

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Hartford**

**Minutes**  
**State Board of Education Meeting**  
**May 1, 2019**

(Approved June 13, 2019)

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State, the State Board of Education (hereinafter "Board") met on Wednesday, May 1, 2019, in Plaza North Meeting 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 9:40 a.m.

Present: Allan B. Taylor, Chairperson  
Erin D. Benham  
William P. Davenport  
Donald F. Harris, Jr.  
Tarini Krishna, Student Member  
Estela López  
Dr. Jane Gates (designee representing Mark Ojakian, Ex Officio)  
Malia K. Sieve  
Robert J. Trefry, Ex Officio

Absent: Erik M. Clemons  
Makayla R. Dawkins, Student Member

**II. Public Participation**

1. Paula Devaney, shared her concerns regarding Old Saybrook Public Schools. A copy of Ms. Devaney's written statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
2. Edward Devaney, shared his concerns regarding Old Saybrook Public Schools.
3. David Low, spoke in support of agenda item V.A., Renewal of State Charter – Elm City Montessori School, New Haven.
4. Ranga Subramanian, spoke in support of agenda item V.A., Renewal of State Charter – Elm City Montessori School, New Haven.
5. Jose Cuapio, a parent of an Elm City Montessori School student, spoke in support of agenda item V.A., Renewal of State Charter – Elm City Montessori School, New Haven.

6. Tim Sullivan, Superintendent of Capitol Region Education Council (CREC) schools, spoke in support of agenda item IX.C., Approval of New Educator Preparation Program: Capitol Region Education Council, Alternate Route to Certification Program in Elementary Education.
7. Lisa Cordova, President, Capitol Region Education Council Education Association (CRECEA), spoke in support of agenda item IX.C., Approval of New Educator Preparation Program: Capitol Region Education Council, Alternate Route to Certification Program in Elementary Education.
8. Marlene Lovanio, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching & Learning for CREC magnet schools, spoke in support of agenda item IX.C., Approval of New Educator Preparation Program: Capitol Region Education Council, Alternate Route to Certification Program in Elementary Education.
9. Tim Barber, Principal, University of Hartford Magnet School, spoke in support of agenda item IX.C., Approval of New Educator Preparation Program: Capitol Region Education Council, Alternate Route to Certification Program in Elementary Education.
10. Cyemone Douglas, Associate Instructor at CREC Montessori Magnet School, spoke in support of agenda item IX.C., Approval of New Educator Preparation Program: Capitol Region Education Council, Alternate Route to Certification Program in Elementary Education.
11. Jesse Pierce, a parent of a student at Parkville Elementary School, shared his concerns regarding the Hartford Board of Education.
12. Kelly Santanta, a parent of a student at Parkville Elementary School, shared her concerns regarding the Hartford Board of Education.
13. Milagros Vega, a parent and grandparent of students at Parkville Elementary School, shared her concerns regarding the Hartford Board of Education. Ms. Vega spoke in Spanish and Board member Estela López translated in English.
14. Gwen Samuels, President of Connecticut Parents Union, shared her concerns regarding the Hartford Board of Education.
15. Latisha Williams, a parent of a third-grader at Achievement First Hartford Academy, spoke in support of agenda item V.C., Renewal of State Charter – Achievement First Hartford Academy, Hartford. A copy of Ms. Williams' written statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
16. Kayla Waters, a parent of a third-grader at Achievement First Hartford Academy, spoke in support of agenda item V.C., Renewal of State Charter – Achievement First Hartford Academy, Hartford. A copy of Ms. Waters' written statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.

17. Annette Armstrong, a parent of a second-grader at Achievement First Hartford Academy, spoke in support of agenda item V.C., Renewal of State Charter – Achievement First Hartford Academy, Hartford. A copy of Ms. Armstrong's written statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
18. Melissa Baez, a parent of four students at Achievement First Hartford Academy, spoke in support of agenda item V.C., Renewal of State Charter – Achievement First Hartford Academy, Hartford. A copy of Ms. Baez's written statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
19. Carl Hardwick, a grandparent of three students at Achievement First Hartford Academy, spoke in support of agenda item V.C., Renewal of State Charter – Achievement First Hartford Academy, Hartford.
20. Terry Starks, a paraprofessional at Achievement First Hartford Summit Middle School, spoke in support of agenda item V.C., Renewal of State Charter – Achievement First Hartford Academy, Hartford. A copy of Ms. Starks' written statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
21. Thomas Stringfellow, a resident of Manchester, addressed the Board on several matters, including reading recommendations.
22. Heather LaSelle, a social worker, shared her concerns regarding the usage of an "opportunity room" for restraints and seclusion. A copy of Ms. LaSelle's written statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
23. Eboni Grady, a parent of students attending Achievement First Hartford Academy, spoke in support of agenda item, V.C., Renewal of State Charter – Achievement First Hartford Academy, Hartford. A copy of Ms. Grady's written statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
24. Darlene Childs, a grandparent of three children who attend Achievement First, submitted testimony in support of agenda item, V.C., Renewal of State Charter – Achievement First Hartford Academy, Hartford. A copy of Ms. Childs' written statement is enclosed in the official file of this meeting.
25. Bruce Ravage, Executive Director of Park City Prep Charter School in Bridgeport, submitted testimony in support of agenda item, V.B., Renewal of State Charter – Park City Prep Charter School, Bridgeport. A copy of Mr. Ravage'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. March 6, 2019, State Board of Education Meeting**

Mr. Harris moved, Dr. López seconded, that the Board adopt the minutes of the March 6, 2019, State Board of Education Meeting.

VOTE ON

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

Motion carried unanimously.

