

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
Ad Hoc Committee on Secondary School Improvement**

**Meeting of September 15, 2008**

***Draft Minutes (Subject to Revision)***

**A. Call to Order and Welcome**

Committee Co-Chair Jay Voss called the meeting to order at 9:37 a.m. The meeting was held in Room 307, State Office Building, 165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut. The following committee members were present:

Barbara Beaudin, SDE	Robert Keating, OWC
Fernando Betancourt, Latino & Puerto Rican Affairs Commission	Representative Robert Keeley
Alan Bookman, Superintendent, Glastonbury	Lauren Kaufman, CBIA
Glenn Cassis, African American Affairs Commission	Yvette Melendez and Jill Ferraiolo, CSU
Dennis Carrithers, CAS	Jonas Zdanys, representing Michael Meotti, DHE
Chris Carver, representing Chris Clouet, CAUS	Mark McQuillan, Commissioner, SDE
Mary Lou DiPaola, New Haven Public School Teacher	Rose Molinelli, representing Robert Hale, CABE
Janet Finneran, Committee Co-Chair, State Board of Education	Allan Taylor, SBE
Judith Greiman, CCIC	Marne Usher, CT PTA
Janice Gruendel, Gov. Sr. Pol. Advisor Children and Youth	Jay Voss, Committee Co-Chair, State Board of Education
Shiela Hayes, NAACP	Barbara Westwater, SDE

## **B. Approval of Minutes of July 14, 2008 Committee Meeting**

On a motion by Mr. Cassis, seconded by Ms. Usher, the Committee unanimously approved the minutes of the July 14, 2008, committee meeting.

## **C. Summary of Cost Analysis**

Associate Commissioner Barbara Beaudin described the process and components of the Secondary School Reform Cost Analysis: Part I (State-Level Costs) and Part II (District-Level Costs). The first focal point of the analysis is Student Success Plans and Support Systems. Other components include Increased Credit Requirements for Graduation and Additional Personnel, Curriculum, Assessment, Facilities and Incentives.

Concerns/comments included:

- Ability of local districts to bear additional costs;
- Potential cost implications for higher education should be included;
- Pleased to see that support for students was the top priority;
- Need to show the potential costs of not implementing this reform package.

## **D. The Connecticut Plan: Academic and Personal Success for Every Middle and High School Student**

Jay Voss introduced the draft proposal, *The Connecticut Plan: Academic and Personal Success for Every Middle and High School Student*, and referred committee members to a related discussion guide, distributed at the meeting. Committee members reviewed each section, and offered the following suggestions:

### Engagement

- Emphasize the role of parents, and include existing resources, such as school-family-community partnerships (page 6, component #6).
- Include both in the narrative and accompanying funding proposal professional development for leaders (page 4, paragraph #1);
- Given that districts are having difficult time passing budgets, we should identify potential areas to save costs or to reallocate funds to support the secondary school reform proposal;
- Ensure that parents are an integral partner in the student success plan process.
- Consider starting foreign language in earlier grades;
- Financial incentives for students should be need-based;
- Elaborate on additional support required for ELL students (page 4);
- Clarify the options regarding the capstone experience (page 3);
- NEASC does not require student success planning; fix paragraph 1 on page 3;

### 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills

No comments.

### Rigor

Mr. Voss discussed the opportunities to take world language (via Humanities elective; Life Skills elective; and four credits through open electives.)

- Clarify that our intention is to reduce the need for remedial education at the college level (page 11, first paragraph);
- Consider foreign language credit requirement;
- List the Commission on Educational Technology and the Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium as resources on page 11;
- Consider the need for sheltered instruction for ELL students;
- Students opting to take another science (lab) course as their STEM elective might result in scheduling and space constraints.

### Assessment and Accountability

- Page 16, third paragraph, delete “Probability and Statistics” and “English I” among the list of common final exams;
- Clarify how CAPT scores will be factored into awarding a diploma (page 17, Option 1, #1, second paragraph);
- Include in this section (perhaps in introduction) a statement that explains that while we will use state-generated final exams, we will provide a rubric for district use to ensure consistency across the state.
- Consider whether the final exam should be counted only as 20% of a student’s grade;
- Consider use of a portfolio or project as an alternative form of assessment for students not performing well on U.S. History (p. 17);
- When appropriate, consider adoption of quality tests already developed and used on an international basis, rather than developing new ones (could be cost effective measure);
- Delete “English II” from Option 3, #2, second line.

Building Capacity

- Note the role of technology in both access to and assessment of student data (top of page 20).

Cost Analysis/Implementation

The committee members then discussed the cost options summarized in Appendices A-D. Mr. Voss noted that Appendix D, *Projected Secondary School Reform State Cost Estimates: 2009-10 through 2016-17*, was preferred.

- Concern that this document does not include costs at local level;
- Add brief explanation of what options are being promoted in the proposal(s);
- Describe how the plan will be phased in (including how districts will be selected; at what point we expect all districts to be fully engaged, etc.)

**Evaluation**

- Page 23, #2, include international benchmarks as an example of “other tests”;
- Look at actual costs of reform against those projected if we do not educate students (prisons, welfare, loss of business from Connecticut due to unprepared workforce; etc.);
- Rather than use the word “pilot,” use Phase I and Phase II.

**Next Meeting**

The committee will meet on September 24, 2008, from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., in room 307 of the State Office Building, 165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut. Prior to the meeting, today’s suggestions will be considered and the plan will be modified to reflect the committee’s discussion. On September 24, the committee will review changes made to the document, conclude its discussion, and vote on the proposal.

**Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:40 p.m.