

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
Hartford**

**DRAFT  
Minutes  
State Board of Education Meeting  
February 14, 2018**

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State, the State Board of Education (hereinafter "Board") met on Wednesday, February 14, 2018, 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 9:38 a.m.

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

Absent: Erik M. Clemons  
Terry H. Jones  
Mark Ojakian, Ex Officio  
Stephen P. Wright

**II. Public Participation**

1. Carl Gross, Director of Pupil Services for Regional School District One, and President of the Connecticut Council of Administrators of Special Education (ConnCASE), spoke in favor of the State Education Resource Center (SERC).
2. Dr. Janet Robinson, Superintendent, Stratford Public Schools, represented the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS). She spoke against agenda item V.B., Approval of Charter school Enrollments.
3. Kenneth Di Pietro, Superintendent, Plainfield Public Schools. Mr. Di Pietro spoke against agenda item V.B., Approval of Charter School Enrollments.

4. Yaakov Hillel Goodman, a dorm counselor and graduate of Durham Mesivta High School, spoke in support of agenda item, V.B., Certificate of Exemption: Mesivta-Durham. A copy of Mr. Goodman's written statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
5. Nitza M. Diaz, a Consultant at the State Education Resource Center (SERC), referenced CGS § 10-357b that defines the purpose of SERC. A copy of Ms. Diaz's written statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
6. Sal Escobales, represented the American Federation of Teachers Connecticut (AFT-CT), and President of New Britain Federation of Teachers, spoke against agenda item V.B., Approval of Charter School Enrollments.
7. Michael Brosnan, Bridgeport Public Schools, spoke against agenda item V.B., Approval of Charter School Enrollments. A copy of Mr. Brosnan's written statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
8. Kristen Record, a resident of the City of Bridgeport, and Physics Teacher at Bunnell High School in Stratford for 18 years, spoke against agenda item V.B., Approval of Charter school Enrollments. A copy of Ms. Record's written statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
9. Melissa Spear, Executive Director, Common Ground High School, New Haven, spoke in support of agenda item V.B., Approval of Charter School Enrollments.
10. Thomas Stringfellow, a Manchester resident, spoke on items in recognition of Black History Month, and education issues. He highlighted the U.S. Postal Service honoring legendary performer and civil rights activist Lena Horne on the Black Heritage Forever Stamp.
11. Nafi Gruenburg, a graduate of Mesivta high school spoke in support of agenda item, V.B., Certificate of Exemption: Mesivta-Durham. A copy of Mr. Gruenburg's written statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
12. Ted Allen, Science Teacher at Ledyard Middle School and Vice President of the Ledyard Education Association, spoke against agenda item V.B., Approval of Charter School Enrollments. A copy of Mr. Allen's written statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
13. Jim Wisniewski, Ledyard Science Teacher, Ledyard Education Association Building Representative, TEAM Mentor, and parent of Ledyard students, spoke against agenda item V.B., Approval of Charter School Enrollments. A copy of Mr. Wisniewski's written statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
14. Jeremy Bond, Publication Coordinator, State Education Resource Center (SERC), spoke in support of SERC.