**V. Items Requiring Action**

**A. Renewal of State Charter – Elm City Montessori School, New Haven**

A panel consisting of Chief Turnaround Officer Desi Nesmith, Bureau Chief Lisa Lamenzo, Eliza Halsey, Executive Director and Julia Webb, Principal presented to the Board. Discussion ensued.

Dr. López moved, and Mrs. Benham seconded, that the State Board of Education, pursuant to subsection (g) of Section 10-66bb of the Connecticut General Statutes, renews the charter of Elm City Montessori School from July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2022, subject to the Commissioner's May 1, 2019, memorandum to the State Board of Education, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

VOTE ON

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

Motion carried unanimously.

**B. Renewal of State Charter – Park City Prep Charter School, Bridgeport**

A panel consisting of Chief Turnaround Officer Desi Nesmith, Bureau Chief Lisa Lamenzo, Bruce Ravage, Executive Director, and Lorraine Moore, Assistant Director presented to the Board. Discussion ensued.

Dr. López moved, and Mrs. Sieve seconded, that the State Board of Education, pursuant to subsection (g) of Section 10-66bb of the Connecticut General Statutes, renews the charter of Park City Prep Charter School from July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2022, subject to the Commissioner's May 1, 2019, memorandum to the State Board of Education, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

VOTE ON

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

Motion carried unanimously.

**C. Renewal of State Charter – Achievement First Hartford Academy, Hartford**

A panel consisting of Chief Turnaround Officer Desi Nesmith, Bureau Chief Lisa Lamenzo, Dacia Toll, Co-CEO and President, Achievement First, and Raven Obas, Elementary Principal, Achievement First Hartford Academy presented to the Board. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Harris moved, and Mrs. Benham 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, 2019, through June 30, 2022, subject to the Commissioner's May 1, 2019, memorandum to the State Board of Education, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

VOTE ON

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

Motion carried unanimously.

**IX. Consent Agenda**

At the request of Dr. López agenda item IX.C., Approval of New Educator Preparation Program: Capitol Region Education Council, Alternate Route to Certification Program in Elementary Education was removed from the consent agenda to address questions. A question and answer period followed concerning the recruitment process.

Mr. Taylor moved, Dr. López seconded, that the Board approve the following Consent agenda items, IX.A., Approval of Charter Management Agreement between Great Oaks Charter School - Bridgeport Inc., and Great Oaks Foundation Inc.; IX.B., Approval of Charter Management Agreement between Stamford Academy, Inc. and Domus Kids, Inc.; and IX.D., Amendment to 2019 Meeting Schedule.

**A. Approval of Charter Management Agreement between Great Oaks Charter School - Bridgeport Inc., and Great Oaks Foundation Inc.**

**RESOLVED**, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-66tt of the Connecticut General Statutes, approves the contract for whole school management services between Great Oaks Charter School – Bridgeport Inc. and Great Oaks Foundation Inc. and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

**B. Approval of Charter Management Agreement between Stamford Academy, Inc. and Domus Kids, Inc.**

**RESOLVED**, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-66tt of the Connecticut General Statutes, approves the contract for whole school management services between Stamford Academy, Inc. and Domus Kids, Inc. and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

**D. Amendment to 2019 Meeting Schedule**

**RESOLVED**, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 1-225 of the Connecticut General Statutes, amends its 2019 schedule of regular meeting dates by changing the June meeting to June 13, 2019, as follows:

January 3, 2019 (Thursday)

February 6, 2019

March 6, 2019

April 3, 2019

May 1, 2019

**June 13, 2019**

July 3, 2019 (Tentative)

August 7, 2019 (Retreat)

September 4, 2019

October 2, 2019

November 6, 2019

December 4, 2019

and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

VOTE ON

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

Motions carried unanimously.

**C. Approval of New Educator Preparation Program: Capitol Region Education Council, Alternate Route to Certification Program in Elementary Education**

**RESOLVED**, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-145d-9(g)(3)(A) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, grants full approval for the period May 1, 2019, through April 30, 2026, to the Capitol Region Education Council (CREC) with annual progress monitoring conducted using program data from the Connecticut Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) Data Dashboard until CREC's Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) 2026 site visit, for the purpose of certifying graduates from CREC in the following certification area:

<b>Program</b>	<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Program Level</b>	<b>Program Type</b>
Elementary Education	1-6	Initial	Alternate Route to Certification

and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

VOTE ON

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

Motion carried unanimously.

**VI. Report of the Chair**

Chairperson Taylor did not provide a report.

## **VII. Report of the Commissioner**

Commissioner Wentzell referenced her written report.

## **VIII. Financial Matters**

Chief Financial Officer Kathy Demsey provided financial updates on the Appropriations Committee and the Governor's budgets. Ms. Demsey highlighted staffing levels, funding for positions, and the restoration of the health services funds grant. Ms. Demsey reported that CTECS would remain with SDE until 2023.

Commissioner Wentzell spoke on operational issues, position counts and the financial ability to hire for positions. The Commissioner indicated that the agency would be working with OPM and the Governor's office.

## **XI. Committee Reports**

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

No report was presented.

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

No report was presented.

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

No report was presented.

### **D. Legislation and Policy Development**

No report was presented.

### **E. Connecticut Technical Education and Career System Board**

CTECS Chairman Trefry thanked Commissioner Wentzell for her support of the technical high schools. Mr. Trefry then introduced Superintendent Jeffrey Wihbey. Mr. Wihbey reported that the CTECS board met yesterday. The final draft of the Strategic Plan will be shared in coming months.

### **F. NASBE**

No report was presented.

Chairperson Taylor adjourned the meeting at 12:41 p.m.

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