

INTERAGENCY COUNCIL FOR ENDING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP
Hartford

Minutes of Meeting
June 18, 2024 1:00 p.m.
[Meeting Recording](#)

I. Opening Remarks and Roll Call

The Honorable Susan Bysiewicz, Lieutenant Governor, State of Connecticut, called the meeting to order at 1 p.m. and welcomed all attendees to the June 18, 2024, meeting of the Interagency Council for Ending the Achievement Gap. She introduced Kari Sullivan Custer to conduct Roll Call.

Roll Call:

Kari Sullivan Custer recorded the following agency personnel present:

Office of the Lieutenant Governor: The Honorable Susan Bysiewicz, Lieutenant Governor, and Tracey Opoku, General Counsel
Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU):
Department of Administrative Services (DAS): Mark Raymond, Deputy Commissioner
Department of Children and Families (DCF): Michael Williams, Deputy Commissioner; Matt Foley, Superintendent of Schools, Unified School District #2; and Vincent Russo, Legislative Program Director; and Mike Carone
Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD): Tekowa Omara-Otunnu, Manager for Arts Education
Department of Housing (DOH): Shante Hanks, Senior Advisor
Department of Public Health (DPH): Julie Vigil, Branch Chief
Department of Social Services (DSS): Astread O. Ferron-Poole, Director of Administration; Talitha Coggins, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Director
Connecticut Judicial Branch (JUD):
Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE): John Frassinelli, Division Director; Laura Stefon, Chief of Staff and Legislative Liaison; and Kari Sullivan Custer, Education Consultant
Office of Early Childhood (OEC): Maggie Adair, Communications and Legislative Program Manager
Office of Policy and Management (OPM): Peter Hopko, Budget Specialist

Lieutenant Governor reviewed the meeting agenda and objectives set forth. She shared that the focus of today's meeting will be an agency roundtable discussion on legislation in the 2024 session.

She shared that we welcome the active engagement of our Council members, and we will continue to follow the format of our previous meetings where we will address policy recommendations from the 2014 Master Plan and seek input from Council members. She invited participants to ask questions or share anything that you would like to add.

II. Acceptance of Minutes and Follow-up from Last Meeting Discussion

Lt. Governor shared that the Council last met on March 19, 2024. The minutes of that meeting were circulated to the Council in draft form for your review.

Participants were invited to make suggested changes at this time. Seeing and hearing none, Lt. Governor asked for any objections to the minutes as final. Seeing and hearing no objections, the March 19, 2024, minutes were accepted as final.

III. Legislative Roundtable and Discussion

Susan Bysiewicz opens discussion with the focus on legislation in the 2024 session that relates to the Council's work.

Council members provide updates on bills and topics of interest:

Patricia Nunez (JUD):

- House Bill 5508: Focuses on juvenile justice, establishing a gender-responsive subcommittee and developing a reentry success plan for youth.
- Senate Bill 380: Revises school discipline procedures, including notification of superintendents upon the arrest of a student.
- House Bill 5506: Proposes to place family with service needs petitions back in court, addressing truancy and defiance of school rules.
- Senate Bill 445: Develops a jobs program for youth impacted by the juvenile justice system.

Charlene Russell-Tucker (SDE):

- Senate Bill 14: Addresses literacy instruction in higher education and educator preparation programs.
- House Bill 5436: Concerns educator certification, simplifying pathways and establishing a teacher standards board.
- House Bill 14: Supports dual credit opportunities and district-industry partnerships for workforce development.

Doug Casey (DAS):

- Senate Bill 2 and Senate Bill 3: Promotes affordable broadband connectivity programs to ensure students have high-speed internet at home.
- Senate Bill 5: Addresses the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in schools, focusing on professional learning for educators and management of student data.
- House Bill 5446: Calls for a plan to subsidize broadband, addressing the impending end of the federal Affordable Connectivity Program.

Vincent Russo (DCF):

- Senate Bill 127: Focuses on kinship foster licensing, adoption subsidies, and technical changes to urgent crisis center language.
- Senate Bill 125: Updates identified adoption language, ensuring alignment with current practices.
- Senate Bill 381: Adjusts mandated reporter laws, allowing educators to ask questions before making a report.

Elena Trueworthy (OEC):

- Discusses the Blue Ribbon Plan for childcare, focusing on workforce support, equitable access, system improvements, and funding.
- House Bill 5051: Proposes the Early Start Connecticut initiative, combining major childcare funding streams for streamlined support.
- Tri-Share Model: Implements shared costs for childcare among businesses, families, and the state.
- Incubator Pilot: Supports family childcare providers operating in shared spaces with business and technical assistance.
- Senate Bill 152: Ensures birth-to-three providers can access licensed childcare settings.

Stephen Hegedus (CSU):

- House Bill 5238: Increases awards under the debt-free Community College program.
- Senate Bill 204 and House Bill 5239: Expand the Connecticut Collegiate Awareness and Preparation Program (ConnCAP).
- Senate Bill 109: Modifies the Connecticut Automatic Admissions Program, changing requirements to a minimum GPA.
- Discusses efforts to address teacher shortages, particularly in special education.

This presentation and discussion can be [watched online](#).

IV. Next Steps

Lieutenant Governor Bysiewicz provided an overview of the next steps going forward. The second quarterly meeting of 2025 will be on March 19, 2024. Additional quarterly meetings will be held on September 17, and December 17.

She reported that the agenda for the next meeting will provide an opportunity for open discussion on education legislation impacting children and families.

She invited members to offer any suggestions for guest speakers who can provide a particular insight on topics related to the Council's work.

V. Closing/Meeting adjourned

Lieutenant Governor Bysiewicz expressed her and the Governor's appreciation of all the work put forth in this legislative session. We appreciate your time and talent and dedication, and we will see you next time. Thank you so much for your participation in our Interagency Council meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 2:20 p.m.