

CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford

Minutes
State Board of Education Meeting
May 4, 2016
(approved June 1, 2016)

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State, the State Board of Education (hereinafter "Board") met on Wednesday, May 4, 2016, in Room 307 of the State Office Building, 165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut.

I. Call to Order

Chairperson Allan Taylor called the meeting to order at 9:42 a.m.

Present: Allan B. Taylor, Chairperson
Theresa Hopkins-Staton, Vice Chairperson
Erin D. Benham
Erik M. Clemons
Terry H. Jones
Estela López
Maria I. Mojica
Timothy J. Noel-Sullivan, Student Member
Malia K. Sieve
Robert J. Trefry, Ex Officio
Joseph J. Vrabely, Jr.
Stephen P. Wright

Absent: Susannah M. Beyl, Student Member
William P. Davenport
Mark Ojakian, Ex Officio

II. Public Participation

1. Dr. Nivea Torres, Superintendent of the Technical High School, introduced Devin Bialek and Johnathan O'Neill, students at Norwich Technical High School, who won the 2016 National Automotive Technology Competition. Mr. Bialek and Mr. O'Neill spoke about their participation in the national competition and how their education at Norwich Technical High School, coupled with community support, contributed to their success. The Board presented a Certificate of Recognition to Devin and Johnathan, in honor of their accomplishments.
2. Christina Burns and Rebecca Folz, students at Quinnipiac University, expressed their concerns about the PRAXIS II multiple subject tests for elementary teacher certification, stating that they do not accurately assess their instructional abilities and students incur a cost when taking and retaking these exams. Ms. Burns and Ms. Folz presented the Board

with a petition in support of eliminating the PRAXIS II multiple subjects tests from Connecticut certification requirements. A copy of their petition is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.

3. Tom Stringfellow, a resident of Manchester, congratulated the two students from Norwich Technical High School, who were recognized by the Board for earning a national award in automotive technology. Mr. Stringfellow spoke about the importance of Memorial Day, and recommended several publications and books about historical events, positive discipline and bullying prevention, LGBT educators, and other education issues.
4. Kimberly Billy, behavioral specialist at Achievement First Hartford High, read prepared remarks in support of the Board granting full renewal of its charter and the high-quality public school option that the school provides to the Hartford community. A copy of Ms. Billy's prepared statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
5. Sunshine Ortiz, parent of Achievement First Summit Middle School scholar, urged the Board to approve a full charter renewal for Achievement First in Hartford. Ms. Ortiz spoke about the positive impact AF has had on her child. A copy of Ms. Ortiz's prepared statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
6. Josephine Pittman, parent of two scholars who attend Achievement First Hartford Academy (AFHA), spoke about her family's positive experience at AFHA and urged the Board to grant AFHA a full charter renewal. A copy of Ms. Pittman's prepared statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
7. Dean Jones, parent of two children who attend Achievement First Summit Middle School, spoke about the quality of the education his children receive at Achievement First, and urged the State Board of Education to grant a full renewal of the charter for Achievement First Hartford. A copy of Mr. Jones' prepared statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
8. Lisa Fair, parent of two scholars who attend Achievement First schools in Hartford, spoke about the positive impact the school has had on her children as well as the impact it has had on the Hartford community and reducing the achievement gap. Ms. Fair asked the Board to grant a full charter renewal. A copy of Ms. Fair's prepared statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.

III. Executive Session

The Board did not meet in executive session.

IV. Consideration of Minutes

Dr. López moved, Mrs. Hopkins-Staten seconded, that the Board adopt the Minutes of the April 6, 2016, State Board of Education Meeting.

VOTE ON

MOTION: In favor: Benham, Clemons, Hopkins-Staten, Jones, López,
Mojica, Sieve, Taylor, Vrabely, Wright
Opposed: 0
Abstained: 0
Absent: Davenport

Motion carried unanimously.

V. Items Requiring Action

A. Approval of Turnaround Plan: Clinton Avenue School New Haven

Mr. Vrabely moved, Mrs. Hopkins-Staten seconded, that the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-223h of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended by Section 258 of Public Act 15-5, of the June 2015 Special Session, adopts and approves the Turnaround Plan for Clinton Avenue School in New Haven for the Commissioner's Network, subject to the conditions noted in the Commissioner's May 4, 2016, memorandum to the State Board of Education, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action, including, but not limited to, expending such funds as may be necessary to execute and implement the foregoing.

VOTE ON

MOTION: In favor: Benham, Clemons, Hopkins-Staten, Jones,
López, Mojica, Sieve, Taylor, Vrabely, Wright
Opposed: 0
Abstained: 0
Absent: Davenport

Motion carried unanimously.

X. Items for Discussion

Ms. Mojica moved, Mrs. Sieve seconded, that the Board consider agenda item X.C. at this time.

VOTE ON

MOTION: In favor: Benham, Clemons, Hopkins-Staten, Jones,
López, Mojica, Sieve, Taylor, Vrabely, Wright
Opposed: 0
Abstained: 0
Absent: Davenport

Motion carried unanimously.

C. Update regarding Fairfield Public Schools Efforts to Address Racial Imbalance

Director of Legal Affairs Peter M. Haberlandt and Attorney Laura Anastasio, introduced a panel consisting of Fairfield Public Schools Superintendent David Title, Chair of the Fairfield Board of Education Philip Dwyer, and Consultant Michael Zuba, AICP, Associate, Director of Planning, Milone & Macroom, Inc. The panelists provided the Board with a status report of Fairfield efforts to address racial imbalance. Discussion ensued. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.

V. Items Requiring Action

On a motion by Mr. Vrabely, seconded by Mrs. Hopkins Staten, the Board voted unanimously to consider agenda item V.B., Renewal of Charter: Achievement First Hartford Academy, at this time.

