

Connecticut State Board Of Education Hartford

Minutes State Board of Education Retreat

August 21, 2024
(Approved September 4, 2024)

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State and posted on the agency's website, the members of the State Board of Education (hereinafter "Board") held a Retreat on Wednesday, August 21, 2024, at the Wethersfield Historical Society, Keeney Memorial Cultural Center, 200 Main Street, Wethersfield, Connecticut.

Public access to the building allowed for public attendance at the meeting.

I. Call to Order

Vice Chair Benham called the Retreat to order at 11:01 a.m.

Present: Erin D. Benham, Vice Chairperson
Sreenidi Bala, Student Member (newly appointed)
Donald F. Harris, Jr.
Sophia Messina, Student Member (newly appointed)
Kristen A. Record
Juan C. Salazar
Allan B. Taylor
Kelli-Marie Vallieres, Ex Officio
Seth D. Zimmerman

Absent: Bonnie E. Burr
Erik M. Clemons
Terrence Cheng, Ex Officio

Vice Chair Benham welcomed the Board members and State Department of Education (SDE) leadership staff. She reviewed the Retreat objectives for the day. She then introduced the Retreat facilitator, Paolo DeMaria, President and CEO of the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE).

Commissioner Russell-Tucker provided a welcome to the Board members, the SDE staff, and NASBE Facilitator Paolo DeMaria. The Commissioner noted the objectives for review and understanding of the Comprehensive Plan for Education 2023-2028.

Mr. DeMaria opened with an introduction of himself and had the Board members and all members of the SDE staff participate in a relationship-building exercise, "*What Defines Me.*"

Commissioner Russell-Tucker provided an overview of the following for understanding of the organizational structure of the Department and the leadership staff that serve in various roles:

- Department Responsibilities
- CT Education Landscape of School Districts
- School and Programs, Certified Educators and Noncertified Staff
- Students
- Organization Chart of the CSDE and the Commissioner's Office
- CSDE Offices and the CSDE Leadership Team

The Board recessed for lunch at 12:25 p.m. and reconvened at 1:15 p.m.

Every Student Prepared for Learning, Life, and Work Beyond School: The Comprehensive Plan for Education 2023-2028

Commissioner Russell-Tucker presented on the following:

- The Plan sets forth the state's vision for education and provides direction for policy consideration and administrative action.
- A review was provided on the Background Info on the Development of the Comprehensive Plan and Process
- Review of the Four Priorities and the Key Actions:
 - Ensuring equitable access to education;
 - Ensuring safe and healthy learning environments;
 - Elevating Connecticut's curriculum frameworks; and
 - Creating opportunities for students to explore multiple career pathway options.
- Review of Comprehensive Plan Implementation and Monitoring

Public Records Law and Ethics Presentation

Legal Director Mike McKeon presented guidance information to the Board members based on the Freedom of Information Commission and State Ethics for the members to have an understanding of their roles. He shared that he was also the Ethics Liaison for the Department.

Boardsmanship Review

Mr. DeMaria presented to the Board on effective Boardsmanship of understanding the role of a Board member, etiquette at meetings, and attendance at Board member engagements beyond the Board meetings. Discussion ensued regarding the structures necessary for an effective governance body that remains focused on learning standards, including the relationship between policy setting role of the Board leadership role support structures provided by the Department.

Vice Chair Benham led a review on calendar events that required Board member attendance.

Legislative Process

Chief of Staff and Legislative Liaison Laura Stefon presented to the Board on the legislative process of timelines of long session and short sessions, public meetings, and committee meetings. She spoke on presentations to the Legislation and Policy Development Committee and moving bills to the Board. She concluded with the tracking of all bills related to the Department during the sessions.

Vice Chair Benham adjourned the Retreat meeting at 2:55 p.m.

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