

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Hartford

Minutes of
July 6, 2011, Meeting

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State, the State Board of Education (hereinafter "Board") met on Wednesday, July 6, 2011. The meeting was held at the State Office Building, 165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut.

I. Call to Order

Mr. Taylor called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

Present: Allan Taylor, Chairperson
Simon Brewer
Joshua Friedman
Theresa Hopkins-Staten
Charles Jaskiewicz
Terry Jones
Estela Lopez
Patricia Luke
Ferdinand Risco
Joseph Vrabely
Stephen Wright

Absent: Ellen Camhi
Patricia Keavney-Maruca
Michael Meotti, Ex-Officio

Mr. Taylor introduced and welcomed Simon Brewer and Joshua Friedman, the newly-appointed Board student members for 2011-12. Attorney Laura Anastasio administered the Oath of Office for each student.

Mr. Taylor requested Board approval to add item IX.A., Request to Reconstitute the Bridgeport Board of Education, to the agenda. On a motion by Mr. Risco, seconded by Mr. Jaskiewicz, the board unanimously approved the addition of this item.

II. Public Participation

Maria Pereira, a member of the Bridgeport Board of Education (BOE), asked the Board to reject the request to reconstitute the Bridgeport BOE. Ms. Pereira commented that voters will have a chance to reconstitute the BOE when voting this fall. A copy of her written testimony is in the official file of this meeting.

Korene Garcia of the Bridgeport Parent Advisory Council spoke in opposition to the resolution to reconstitute Bridgeport's BOE and asked the Board to reject the proposal. Ms. Garcia noted that it may set a precedent for other towns if approved.

Shavonne Davis spoke as a parent of children at Dunbar School. Ms. Davis requested that the Board reject the Bridgeport proposal and commented that a political game is not fair to the children of Bridgeport.

Tiffany Jones, a member of Students in Action for Equal Education (SAFE), spoke about her concern for education in Bridgeport and asked the Board to please consider the consequences of not allowing voters to vote this fall.

Emeline Blackwood, a 31-year resident of Bridgeport, asked that Bridgeport BOE members be given a choice to resign or wait for the fall elections. Ms. Blackwood asked the Board not to approve the proposal.

Mary Pat Healy, Executive Director of the Bridgeport Child Advocacy Coalition, voiced her concerns about the need for transparency in an effort to build community trust. Ms. Healy questioned if a State takeover is in the best interest of the children. She also questioned if parents would still be involved in the education process.

Laurayne Farrar-James, a constituent of Bridgeport, shared her concerns about the proposal to reconstitute. She asked that the Board please consider those people who fought, and continue to fight, for the right to vote.

Mayra Perez, a Bridgeport resident and school social worker, commented that she has attended many BOE meetings and doesn't know why this can't wait until the fall when new BOE members can be elected. Ms. Perez requested that the Board reject the proposal to reconstitute Bridgeport BOE.

III. Executive Session

There were no issues for Executive Session.

VIII.B. Innovation Grant Proposal Briefing

Dr. James Comer, from the Yale Child Study Center, informed the Board of the possibility of a grant application to close the achievement gap. The \$50 million federal grant would be distributed to 50 underperforming schools. Dr. Comer presented an overview of the school development program. He stressed the importance of early learning, and noted that moral and ethical development is also very important. The development program allows teachers/administrators to learn and gain experience to help in the development of children. Dr. Comer commented that the school transformation framework includes three teams: parents, school planning and management, and student and staff support. Together they carry out the three guiding principles of no-fault problem solving, consensus, and collaboration.

Dr. Comer noted that not only does the model improve academics but also character outcomes. In closing, Dr. Comer respectfully asked the Board for support of this grant application.

Following discussion, Mr. Taylor confirmed the Board's interest in supporting Dr. Comer's grant application and suggested language for a resolution.

Mr. Jaskiewicz moved, Mr. Vrabely seconded, that the State Board of Education approve the following resolution endorsing the Yale Child Study Center for an Investing in Innovation Fund Grant:

Whereas, the Connecticut State Board of Education recognizes the School Development Program designed by Dr. James Comer and the Yale Child Study Center as a proven methodology for closing the achievement gap; and

Whereas, the Connecticut State Board of Education believes a large-scale implementation of that program in Connecticut, in conjunction with our largest teacher training institution, would provide a sufficient core of trained teachers and other personnel to effect a permanent change in school culture and teacher preparation in Connecticut; and

Whereas, the Connecticut State Board of Education believes the large-scale implementation of the School Development Program would make a measurable difference in closing the achievement gap in Connecticut; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Connecticut State Board of Education enthusiastically endorses the application of the Yale Child Study Center for an Investing in Innovation Fund grant, pledges the cooperation of the State Board of Education and the State Department of Education in implementing that grant, and directs the Commissioner to inform the United States Department of Education of our support and to take any other necessary and appropriate action in support of the application.

