City Charter School.
14. Jacob Werblow, Professor of Curriculum and Instruction, Central Connecticut State University, spoke on the removal of edTPA assessment certification.

III. Executive Session

There was no executive session held.

Vice Chair announced that the agenda items would be taken out of order to accommodate the time constraints of guests.

Vice Chair Benham moved the agenda to Action Item VII.A.

VII. Items Requiring Action

A. Consideration of Declaratory Ruling – Brass City Charter School

Vice Chair Benham asked for a motion on agenda item VII.A. Board Member Harris moved, and Board Member Zimmerman seconded, that in the matter of the Petition of the Brass City Charter School for a Declaratory Ruling, the State Board of Education take the following action pursuant to Section 4-176 of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) and Sections 10-4-20 through 10-4-22 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies Sections:

(1) Find that the legal rights, duties, or privileges of the Brass City Charter School, the Waterbury Board of Education, the Booker T. Washington Academy, and the New Haven Board of Education will be specifically affected by this Declaratory Ruling proceeding, and thereby confirm the granting of party status in this proceeding to the Brass City Charter School, the Waterbury Board of Education, the Booker T. Washington Academy, and the New Haven Board of Education pursuant to C.G.S. Section 4-176(d);

(2) Approve, adopt, and issue the Declaratory Ruling attached hereto on the two questions presented in the Brass City Petition on which the State Board agreed to issue such rulings at its meeting of September 6, 2024, which Declaratory Ruling shall be effective upon mailing thereof to the Brass City Charter School, the Waterbury Board of Education, the Booker T. Washington Academy, and the New Haven Board of Education pursuant to C.G.S. Section 4-176(h);

(3) Authorize the Chairperson to sign the Declaratory Ruling on behalf of the State Board; and

(4) Direct the Commissioner to take the necessary action to implement this Resolution.

CSDE Legal Director Mike McKeon and CSDE Attorney Louis Todisco provided an overview. Legal Director McKeon acknowledged the public participation comments made earlier in this meeting and noted that the comments had focused on finances and references to charter schools, but no references to the students and education of those students. He stated that Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-6633(d)(7) is the focus of the declaratory ruling. He asserted that C.G.S. Section 10-6633(d)(7) provides that districts will create Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), which are required by law and sets forth what educational services these students are to receive, and delineates what students need to make a reasonable educational progress.

[Board Member Salazar left the meeting at approximately 11:00 a.m.]

VOTE ON

MOTION: In favor: Benham, Burr, Clemons, Harris, Record, Taylor, Zimmerman
 Opposed: 0
 Abstained 0
 Absent: Salazar

Motion carried unanimously.

B. Approval of New Educator Preparation Program: Central Connecticut State University, Comprehensive Special Education, Undergraduate Level

Vice Chair Benham asked for a motion on agenda item VII.B. Board Member Taylor moved, and Board Member Zimmerman 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 to Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) for the period May 1, 2024, through March 31, 2030, 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, for the purpose of certifying graduates from CCSU in the following new certification area and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

Program	Grade Level	Program Level	Program Type
Comprehensive Special Education	PK-12	Initial	Undergraduate

Chief Talent Officer Dr. Shuana Tucker and Education Consultant Lauren Tafrate, Talent Office, with CCSU representatives Dr. Paula Talty, Interim Dean, and Dr. Megan Mackey, Chairperson, Department of Special Education and Interventions, presented to the Board.

The Board engaged with questions and answers.

VOTE ON

MOTION: In favor: Benham, Burr, Clemons, Harris, Record, Taylor, Zimmerman
Opposed: 0
Abstained 0
Absent: Salazar

Motion carried unanimously.

C. Approval of New Educator Preparation Program: University of Saint Joseph, Integrated Early Childhood Elementary Education N-3 and Special Education N-K, Undergraduate Level

Vice Chair Benham asked for a motion on agenda item VII.C. Board Member Harris moved, and Board Member Burr 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 to University of Saint Joseph (USJ) for the period May 1, 2024, through March 31, 2025, 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, for the purpose of certifying graduates from USJ in the following new certification area and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

Program	Grade Level	Program Level	Program Type
Early Childhood	N-3	Initial	Undergraduate

Chief Talent Officer Dr. Shuana Tucker and Education Consultant Lauren Tafrate, Talent Office, with St. Joseph representatives Dr. Meredith McConnochie, Associate Professor of Education and Program Director of Early Childhood/Special Education, Dr. Ashley Oldham, Associate Professor of Education and Chair of the Department of Education, and Dr. Dianna Wentzell, Director of Clinical Practice, Licensure Officer, Associate Professor of Education, presented to the Board.

