

CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION Hartford

Minutes

August 3, 2011, Meeting

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State, the State Board of Education (hereinafter "Board") met on Wednesday, August 3, 2011. The meeting was held at the State Office Building, 165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut.

I. Call to Order

Chairperson Taylor called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

Present: Allan Taylor, Chairperson
Theresa Hopkins-Staten, Vice Chairperson
Simon Brewer
Joshua Friedman
Terry Jones
Patricia Keavney-Maruca
Estela Lopez*
Patricia Luke
Ferdinand Risco, Jr.
Joseph Vrabely, Jr.
Stephen Wright*

Absent: Ellen Camhi
Charles Jaskiewicz, III
Michael Meotti, Ex-Officio

II. Public Participation

No one from the public signed up to address the Board.

By unanimous consent, the board agreed to consider agenda item VII., Connecticut Technical High School Matters, at this time.

[*Stephen Wright arrived at 9:20 a.m.]

VII. Connecticut Technical High School Matters (CTHSS)

Patricia Ciccone, Superintendent of the Connecticut Technical High School System, who participated via phone call, gave an overview of the "List of Non Mandated Programs in the CTHSS." She discussed the impact of the proposed budget reductions on staffing and educational offerings in the Connecticut Technical High School System. Discussion ensued.

III. Executive Session

On a motion by Mrs. Luke, seconded by Mrs. Hopkins-Staten, the board voted unanimously to go into executive session for the purpose of discussing Pending Litigation (Bridgeport) at 10:04 a.m. Present in Executive Session were board members Mr. Taylor, Mr. Brewer, Mr. Friedman, Mrs. Hopkins-Staten, Mr. Jones, Mrs. Keavney-Maruca, Dr. Lopez, Mrs. Luke, Mr. Risco, Mr. Vrabely and Mr. Wright. Also present were Commissioner of Education, George Coleman, Attorney Daniel Murphy, Director of Legal and Governmental Affairs, and Attorney Perry Zinn-Rowthorn, Office of the Attorney General. Ms. Camhi, Mr. Jaskiewicz, and Commissioner Meotti were absent.

[*Estela Lopez arrived during Executive Session]

On a motion by Mr. Vrabely, seconded by Mr. Risco, the board voted unanimously to reconvene in public session at 11.07 a.m. Present were board members: Mr. Taylor, Mr. Brewer, Mr. Friedman, Mrs. Hopkins-Staten, Mr. Jones, Mrs. Keavney-Maruca, Mrs. Luke, Dr. Lopez, Mr. Risco, Mr. Vrabely and Mr. Wright. Ms. Camhi, Mr. Jaskiewicz, and Commissioner Meotti were absent.

IV. Consideration of Minutes of the July 6, 2011, State Board of Education Meeting

Mrs. Luke moved, Dr. Lopez seconded, to approve the minutes of the July 6, 2011, State Board of Education Meeting.

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

Motion carried unanimously.

V. Report of the Chair

Chairman Taylor reported the following:

Five State Board of Education members attended the recent NASBE New Board Member Institute in Arlington, Virginia. (Mr. Jaskiewicz, Mr. Jones, Ms. Keavney-Maruca, Mr. Risco, and Mr. Wright).

Mr. Risco was elected to fill one of the two seats on the NASBE Board of Directors reserved for new board members. His term commences January 1, 2012.

The NASBE Annual Conference will take place October 13-15, 2011, in Atlanta, Georgia. The theme of this year's conference is "Lessons in Learning: an International Perspective."

Mr. Taylor invited members to participate at the "Closing the Achievement Gap: Getting PreK-Grade 3 Right" forum on August 18, from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., at Alumni Hall, CCSU, in New Britain.

VI. Consent Agenda

Mrs. Luke moved, Mr. Wright seconded, the following consent agenda item:

VI.A. Appointment of Special Education Hearing Officers

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-76h(c) of the Connecticut General Statutes, appoints Attorney Ann Frances Bird, Attorney Inez Diaz Galloza, Attorney Brette Holcombe Fitton, Attorney Sylvia Ho, Attorney Robert L. Skelley and Attorney Catherine M. Spain, as members of the impartial hearing board for special education due process hearings for a four-year term beginning September 1, 2011; authorizes the Commissioner to appoint a hearing officer to conduct a hearing upon receipt of a request for such hearing; and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

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

Motion carried unanimously.

VIII. Items for Discussion

A. Implications of Budget on State Department of Education and Connecticut Technical High School System (CTHSS)

Commissioner Coleman summarized the implications of the budget reductions on the agency and on the CTHSS.

Commissioner Coleman reviewed the "Summary of Governor's Proposed 2011-12 Budget Reduction Plan if the Union Concession Agreement Fails" (Copy in official file). Discussion ensued.

B. Race to the Top Application and Early Childhood Education Transition

Commissioner Coleman introduced department staff members Michelle Levy, Andrea Brinnel, and Deb Adams who gave a power point presentation titled, "State Department of Education's Role in the Development of a Coordinated System of Early Care and Education." Discussion ensued.

[Mr. Jones left the meeting at 12:05 p.m.]

C. 2011 Legislative Task Forces and Ongoing Reports to the General Assembly

Commissioner Coleman and Jessica Andrews Walsh, Legislative Liaison, gave an overview of Legislative Task Forces and the State Reports Due to the Connecticut General Assembly, and the Department's and Board's responsibilities related thereto. Discussion ensued.

X. Report of the Commissioner

Commissioner Coleman updated the board on the following:

- (1) An investigator has been hired to investigate the alleged cheating on the Connecticut Mastery Test by educators at Hopeville School in Waterbury. Mr. Coleman stated that he was very upset about the impact of such alleged actions. In addition to being unfair to students and families by misreporting their true performance, Commissioner Coleman noted that he felt that the affiliated costs (hiring an investigator, placing staff on paid leave, retesting students, hiring substitute teachers, etc.) should be the responsibility of those determined to be at fault. He encouraged the Board to instruct the Department to develop legislation that would strengthen the sanctions against those found to have committed such improprieties.
- (2) Dr. Stephen Adamowski has signed a contract to serve as the Special Master in Windham, and has set forth performance expectations and indicators of success.
- (3) He has moved forward in response to the Board's action in July 2011 pertaining to appointing a new Bridgeport Board of Education, and has been pleased with the responses of those who have expressed interest in being considered for appointment to that board. He noted that he sent staff members to Bridgeport to conduct interviews with applicants, and anticipates announcing the new Bridgeport Board soon.

XI. Financial Matters

(Addressed during discussion of agenda item VIII. A., above)

XII. Committee Reports

A. Finance, Audit, and Department Matters

Mrs. Luke reported that on August 18th or 19th, 2011, the committee expects to have more information to draft the annual audit report.

B. Legislation and Bylaws

Ms. Hopkins-Staten urged board members to review the Legislation Implementation Requirements, and the State Department of Education's role. She noted the importance of being mindful of staffing capacity versus increased workload.

C. Policy Development

The committee will meet on September 7, 2011, to continue its discussion of the position statement on the Education of Students with Exceptionalities.

D. Connecticut Technical High Schools

CTHS matters were discussed earlier in the meeting.

E. NASBE

Mr. Taylor congratulated Mr. Risco on being elected to serve on the NASBE Board of Directors. He noted that the board will be asked to vote on NASBE officers at the September 2011 State Board of Education Meeting.

F. Ad Hoc Committee on Accountability

No report was issued.

By unanimous consent, the meeting was adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

Signed: _____
George A. Coleman, Secretary