

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
Hartford**

**Minutes  
State Board of Education Meeting  
June 13, 2019**

(Approved September 4, 2019)

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State, the State Board of Education (hereinafter "Board") met on Thursday, June 13, 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 9:41 a.m.

Present: Allan B. Taylor, Chairperson  
Erin D. Benham  
Erik M. Clemons  
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: Makayla R. Dawkins, Student Member

**Oath of Office**

Attorney Jessa Y. Mirtle, Commissioner of the Superior Court, administered the Oath of Office to the following reappointed Board members: (i) Erin D. Benham, and (ii) Estela López. Copies of the Oath of Office are enclosed in the official file of this meeting.

**II. Public Participation**

1. Thomas Stringfellow, a resident of Manchester, addressed the Board on several matters, including reading recommendations.
2. Ingrid Canady, Executive Director of the State Education Resource Center (SERC), Chief Operating Officer Charlene Russell-Tucker, and Judy Carson, Ph.D. on behalf of the SERC staff for the Commissioner's Roundtable for Family and Community Engagement in Education, thanked the Commissioner for her support and presented Commissioner Wentzell with a plaque.

3. Lieutenant Roy Minton, Deputy Fire Marshal, Stratford Fire Marshal's Office, spoke on the statewide Fire Prevention Poster contest and the need to encourage fire safety awareness.
4. Patrice McCarthy, Deputy Director and General Counsel of Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, congratulated the student members on graduation, and Erin Benham and Estela Lopez on their reappointment. Ms. McCarthy thanked Commissioner Wentzell for her graceful leadership style under pressure, for being a Friend of Public Education (CABE award November 2018), and expressed appreciation to the Commissioner for her valuable commitment.
5. Jessica Martinez, Vice Chair, Bridgeport Board of Education, spoke on Bridgeport's need of an interim superintendent; the need to elect leaders who care; and the need to work together to hold local boards of education accountable and transparent.

#### Certificate of Recognition for Dr. Sarah Barzee

Commissioner Wentzell presented Dr. Sarah Barzee, former Chief Talent Officer, with a Certificate of Recognition. The Commissioner thanked Dr. Barzee for her leadership of the Talent Office and for her dedication to the State Department of Education and State Board of Education. Dr. Barzee thanked Commissioner Wentzell and the Board for their support over the years.

#### State Student Advisory Council on Education End-of-Year Presentation

Commissioner Wentzell introduced the partnership of the Connecticut Association of Schools and the State Student Advisory Council on Education (SSACE).

Ms. Cheresse Miller, Director of Student Activities, Connecticut Association of Schools, introduced the students who would be presenting SSACE's end-of-year report to the State Board of Education. For 2018-19, SSACE focused its attention on: (i) Value of Teachers, and (ii) Cultivating an Interest in Teaching.

The presenting students were: (1) **Emma McKinney** – Staples High School, and (2) **Ann Martinez** – Henry Abbott Technical High School. The students presented a PowerPoint that outlined their discussions, data, and recommendations. A copy of the presentation is in the official file of this meeting.

### **III. Executive Session**

The Board did not meet in executive session.

**IV. Consideration of Minutes**

**A. May 1, 2019, State Board of Education Meeting**

Mrs. Benham moved, Mr. Davenport seconded, that the Board adopt the minutes of the May 1, 2019, State Board of Education Meeting.

VOTE ON

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

Motion carried unanimously.

**V. Items Requiring Action**

**A. Election of Vice Chairperson of the State Board of Education**

Mrs. Benham moved, and Mr. Davenport seconded, that the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 2 of Article II of its Bylaws, elects Estela López as Vice Chairperson of the State Board of Education, for the period June 13, 2019, until the next biennial organizational meeting, at which an election for Vice Chairperson will be held.

VOTE ON

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

Motion carried unanimously.

**B. Adoption of 2020 Meeting Schedule**

Dr. López moved, and Mrs. Sieve seconded, that the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 1-225 of the Connecticut General Statutes, approves the 2020 schedule of regular meeting dates, as follows:

January 8, 2020  
February 6, 2020 (Thursday)  
March 4, 2020  
April 1, 2020  
May 7, 2020 (Thursday)  
June 3, 2020

July 1, 2020 (Tentative)  
August 5, 2020 (Retreat)  
September 2, 2020  
October 7, 2020  
November 4, 2020  
December 2, 2020

and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

VOTE ON

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

Motion carried unanimously.

**C. Receipt of the Condition of Education Report, 2017-18**

Chief Performance Officer Ajit Gopalakrishnan presented an overview of the Executive Summary of the report to the Board. Discussion ensued.

