

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
Hartford**

**Special Meeting**

**Draft Minutes  
Special State Board of Education Meeting  
August 4, 2014**

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State and posted on the agency's web site, the State Board of Education (hereinafter "Board") met on Monday, August 4, 2014, in Room 307 of the State Office Building, 165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut.

**I. Call to Order**

Chairman Taylor called the meeting to order at 2:10 p.m.

Present: Allan B. Taylor, Chairperson  
Theresa Hopkins-Staten, Vice Chairperson  
Charles Jaskiewicz  
Terry Jones  
Patricia Keavney-Maruca  
Joseph Vrabely  
Stephen Wright

Absent: Gregory Gray, ex officio  
Estela Lopez  
Robert Trefry, ex officio

**II. Public Participation**

1. Ernestine Browning, member of Varick Memorial AME Zion Church in New Haven, and former teacher and principal, stated that Reverend Morrison has a strong vision for Booker T. Washington Academy (BTWA), and urged the Board to grant the charter to BTWA.
2. Carlis Highsmith, member of Varick Memorial AME Zion Church in New Haven, mother and grandmother, spoke in support of Booker T. Washington Academy.
3. Jennifer Alexander, Chief Executive Officer of ConnCAN, spoke in support of Booker T. Washington Academy.

4. Jamilya Maebry, member of Varick Memorial AME Zion Church in New Haven and a community activist, spoke in support of the atmosphere of the school proposed by Pastor Eldred Morrison.
5. Nadine Ricks McCullom, aunt of several nieces and nephews, asked the Board to support the approval of Booker T. Washington Academy, as it would prevent children from ending up on the streets.
6. Joanne Crudup, member of Varick Memorial AME Zion Church in New Haven, mother and grandmother, stated that young children need a school that will promote God's principles and promote love for one another. She stated that Booker T. Washington will allow New Haven to become a better community.
7. Jeanette Reynolds, member of Varick Memorial AME Zion Church in New Haven, spoke in support of the opening of Booker T. Washington Academy and urged the Board to give the school a chance.

### **III. Hearing on Charter Modification Request Submitted by Booker T. Washington Academy**

Mr. Vrabely moved, Mr. Jaskiewicz seconded, that pursuant to Section 4-181a (b) of the Connecticut General Statutes, the State Board of Education (SBE), finds that, based on the evidence presented at the hearing in this matter on August 4, 2014, a change in conditions has been demonstrated, and hereby modifies the conditions imposed in its April 2, 2014, grant of a state charter to Booker T. Washington Academy (BTWA), pursuant to Section 10-66bb of the Connecticut General Statutes; and be it further

RESOLVED, That in lieu of the conditions imposed in the April 2, 2014 granting of the BTWA state charter, the SBE approves the Commissioner's recommendation to grant the BTWA charter for the period July 1, 2014, through June 30, 2017, subject to the following terms and conditions: (a) require BTWA to report to the SBE on the first year of school operations by September 2015; (b) adjust the seat allocation for BTWA from 225 to 120 seats for the 2014-15 school year; and (c) require BTWA to participate in regular site visits conducted by the Turnaround and Charter School Offices, other monitoring processes, and technical assistance, as necessary; and the

SBE authorizes the Commissioner to release the charter, which shall be subject to conditions (a), (b), and (c) referenced above, when the Commissioner, with the State concurrence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, determines that the conditions regarding charter release, as listed in the fifth-numbered paragraph on page 3 of the Commissioner's August 4, 2014, memorandum to the SBE, have been satisfied, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

In response to Board's concerns about funding for BTWA, the Board concurred with Commissioner Pryor's recommended that condition number 5(a) on page 3 of his August 4, 2014, memorandum to the SBE be reworded as follows:

- (a) Receipt of sufficient funding from the General Assembly and written assurances of philanthropic donations and other financing sufficient to meet the school's operating needs for the first year of the school;

Discussion ensued. Due to their prior involvement with Achievement First, Commissioner Pryor and Mr. Morgan Barth, Division Director of School and District Turnaround, voluntarily recused themselves and left the meeting room during the Board's discussion of the relationship between Booker T. Washington Academy and Achievement First.

VOTE ON	In favor:	Hopkins-Staten, Jaskiewicz, Jones, Keavney-Maruca,
MOTION:		Taylor, Vrabely, Wright
	Opposed:	0
	Abstained:	0
	Absent:	Lopez

Motion carried unanimously.

#### **IV. Appointments to the State Education Resource Center Board of Directors**

Mr. Wright moved, Mr. Jaskiewicz seconded, that the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 1(b)(1) of Public Act 14-212, An Act Concerning the State Education Resource Center, appoints George Coleman and Diane Ullman to the State Education Resource Center Board of Directors for a term coterminous with that of the Governor or until a successor has been appointed and qualified, whichever is longer, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

VOTE ON MOTION:	In favor:	Hopkins-Staten, Jaskiewicz, Jones, Keavney-Maruca, Taylor, Vrabely, Wright
	Opposed:	0
	Abstained:	0
	Absent:	Lopez

Motion carried unanimously.

**V. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 4:22 p.m.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Stefan Pryor, Secretary

