

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford**

**DRAFT
Minutes
State Board of Education Meeting
October 4, 2017**

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State, the State Board of Education (hereinafter "Board") met on Wednesday, October 4, 2017, in Plaza North Room C and D of the State Office Building, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Hartford, Connecticut.

I. Call to Order

Chairperson Allan Taylor called the meeting to order at 9:46 a.m.

Present: Allan B. Taylor, Chairperson
Estela López, Vice Chairperson
Erin D. Benham
Erik M. Clemons
William P. Davenport
Donald F. Harris, Jr.
Terry H. Jones
Maria I. Mojica
Saomai Nguyen, Student Member
Jaweria Shah, Student Member
Malia K. Sieve
Robert J. Trefry, Ex Officio
Joseph J. Vrabely, Jr.

Absent: Mark Ojakian, Ex Officio
Stephen P. Wright

II. Public Participation

1. Christopher Stone, a fifth grade teacher in Wallingford Public Schools, and director of Connecticut STEM Academy in Wallingford, CT. Mr. Stone spoke in support of the importance of STEM education for school-aged students. A copy of Mr. Stone's written statement is included in the official file of this meeting.
2. Kekylla Wynkoop, a parent of an Open Choice student, came to plead the situation concerning her seven year-old son attending school in Berlin. Ms. Wynkoop stated that her son has been experiencing anxiety due to bullying and racial tension at his school. The Commissioner confirmed that Ms. Wynkoop has been working with Mr. Glen Peterson and Dr. Adrian Wood. The Commissioner invited Ms. Wynkoop to have a conversation with Chief Operating Officer Charlene Russell-Tucker to gain information as to everything that has been done on the issues that she brought to our attention.

3. Gwen Samuel, President and Founder, Connecticut Parents Union, spoke on the matter of Kekylla Wynkoop. Ms. Samuel reiterated Ms. Wynkoop's request for a tutor for her seven year-old son.
4. Thomas Stringfellow, a Manchester resident, followed up on Ms. Samuel's comments concerning the seven year-old son of Kekylla Wynkoop. Mr. Stringfellow expressed that he felt angry and was appalled that such racial bias was going on in schools today. Mr. Stringfellow recommended some reading materials to the Board. A copy of Mr. Stringfellow's written statement is included in the official file of this meeting.

III. Executive Session

The Board did not meet in executive session.

IV. Consideration of Minutes

A. September 6, 2017, State Board of Education Meeting

Mr. Vrabely moved, Mr. Davenport seconded, that the Board adopt the minutes of the September 6, 2017, State Board of Education Meeting.

VOTE ON

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

Motion carried unanimously.

V. Items Requiring Action

A. Approval of Commissioner's Network Plan: New Britain High School, New Britain

A panel consisting of the Chief Turnaround Officer Desi Nesmith, Superintendent Nancy Sarra, and Principal Joe Pinchera, New Britain High School presented the New Britain High School plan for entering the Commissioner's Network to the Board. Discussion ensued.

Dr. López moved, Mr. Vrabely 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 New Britain High School in New Britain for the Commissioner's Network, subject to the conditions noted in the Commissioner's October 4, 2017, Executive Summary 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, Davenport, Harris, Jones, López, Mojica, Sieve, Taylor, Vrabely
Opposed: 0
Abstained: 0
Absent: Wright

Motion carried unanimously.

X. Items for Discussion

The Board unanimously agreed to consider agenda item X.A., State Assessment and Growth Results, 2016-17, at this time.

A. State Assessment and Growth Results, 2016-17

Chief Performance Officer Ajit Gopalakrishnan presented an overview of the state's summative assessments for 2016-2017 to the Board, which included a PowerPoint presentation. Mr. Gopalakrishnan first acknowledged the staff in the Performance Office and recognized the leadership of Bureau Chief of Assessment Abe Krisst. Guests panelists from (i) Vernon Public Schools: Superintendent Joseph Macary and Assistant Superintendent Robert Testa; and (ii) Regional School District #10 (Burlington, Harwinton): Superintendent: Alan Beitman, and Assistant Superintendent Cheri Burke represented a district perspective of districts and schools performing beyond the state growth rate.

V. Items Requiring Action (continued)

Mr. Vrabely requested and the Board agreed to consider agenda V.B., Appointment to the Technical Education and Career System Board, at this time. Mr. Trefry and Mr. Vrabely made comments in support of Ms. Andrea Comer's qualifying background and experience to her joining the Technical Education and Career System Board.