VOTE:

In Favor: Hopkins-Staten, Jaskiewicz, Jones, Lopez, Luke, Risco, Taylor, Vrabely, Wright
Opposed: 0
Abstained: 0
Absent: Camhi, Keavney-Maruca

Motion carried unanimously.

IV. Consideration of Minutes

- A. June 1, 2011, State Board of Education Meeting
- B. June 22, 2011, Special State Board of Education Meeting

Mrs. Luke moved, Mrs. Hopkins-Staten seconded, that the State Board of Education approve the minutes of the June 1, 2011, State Board of Education meeting and the June 22, 2011, Special State Board of Education meeting.

Mrs. Luke noted that a motion to approve the recognitions (items VI.C. through VI.F.4) was omitted from the minutes of the June 1, 2011, meeting.

VOTE:

In Favor: Hopkins-Staten, Jaskiewicz, Jones, Lopez, Luke, Risco, Taylor, Vrabely, Wright
Opposed: 0
Abstained: 0
Absent: Camhi, Keavney-Maruca

Motion carried unanimously.

V. Report of the Chair

Mr. Taylor did not issue a report.

VI. Consent Agenda

Mr. Risco moved, Mrs. Luke seconded, that the State Board of Education approve all five items on the Consent Agenda.

VI.A. A Report of School Readiness Need and the Costs to Serve All 3- and 4-year-old Children in 19 Priority School Districts

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-4(d) of the Connecticut General Statutes, receives *A Report of School Readiness Need and the Costs to Serve All 3- and 4-Year-Old Children in 19 Priority School Districts* and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

VI.B. Putnam Science Academy – Certificate of Exemption Renewal

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-8a-1 to 10-8a-8 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, issues a Certificate of Exemption to the Putnam Science Academy (“PSA”), 18 Maple Street, Putnam, CT 06260, for the period of July 6, 2011, through July 5, 2012, contingent upon the following:

- The school must address the fire code compliance issues by August 31, 2012:
 - The fire escape for the classrooms at 18 Maple Street;
 - The fire escape for the second floor of 26 Church Street;
- PSA will provide verification of an exemption granted by the State Fire Marshal for the doorways below eighty inches and the exit stair windows by September 30, 2011;
- PSA shall notify the Division of Legal and Governmental Affairs upon correction of the safety issues and verification by the local fire marshal;

and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

VI.C. Designation of Teacher Shortage Areas for the 2011-2012 School Year

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education approves the Designation of Certification Shortage Areas, 2010-11 (Fall Hiring Report), and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

VI.D. Approval of Educator Preparation Program: University of Hartford

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-145d-9(g)(1)(A) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, grants full continuing approval for the period from September 30, 2011, to September 30, 2016, for the initial and advanced level educator preparation programs, for the purpose of certifying graduates from the University of Hartford in the following areas:

<u>Program</u>	<u>Grades</u>	<u>Certification</u>	<u>Program Type</u>
Early Childhood Education	Birth-K	Initial	Undergraduate/Graduate
Early Childhood Education	Nursery-3	Initial	Undergraduate/Graduate
Elementary Education	K-6	Initial	Undergraduate/Graduate
Elementary/Special Education	K-6/K-12	Initial	Undergraduate
Secondary Education:			
English	7-12	Initial	Undergraduate
Mathematics	7-12	Initial	Undergraduate
Music	PK-12	Initial	Undergraduate/Graduate

and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

VOTE:

In Favor:	Hopkins-Staten, Jaskiewicz, Jones, Lopez, Luke, Risco, Taylor, Vrabely, Wright
Opposed:	0
Abstained:	0
Absent:	Camhi, Keavney-Maruca

Motions carried unanimously.

VII.A. Connecticut Technical High School System (CTHSS) - Report of the Superintendent

Superintendent Ciccone and Brian Mahoney, Chief Financial Officer, discussed budget matters related to the CTHSS.

Mr. Mahoney noted that the Department is required to reduce its budget by \$33.5 million this fiscal year. The agency reduction plans are due to the Office of Policy and Management by July 8, and the Governor will submit the final reductions to the Legislature no later than July 15. When preparing the reduction options, the Department will focus on three points: preserve Department capacity and jobs; preserve the core mission of the agency to provide a free and adequate public education; and continue to support proven interventions that relate directly to closing achievement gaps.