Dr. López moved, and Mrs. Benham seconded, that the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-4(b) of the Connecticut General Statutes, receives *The Condition of Education in Connecticut (2017-18)* and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

VOTE ON

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

Motion carried unanimously.

**D. Receipt of Report on Racial Imbalance**

A panel consisting of the Division of Legal and Governmental Affairs Legal Director Jessa Mirtle and Attorney Laura Anastasio presented to the Board.

Mr. Davenport moved, Mrs. Benham 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 2018-19 school year, dated April 16, 2019, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

VOTE ON

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

Motion carried unanimously.

**E. Resolution in Honor of Tarini Krishna**

Dr. López moved, Mrs. Sieve seconded, that the Board approve the following Resolution in Honor of Tarini Krishna as read into the record by Chairperson Taylor:

WHEREAS,      Section 10-1 of the Connecticut General Statutes provides for the appointment of two student members to the Connecticut State Board of Education; and

WHEREAS,      Governor Dannel P. Malloy appointed Tarini Krishna of Ridgefield to the State Board of Education for a one-year term commencing August 1, 2018; and

WHEREAS,      During her tenure, Ms. Krishna has served with distinction and has contributed greatly to the Board's discussions of education policy issues;

*NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED*, That the State Board of Education extends to Tarini Krishna its appreciation for her commitment to educational excellence and equity in Connecticut public schools and best wishes for success in her future endeavors.

VOTE ON

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

Motion carried unanimously.

**F. Resolution in Honor of Makayla Dawkins**

Dr. López moved, Mrs. Sieve seconded, that the Board approve the following Resolution in Honor of Makayla Dawkins as read into the record by Chairperson Taylor:

WHEREAS,      Section 10-1 of the Connecticut General Statutes provides for the appointment of two student members to the Connecticut State Board of Education; and

WHEREAS, Governor Dannel P. Malloy appointed Makayla Dawkins of New Haven to the State Board of Education for a one-year term commencing August 1, 2018; and

WHEREAS, During her tenure, Ms. Dawkins has served with distinction and has contributed greatly to the Board's discussions of education policy issues;

*NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED*, That the State Board of Education extends to Makayla Dawkins its appreciation for her commitment to educational excellence and equity in Connecticut public schools and best wishes for success in her future endeavors.

VOTE ON

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

Motion carried unanimously.

## IX. Consent Agenda

Mr. Taylor moved, Dr. López seconded, that the Board approve the following Consent agenda items: IX.A., Recognition of Career and Technical Education Student Organizations; IX.B., Recognition of the Connecticut Association for Adult and Continuing Education Student Award Winners; IX.C., Recognition of GED Scholar; IX.D., Approval of Proposed Contract for Whole School Management Services between Achievement First Hartford Academy, Inc. and Achievement First, Inc. Amendment; IX.E., Request for Finance Advisory Committee (FAC) Action; and IX.F., In the Matter of Tee (Torians) Hughes, Coaching Permit Holder.

### A. Recognition of Career and Technical Education Student Organizations

**Whereas**, Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs) are a co-curricular, integral part of the local, state and national career and technical education programs;

**Whereas**, The development of individual student leadership skills is the keystone of these organizations; and

**Whereas**, All CTSO chapters were asked to identify an outstanding service project; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That the Connecticut Board of Education recognizes the following CTSO Outstanding Service Award Recipients:

- Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA), Hamden High School, Hamden

- Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), Simsbury High School, Simsbury
- Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA), Fairfield Ludlowe High School, Fairfield
- FFA, formerly known as Future Farmers of America, Bloomfield High School, Bloomfield
- Future Health Professionals (HOSA), Stratford High School, Stratford
- SkillsUSA, Oliver Wolcott Technical High School, Torrington

and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

**B. Recognition of the Connecticut Association for Adult and Continuing Education Student Award Winners**

**WHEREAS**, Adult education exemplifies the concept of lifelong learning with nearly ten thousand Connecticut residents in adult basic education/secondary school completion programs and nearly twelve thousand Connecticut residents in English as a Second Language (ESL) and U.S. citizenship preparation programs; and

**WHEREAS**, The Connecticut Association for Adult and Continuing Education (CAACE), through its CAACE Student Award, recognized six individuals who have overcome numerous obstacles and hardships to persist and succeed in adult education; and

**WHEREAS**, These individuals exemplify the spirit and determination necessary to achieve a goal and serve as role models to all adult and young learners in our communities; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That the Connecticut State Board of Education recognizes the following individuals for their accomplishments in this major adult education endeavor:

Afani Agbeginiganidrissou	Manchester Adult Education
Betty Ambroise	New London Adult Education
Evan Donlon	EASTCONN Adult Education
Rudina Fusha	Foothills Adult Education
Hala Mashhour	East Hartford Adult Education
Rejean Ouellette	Cheshire Adult Education

and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

**C. Recognition of GED Scholar**

**WHEREAS**, Nathaniel Marofsky, of Canton, has demonstrated exceptional skill and proficiency in the four subject areas of the high school equivalency examination by attaining a total score of 752 on the GED® tests in 2018;  
and

**WHEREAS**, He is the Connecticut resident with the highest total score on the GED® tests; and

**WHEREAS**, He has brought honor to himself, to the State Board of Education and the State of Connecticut; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, That the Connecticut State Board of Education honors Nathaniel Marofsky with great appreciation for his accomplishments in a major adult education endeavor and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

**D. Approval of Proposed Contract for Whole School Management Services between Achievement First Hartford Academy, Inc. and Achievement First, 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 Achievement First Hartford Academy, Inc. and Achievement First, Inc. and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

**E. Request for Finance Advisory Committee (FAC) Action**

**RESOLVED**, That the State Board of Education approves the request for Finance Advisory Committee (FAC) action to transfer \$1,000,000 from one CT Technical Education and Career System account to another, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

**F. In the Matter of Tee (Torians) Hughes, Coaching Permit Holder**

**RESOLVED**, That pursuant to its authority under subsection (e) of Section 10-145d-613 of the Regulations for Connecticut State Agencies, the State Board of Education orders the Commissioner to file with it, within the regulatory time period, a written report In the Matter of Tee (Torians) Hughes, Coaching Permit Holder.

Motions 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. The Commissioner highlighted her attendance as a speaker at the Annual State FFA Convention.

## **VIII. Financial Matters**

Chief Financial Officer Kathy Demsey provided the board with an update on the budget.

Commissioner Wentzell noted that Ms. Demsey would continue to update the Board concerning positions with the SDE and CTECS.

## **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 introduced Superintendent Jeffrey Wihbey. Mr. Wihbey reported that the CTECS was working on applications with Regional School Choice Office (RSCO). Mr. Wihbey announced that they were opening a Health Tech Shop at A.I. Prince Technical High School.

**F. NASBE**

No report was presented.

**V. Items Requiring Action** (continued)

**G. Resolution and Certificate of Recognition in Honor of Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell**

Mr. Taylor moved, Dr. López seconded, that the Board add to the agenda and approve the following Resolution and Certificate of Recognition in Honor of Dianna R. Wentzell as read into the record by Chairperson Allan Taylor:

**WHEREAS,** Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell was appointed by Governor Dannel P. Malloy to serve as Commissioner of Education for the State of Connecticut in April, 2015; and; and

**WHEREAS,** The Connecticut State Board of Education appointed her to serve as Interim Commissioner of Education effective January 7, 2015; and

**WHEREAS,** Through her leadership role as Commissioner of Education, she led the Connecticut State Department of Education with honor and distinction; and

**WHEREAS,** She has an accomplished career in education spanning over 30 years; and

**WHEREAS,** She has served as Chief Academic Officer; Assistant Superintendent for Pre K-12 Education; held various district leadership positions with a focus on curriculum, instruction and assessment; and served as a social studies teacher and a teacher for gifted students;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,** that the Connecticut State Board of Education honors Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell for her selfless dedication to Connecticut's children, the Connecticut State Department of Education, and the Connecticut State Board of Education, and expresses appreciation for her years of service to the State of Connecticut, and wishes her well in her retirement.

Approved unanimously this thirteenth day of June, two thousand nineteen.

VOTE ON

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

Motion carried unanimously.

**Certificate of Recognition in Honor of Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell**

Certificate of Recognition in honor of Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell for her service as Commissioner of the Connecticut State Department of Education, and with appreciation for her significant and lasting contributions to the improvement of academic educational leadership, curriculum, instruction, and academic student success at the local, state, regional, and national levels over the past 30 years

Approved unanimously this thirteenth day of June, two thousand nineteen.

Commissioner Wentzell thanked the Board for its acknowledgement and recognition. She thanked the Board members and the staff of the State Department of Education for the honor to have served as Commissioner.

Chairperson Taylor adjourned the meeting at 12:17 p.m.

Prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Miguel A. Cardona, Secretary  
State Board of Education