15. Janet Piezzo, a 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Math Teacher, Plainfield Public Schools, and President of the Plainfield Education Association, spoke against agenda item V.B., Approval of Charter School Enrollments. A copy of Ms. Piezzo's written statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
16. Dr. Steve Perry, Principal, Capital Preparatory School, spoke in support of agenda item V.B., Approval of Charter School Enrollments.
17. Donald Williams, Executive Director of the Connecticut Education Association, spoke against agenda item V.B., Approval of Charter School Enrollments. A copy of Mr. Williams' written statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
18. Milly Arciniegas, Executive Director of the Hartford Parent University, spoke in favor of the State Education Resource Center (SERC).
19. Milagros Vega, spoke in support of the State Education Resource Center (SERC).
20. Marilyn Calderon, Executive Director, Connecticut Parent Power, a parent-led organization, spoke in support of the State Education Resource Center (SERC).
21. Patrice McCarthy, Deputy Director and General Council, Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE), spoke against agenda item V.B., Approval of Charter School Enrollments.
22. Jessica Martinez, a Bridgeport Parent Leader and newly elected board of education member, spoke on the advocacy presented at the meeting.
23. Jaysa Mellers (guest with Jessica Martinez); student body president of Classical Studies Math Academy (CSMA) spoke about their school being divided into two buildings and a building at 238 Jewett Avenue that Classical Studies Math Academy is trying to purchase.
24. Morgan Barth, Principal of Achievement First Amistad High School, New Haven, spoke in support of agenda item V.B., Approval of Charter School Enrollments.
25. Anjaniece Wilson, a 12<sup>th</sup> grade student at Amistad High School, New Haven spoke in support of agenda item V.B., Approval of Charter School Enrollments.
26. Miquell Shaw, a 12<sup>th</sup> grade student at Amistad High School, New Haven spoke in support of agenda item V.B., Approval of Charter School Enrollments.
27. Toby Ferguson, a 12<sup>th</sup> grade student at Amistad High School, New Haven spoke in support of agenda item V.B., Approval of Charter School Enrollments.

28. Fran Rabinowitz, Executive Director, Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS), submitted written testimony in opposition to agenda item V.B., Approval of Charter School Enrollments. A copy of Ms. Rabinowitz's written statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
29. Mario Ciccarini, Principal, Bradley School, in Derby, submitted written testimony in support of the State Education Resource Center (SERC). A copy of Mr. Ciccarini's written statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
30. Laurel LaPorte-Grimes, Ph.D., Uniting for Safe Inclusive Community (USIC) - Manchester, submitted written testimony in support of continued funding for State Education Resource Center (SERC). A copy of Dr. LaPorte-Grimes' written statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
31. Donna-Lee Rulli, submitted the written testimony of Veronica J. Scarfi, Ph.D., Certified School Psychologist, in support of the State Education Resource Center (SERC) and the SERC Library. A copy of Dr. Scarfi's written statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
32. Katherine Tucker, resident of Danbury, submitted written testimony in support of the State Education Resource Center (SERC). A copy of Ms. Tucker's written statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
33. Virginia Babcock, SERC Consultant, submitted written testimony in support of the State Education Resource Center (SERC). A copy of Ms. Babcock's written statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
34. Ivelise Velazquez, Chief Academic Officer for New London Public Schools, submitted written testimony in support of the State Education Resource Center (SERC). A copy of Ms. Velazquez's written 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**

#### **A. January 3, 2018, State Board of Education Meeting**

Mr. Vrabely moved, Mr. Harris seconded, that the Board adopt the minutes of the January 3, 2018, State Board of Education Meeting.



environment, encouraging teachers to take ownership of the programs, practices, policies, and priorities that shape student learning. Questions and answers ensued.

**C. Education Development Center (EDC) Work in Connecticut and Updates from the Regional Educational Laboratory/Northeast and Islands (REL-NEI)**

A panel consisting of Rebecca “Rebby” Carey, Associate Director, U.S. Division, Education Development Center (EDC) and Researcher Carrie Parker, Regional Educational Laboratory Northeast & Islands (REL-NEI). The presentation focused on the English learner, including effective models for meeting the needs of the diverse population of students who are English learners.

The Board recessed the meeting for lunch at 1:31 p.m.

The Board reconvened the meeting at 2:19 p.m.

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

Absent: Erik M. Clemons  
Terry H. Jones  
Mark Ojakian, Ex Officio  
Stephen P. Wright

**V. Items Requiring Action**

**A. Certificate of Exemption: Mesivta–Durham**

Dr. López moved, Mr. Vrabely seconded, 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 conditional Certificate of Exemption to the Mesivta-Durham of Yeshiva Gedolah of Waterbury (“Mesivta”), 459 Wallingford Road, Durham, CT 06422, for the period of February 14, 2018, through August 13, 2018, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action. The conditional Certificate of Exemption is subject to satisfaction of the following conditions:

1. To ensure appropriate levels of supervision for the number of students served, the Mesivta shall not exceed its current enrollment (180) and shall maintain its current levels of personnel involved in teaching, supervising or providing care for students, including with respect to the allocation of staff assigned to dormitory supervision responsibilities.
2. In accordance with the applicable regulations, CSDE may conduct a site visit at the Mesivta during the period of conditional approval at a time to be determined by CSDE.
3. In records that shall be preserved and available for inspection by state agencies, the Mesivta shall document any instance involving a breach of its policies or procedures relating to supervision, safety or health of students, and how the breach was addressed. In addition to any reports to DCF or other state agencies that may be required by law, any breach of policies or procedures resulting in injury or serious risk of injury to a student shall be reported to CSDE as soon as possible, and in no event later than 48 hours following discovery of the incident.
4. The Mesivta shall obtain and provide to CSDE a final health inspection report from the Town of Durham health inspector for the dining hall, and shall continue refraining from using the dining hall for food preparation until receipt of such report.

The Certificate of Exemption shall convert to a standard one-year Certificate of Exemption, expiring February 13, 2019, upon a determination by CSDE that the Mesivta appropriately satisfied the foregoing conditions during the initial six-month period.

**VOTE ON**

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

Motion carried unanimously.

**V. Items Requiring Action**

**B. Approval of Charter School Enrollments**

Dr. López moved, Mr. Vrabely seconded, that the State Board of Education approves the distribution of an additional 57 seats in state charter schools for the 2017-18 school year and, pursuant to Section 10-66bb(c) of the Connecticut General Statutes, grants enrollment waivers for two state charter schools, as delineated in



- The Commissioner thanked Director of Communications Peter Yazbak for all his efforts for the Department's social media presence.
- GirlsGoCyberStart. The Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) and the State Department of Education will collaborate with the Girl Scouts of Connecticut to encourage young women in grades 9 through 12 to register for cybersecurity training for future cybersecurity professionals.
- #Loveteaching. The Commissioner highlighted the national campaign, Love Teaching Campaign. During the week of Valentine's Day, teachers around the U.S. and Connecticut were asked to share why they love teaching with a story from the classroom. Teachers can post using the hashtag #loveteaching on social media or their blog.
- The funds that would be received from the federal government are at jeopardy, which places our Title II and Title IV funding to districts at risk.
- State Education Resource Center (SERC). The State Department of Education is very supportive of SERC. As a quasi-public agency, it is up to the SERC Board of Directors whether SERC continues to operate and not a matter for the State Department of Education or the State Board of Education.

### **VIII. Financial Matters**

Chief Financial Officer Kathleen Demsey provided a financial summary on the budget. Ms. Demsey highlighted that an impact to the Department is the potential consolidation of the Office of Higher Education into the Department. She stated that Governor Malloy has proposed changes to the ECS formula that was passed; those changes would mean that some districts that were anticipating funding would not receive funds. Discussion ensued.

### **XI. Committee Reports**

#### **A. Academic Standards and Assessment**

The committee will be meeting on February 26, 2018.

#### **B. Accountability and Support**

Dr. López reported that the committee will be meeting on February 21, 2018. An invitation was extended to attend the meeting for its restorative practice overview.

**C. Finance, Audit, and Budget**

Mr. Taylor reported that the committee will be meeting on February 28, 2018.

**D. Legislation and Policy Development**

Mr. Vrabely reported that the committee met this morning and had two presentations. Chief Talent Officer Dr. Sarah Barzee presented on the Sacred Heart University (SHU) proposal for a Superintendent of Schools program. Mr. Vrabely thanked Dr. Barzee for bringing new educator preparation programs that relates to workforce needs. Attorney Matthew Venhorst presented an overview of regional collaboration among school districts.

**E. Connecticut Technical High School System Board**

Mr. Trefry reported that Jeffrey Wihbey has been officially appointed by Commissioner Wentzell as the Superintendent of the Connecticut Technical Education and Career System. Mr. Trefry indicated that Mr. Wihbey is in the process of meeting with focus groups at each of the technical high schools. Mr. Trefry referenced that he and Mr. Wihbey continue to work with Ms. Kathy Demsey on the budget.

**F. NASBE**

No report was given.

Chairperson Taylor adjourned the meeting at 3:21 p.m.

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