B. Renewal of Charter: Achievement First Hartford Academy

Mrs. Hopkins Staten moved, Mr. Jones seconded, that the State Board of Education, pursuant to subsection (g) of Section 10-66bb of the Connecticut General Statutes, renews the charter of Achievement First Hartford Academy from July 1, 2016, through June 30, 2019, subject to the conditions noted in the Commissioner's May 4, 2016, memorandum to the State Board of Education, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

VOTE ON

MOTION:	In favor:	Benham, Clemons, Hopkins-Staten, Jones, López, Mojica, Sieve, Taylor, Vrabely, Wright
	Opposed:	0
	Abstained:	0
	Absent:	Davenport

Motion carried unanimously.

C. Approval of Bill of Rights for Parents of Students With Disabilities

Dr. López moved, Mr. Vrabely seconded, that the State Board of Education pursuant to Section 10-76ll of the Connecticut General Statutes, approves the Transition Bill of Rights for parents of students receiving special education services, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

E. Receipt of Report on Racial Imbalance

Ms. Sieve moved, Mr. Vrabely seconded, that the State Board of Education, pursuant to Sections 10-226a and 10-226b of the Connecticut General Statutes, accepts the Racial Imbalance Report for the 2015-16 school year, dated April 19, 2016, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

Dr. López left the meeting at 1:49 p.m.

VOTE ON

MOTION:	In favor:	Benham, Clemons, Hopkins-Staten, Jones, Mojica, Sieve, Taylor, Vrabely, Wright
	Opposed:	0
	Abstained:	0
	Absent:	Davenport, López

Motion carried unanimously.

F. Acceptance of Resignation: Chief Academic Officer

Mr. Jones moved, Mr. Vrabely seconded, that the State Board of Education, pursuant to its Bylaws, accepts with regret the resignation of Ms. Mary Anne Butler as Chief Academic Officer of the Connecticut State Department of Education, effective the close of business on May 12, 2016, and wishes her continued success in her future endeavors.

VOTE ON

MOTION:	In favor:	Benham, Clemons, Hopkins-Staten, Jones, Mojica, Sieve, Taylor, Vrabely, Wright
	Opposed:	0
	Abstained:	0
	Absent:	Davenport, López

Motion carried unanimously.

VI. Report of the Chair

Chairperson Allan Taylor highlighted a NAACP's Education Summit Workshop event that was held on Saturday, April 30, 2016. Also in attendance was Vice-Chair Hopkins-Staten. Chief Performance Officer Ajit Gopalakrishnan, as a panelist, represented Commissioner Dianna R. Wentzell at the Summit.

VII. Report of the Commissioner

Commissioner Wentzell referenced her written report. The Commissioner highlighted that she participated in the celebration of Jahana Hayes as National Teacher of the Year. The

Commissioner will provide the Board with a link to Ms. Hayes' speech and President Obama's remarks. The Commissioner commended the Talent Office and Communications Office staff for their role in this event. The Board members were presented with a framed photo of the 2016 National Teacher of the Year. The Commissioner showed a video presentation featuring Ms. Hayes. A copy of the Commissioner's written report is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.

VIII. Financial Matters

No reported was presented.

IX. Consent Agenda

A. Request to Finance Advisory Committee to Transfer Funds

Mr. Vrabely moved, Ms. Mojica seconded, that the State Board of Education approves the request for Finance Advisory Committee (FAC) action to transfer an estimated \$172,500 from the Commissioner's Network account to the Excess Cost-Student Based account, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

VOTE ON

MOTION:	In favor:	Benham, Clemons, Hopkins-Staten, Jones, Mojica, Sieve, Taylor, Vrabely, Wright
	Opposed:	0
	Abstained:	0
	Absent:	Davenport, López

Motion carried unanimously.

X. Items for Discussion

A. Five-year Comprehensive Plan for Education

Chairman Taylor invited Board members to make suggestions regarding the draft Five-year Comprehensive Plan for Education, "Ensuring Equity and Excellence for All Connecticut Students." Discussion ensued.

Mr. Wright left the meeting at 2:34 p.m.

B. Update on Commissioner's Network Activities and Structures

Chief Turnaround Officer Desi Nesmith provided an update on the Commissioner's Network Schools. He highlighted successes of schools to date, areas of continued focus, and ongoing enhancements to the Commissioner's Network System. A copy of Mr. Nesmith's PowerPoint presentation is enclosed in the official file.

XI. Committee Reports

A. Academic Standards and Assessment

The State Department of Education staff is vetting both the draft Connecticut arts and the social, emotional and intellectual habits frameworks standards across the state. Mr. Wright is participating in some of the sessions.

B. Accountability and Support

In the absence of Dr. López, Mrs. Benham reported that the next meeting is scheduled for May 23, 2016.

C. Finance, Audit, and Budget

Mr. Taylor reported that the next meeting is scheduled for May 23, 2016.
(NOTE: This meeting was rescheduled to June 3, 2016.)

D. Legislation and Policy Development Committee

Mrs. Hopkins-Staten reported that the committee did not meet in May and will reconvene in June.

E. Connecticut Technical High School System (CTHSS) Board

Mr. Trefry thanked the Board for honoring the two Norwich Tech students. Mr. Trefry reported that on April 6th, the CTHSS presented and displayed its technical education skills at the State Capitol. In the recently released U.S. News and World Report, four Connecticut technical high schools received bronze medal designations in Best High Schools Rankings 2016. Mr. Trefry referenced the CTHSS graduation sheet and encouraged Board members to sign up to attend the CTHSS graduation ceremonies.

F. NASBE

No report was presented.

Chairperson Taylor adjourned the meeting at 3:25 p.m.

Signed: _____
Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell, Secretary