Superintendent Ciccone expressed concern that timing is extremely important for the CTHSS, due to the opening of schools and the many retirements/vacancies. Significant refills will be needed to ensure schools open on time. Additionally, students, parents and local districts will need to be notified in the event of a school closure.

As a final budgetary note, Mr. Mahoney commented that if a school is closed and the students return to the local district, no additional Education Cost Sharing funds will be provided to such district for FY2012 and FY2013.

Superintendent Ciccone closed with more positive news that CTHSS students recently attended a Skills USA competition held in Kansas City, Missouri, where students competed in different trade, technical and leadership fields. A number of CTHSS students received either gold or silver medals.

Superintendent Ciccone also distributed the "2011 Survey of Connecticut's Manufacturing Workforce" prepared by the CBIA Education Foundation. It shows that 51 percent of manufacturing workers come out of the technical high schools.

IX.A. Request to Reconstitute the Bridgeport Board of Education

The following Bridgeport representatives addressed the Board: Bill Finch, Mayor; Robert Henry, Deputy Superintendent; Barbara Bellinger, Chair, Bridgeport Board of Education; and Thomas Mulligan, Finance Committee Director, Bridgeport Board of Education.

Mayor Finch and Ms. Bellinger discussed the two resolutions that were adopted by the Bridgeport Board of Education on Tuesday, July 5, 2011. Mayor Finch urged the Board to pass the resolution to reconstitute Bridgeport Public Schools as soon as possible. He stated that it is difficult to fulfill the mission of the public schools due to financial limitations and not having an approved operating budget in place.

Mr. Henry spoke on behalf of John Ramos, Bridgeport Superintendent, who was unable to attend. A letter from Dr. Ramos to the Board supporting the proposal to reconstitute is in the official file of the meeting.

Mr. Mulligan commented that the current board of education cannot achieve its purpose, and he feels this is an emergency situation.

After lengthy discussion amongst Board members, Mr. Wright moved, Mr. Jaskiewicz seconded, the following resolution:

Whereas, the Bridgeport Board of Education has requested that the State Board of Education exercise its authority pursuant to Section 10-223(e) of the Connecticut General Statutes to authorize the Commissioner to reconstitute the Bridgeport Board of Education; and

Whereas, the State Board of Education has concluded that the Bridgeport School District has not made sufficient progress in implementing its District Improvement Plan and that the inability of the Bridgeport Board of Education to fulfill its statutory responsibilities is a significant contributor to the failure of the Bridgeport School District to make satisfactory progress; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Commissioner of Education is authorized to reconstitute the Bridgeport Board of Education.

VOTE:

In Favor:	Jaskiewicz, Jones, Lopez, Wright, Taylor
Opposed:	Hopkins-Staten, Luke, Risco, Vrabely
Abstained:	0
Absent:	Camhi, Keavney-Maruca

Motion carried.

VIII.A. Role of the State Department of Education in the Development of a Coordinated System of Early Care and Education

It was agreed to postpone this discussion.

X. Report of the Commissioner

Mr. Coleman submitted a written report, which is in the official file of this meeting. He briefly spoke about the operations and staffing implications of the state budget.

Mr. Coleman also noted that the U.S. Department of Education has announced an Early Learning Race to the Top competition. Applications are to be completed by mid-October and awards granted by the end of the year.

XI.A. Financial Matters – Update on Budget

Brian Mahoney discussed financial matters earlier in the meeting.

XII. Committee Reports

A. Finance, Audit and Department Matters

Mrs. Luke reported that no meetings are scheduled, as the committee is still waiting for budgetary staffing issues to be completed along with the audit plan.

B. Legislation and Bylaws

Mrs. Hopkins-Staten reported that the committee held a conference call on June 30 and received a summary of all education-related bills that were passed during the session, along with the final status of Board proposals that were introduced. She noted that many bills have not yet been signed by the Governor, and there may be changes. A final summary will be provided once the special session is over.

C. Policy Development

Dr. Lopez reported that the committee met on June 13 and reviewed the work plan. Changes were recommended, and the committee is scheduled to meet again on August 3 (pending the retreat).

D. Connecticut Technical High School System

Mr. Vrabely reported that the committee will not meet in July or August.

E. NASBE

Mr. Taylor reported that a webinar is planned for next week, and a report is being written on teacher evaluation/compensation for a conference in October.

F. Ad Hoc Committee on Accountability

Nothing is currently scheduled, but this Committee will reconvene in the fall.

Prior to adjournment, there was brief discussion about the Board Retreat tentatively scheduled for August 3. Dr. Lopez and Mr. Risco volunteered to organize and plan the retreat.

By unanimous consent, the meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

Prepared by: _____
George A. Coleman, Secretary