B. Appointment to the Technical Education and Career System Board

Mr. Vrabely moved, Dr. López seconded, that the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-95(a) of the Connecticut General Statutes, approves the appointment of Andrea Comer as member of the Technical Education and Career System Board, effective immediately, for a term coterminous with the term of the Governor or until a successor is appointed and has qualified, whichever is longer, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

VOTE ON

MOTION: In favor: Benham, Clemons, Davenport, Harris, López, Mojica,
Sieve, Taylor, Vrabely
Opposed: 0
Abstained: 0
Absent: Wright

Motion carried unanimously.

VIII. Financial Matters

Chief Financial Officer Kathleen Demsey provided a financial summary on school funding. Ms. Demsey summarized the education cost sharing grant distributions under the Governor Malloy's Executive Order and how districts will receive payments. Commissioner Wentzell explained that Governor Malloy's Executive Order is not the Governor's budget; it is a spending plan and not a budget proposal. The Commissioner encouraged the Board to contact Kathy Demsey or Laura Stefon with any follow-up budget questions. Discussion ensued.

V. Items Requiring Action (continued)

C. Resolution in Honor of Gloria McCree

By unanimous consent, the Board added to the agenda and approved the following resolution, which reads as follows:

Whereas, Gloria McCree has served as the Director of the Office of Internal Audit for the Connecticut State Board of Education since 2013; and

Whereas, through her leadership role at the Connecticut State Department of Education, Ms. McCree has been a fierce advocate for serving the public interest regarding financial and compliance matters; and

Whereas, she has staffed with distinction the Connecticut State Board of Education's Finance, Audit and Budget Committee; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Connecticut State Board of Education honors Gloria McCree for her selfless dedication to the agency and board, expresses appreciation for her years of service to the State of Connecticut, and wishes her well in her future endeavors.

Motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Taylor and Commissioner Wentzell thanked Ms. McCree for her years of service and wished her well in her retirement.

VI. Report of the Chair

No written report was provided.

VII. Report of the Commissioner

Commissioner Wentzell referenced her written report. The Commissioner featured the following points from her report:

- Commissioner Wentzell emphasized Governor Malloy's efforts concerning the aftermath of Hurricanes Maria and Harvey. She referenced the guidance document, "Displaced Children from Puerto Rico," that was prepared by the Legal department and Chief Operating Officer Charlene Russell Tucker's office. The Commissioner stressed the need to support the school districts.
- The Commissioner thanked Chief Talent Officer Dr. Sarah Barzee and her team for the 2018 Teacher of the Year announcement of a first grade teacher, Erin Berthold, Cook Hill School, Wallingford.
- Commissioner Wentzell invited Affirmative Action Director Levy Gillespie and his team to come forward for recognition of their Affirmative Action Plan and for supporting the State Department of Education, Connecticut Technical High School System, and the Office of Early Childhood. The Commissioner announced that the Department's Affirmative Action Plan had been approved by the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities. The Commissioner thanked Mr. Gillespie for his leadership and also his staff for all of their support.

IX. Consent Agenda

The Board unanimously agreed to consider agenda item IX.A., Report on Agricultural Science and Technology Education Graduates Five Years After Graduation, at this time.

Mr. Davenport highlighted that this was the 23rd graduate survey that the Agricultural Science programs have done. Mr. Davenport questioned what needed to be done to have all school Choice programs do a five-year graduate survey. Mr. Taylor responded that it would be looked into.

A. Report on Agricultural Science and Technology Education Graduates Five Years After Graduation

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-65a (b) of the Connecticut General Statutes, receives the Report on Agricultural Science and Technology Education Graduates Five Years After Graduation.

Tepper Bates, from the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness, led the discussion that centered on the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, a 30 year-old act this year that provides for all districts to have a liaison to better understand the homeless population and get them back into education.

E. Connecticut Technical High School System Board

Mr. Trefry introduced Interim Superintendent Jeffrey Wihbey to provide a report to the Board. Mr. Wihbey reported that at its last Board meeting, they engaged in data points for mastery-based learning for mathematics and literacy, and the vision and goal setting for principal and teacher evaluations. Mr. Wihbey announced that the student enrollment for October had increased. Mr. Wihbey thanked Chairman Trefry and Commissioner Wentzell for open school visits that they attended.

F. NASBE

Mr. Taylor reports that Vice Chairperson López has been nominated to the NASBE Board of Directors.

Chairperson Taylor adjourned the meeting at 1:11 p.m.

Prepared by: _____
Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell, Secretary
State Board of Education