The Board engaged with questions and answers.

VOTE ON

MOTION: In favor: Benham, Burr, Clemons, Harris, Record, Taylor, Zimmerman
Opposed: 0
Abstained 0
Absent: Salazar

Motion carried unanimously.

D. Approval of Commissioner’s Network Turnaround Plan: Columbus School, Bridgeport

Vice Chair Benham asked for a motion on agenda item VII.D. Board Member Zimmerman moved, and Board Member Burr seconded, that, pursuant to Section 10-223h of the Connecticut General Statutes, the State Board of Education adopts and approves the Turnaround Plan for Columbus School in Bridgeport, subject to the conditions noted in the Commissioner of Education’s May 1, 2024, Executive Summary to the State Board of Education, 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.

Chief Academic Officer Irene Parisi, Bureau Chief Jennifer Webb, Turnaround Office, with school representatives Superintendent Dr. Carmela Levy-David and Principal Linda Bagoly, presented to the Board.

VOTE ON

MOTION: In favor: Benham, Burr, Clemons, Harris, Record, Taylor, Zimmerman
 Opposed: 0
 Abstained 0
 Absent: Salazar

Motion carried unanimously.

E. Approval of Commissioner’s Network Turnaround Plan: Augusta Lewis Troup School, New Haven

Vice Chair Benham asked for a motion on agenda item VII.D. Board Member Burr moved, and Board Member Harris seconded, that, pursuant to Section 10-223h of the Connecticut General Statutes, the State Board of Education adopts and approves the Turnaround Plan for Augusta Lewis Troup School in New Haven, subject to the conditions noted in the Commissioner of Education’s May 1, 2024, Executive Summary to the State Board of Education, 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.

Chief Academic Officer Irene Parisi, Bureau Chief, Jennifer Webb, Turnaround Office, with school representatives Superintendent Dr. Madeline Negrón and Principal Eugene Foreman, presented to the Board.

VOTE ON

MOTION: In favor: Benham, Burr, Clemons, Harris, Record, Taylor, Zimmerman
 Opposed: 0
 Abstained 0
 Absent: Salazar

Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chair Benham brought the agenda back to agenda order with IV., Consideration of Minutes.

IV. Consideration of Minutes:

A. April 3, 2024, State Board of Education Meeting

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

VOTE ON

MOTION:	In favor:	Benham, Burr, Clemons, Harris, Record, Taylor, Zimmerman
	Opposed:	0
	Abstained:	0
	Absent:	Salazar

Motion carried unanimously.

V. Report of the Chair

Vice Chair Benham highlighted the following:

- Reported that she and Board Member Harris attended the Legislative Forum on Educator Diversity that was held on April 23, 2024, at the LOB.
- Attended Data Walk: Unspoken Crisis sponsored by Dalio Foundation – April 29, 2024.
- Updated the Killingly 10-4b hearings that were scheduled for May 16, 2024 and May 24, 2024.
- Updated the SBE Calendar of Meetings as follows:
 - June 5, 2024, is a regularly scheduled meeting.
 - July 10, 2024, SBE meeting is **canceled**.
 - August 7, 2024, Retreat. A location will be determined.
- Highlighted to the new Board members the opportunity to attend the NASBE 2024 New Members Institute conference being held in July, in Washington, D.C.

VI. Report of the Commissioner and Agency Update

The Commissioner noted that she would highlight a few items from her written report in the Board's Supplemental Folders that are connected to the Board's Five-year plan priorities.

- Provided remarks at the STAND UP FOR STEM Mentorship Awards with Lieutenant Governor Bysiewicz and Chief Manufacturing Officer Paul Lavoie at SCSU.
- Joined Senator Doug McCrory, Representative Bobby Gibson and other representatives on the panel Legislative Forum on Educator Diversity – Tuesday, April 23, 2024.
- Participated in the Connecticut Interagency Council on Homelessness meeting to address housing and homelessness.
- Highlighted the dissemination of the English Language Arts K-8 Model Curricula to districts.
- Moderated panel on participant perspectives of student voice for multiple pathway options at the second annual 2024 Workforce Summit.

Content Area Licensure Assessment and Teacher Certification.

The Commissioner invited Chief Performance Officer Ajit Gopalakrishnan to present on Content Area Licensure Assessment and the results from that report. He noted that the Board had the full report and that the report was available online. He provided an overview of completing an approved Educator Preparation Program (EPP) and appropriate content area standardized range of assessment testing of PRAXIS II. He added that Connecticut's passing cut scores align with the Educational Testing Service (ETS) recommended cut score of passing standards for assessing content knowledge.

Chief Gopalakrishnan provided an introduction of the EPP Dashboard on EdSight. He stated that this dashboard provides a range of metrics, including the total number of candidates, number of completers, number of completers certified within one year, pass rates on licensure examinations, and employment in Connecticut public schools.

In conclusion, Chief Gopalakrishnan spoke on alternative pathways that the CSDE was exploring for certification. He concluded that if HB 5436 becomes law, then the newly established Connecticut Educator Preparation and Certification Board (in concert with the State Board of Education) would be responsible for modernizing and aligning educator preparation and certification.

The Board engaged with questions and answers.

[Board Member Keavney-Maruca left the meeting at approximately 12:15 p.m.]

Vice Chair Benham brought the agenda back to agenda to VII.F, Items Requiring Action.

F. The Condition of Education in Connecticut 2022-23

Vice Chair Benham asked for a motion on agenda item VII.F. Board Member Clemons moved, and Board Member Harris seconded, that the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-4(b) of the Connecticut General Statutes, receives *The Condition of Education in Connecticut* (2022-23) and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

Chief Performance Officer Ajit Gopalakrishnan presented an overview and key highlights of the annual report to the Board.

The Board engaged in discussion.

VOTE ON

MOTION:	In favor:	Benham, Burr, Clemons, Harris, Record, Taylor, Zimmerman
	Opposed:	0
	Abstained:	0
	Absent:	Salazar

Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chair Benham brought the agenda to IX., Consent Agenda.

A. Request for Finance Advisory Committee (FAC) Action

Vice Chair Benham asked if there was a Board member wishing to remove an item from Consent. Board Member Harris asked to remove agenda item IX.A. from the Consent Agenda for discussion. As Chair of the Finance, Audit, and Budget Committee, Chair Harris requested clarification to ensure that the Request for Finance Advisory Committee (FAC) Action was not associated with the Finance, Audit and Budget Committee (FABC).

Vice Chair Benham asked she asked for a motion agenda item IX.A. Board Member Harris moved, Board Member Burr seconded, that the State Board of Education approves the request for Finance Advisory Committee action to transfer funds from the Charter School account to the Adult Education and Excess Cost-Student Based accounts and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

Chief of Fiscal and Administrative Services Roger Persson and Chief Performance Officer Ajit Gopalakrishnan joined at the table to present. Chief Persson addressed Chair Harris's fiscal inquiry of the FABC.

VOTE ON

MOTION:	In favor:	Benham, Burr, Clemons, Harris, Record, Taylor, Zimmerman
	Opposed:	0
	Abstained:	0
	Absent:	Salazar

Motion carried unanimously.

VIII. Financial Matters

There were no matters to report.

X. Committee Reports

A. Academic Standards and Assessment

The committee did not meet.

B. Accountability and Support

Committee Chair Benham reported that the committee met on April 11, 2024. The next meeting will be on May 15, 2024.

C. Finance, Audit, and Budget

Committee Chair Harris reported that the next quarterly meeting will be held on June 4, 2024.

D. Legislation and Policy Development

The committee did not meet.

E. Connecticut Technical Education and Career System Board

On behalf of Chairperson Patricia Keavney-Maruca, Vice Chair Benham reported that (1) at the U.S.A. Skills competition held on March 22, 2024, 77 CTECS students qualified for the national competitions to be held in Atlanta this summer; (2) across all trades, 11,781 various credentials have been earned this year; (3) 1,074 juniors and seniors are currently out and engaged with work-based learning; and (4) she reported that the chronic absenteeism goal for this school year was 16.9%; CTECS is currently at 16.0%.

F. NASBE

Vice Chair Benham reported on NASBE events (i) Office Hours on AI on education, and the New Member Institute open to new members to be held in July.

G. SERC

Vice Chair Benham referenced her written report and highlighted the invitation for SERC's 2024 Dismantling Systemic Racism Conference on May 6, 2024. She lifted two podcasts from The Learning Podcast: (1) Learning with Multilingual Students; and (2) A Walk in My Shoes.

XI. Items for Discussion

There were no Discussion items on the agenda.

Vice Chair Benham asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting, Board Member Harris moved, Board Member Burr seconded.

Vice Chair Benham adjourned the meeting at 12:49 p.m.

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