

THE COMMISSIONER'S ROUNDTABLE FOR FAMILY AND
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN EDUCATION
Hartford

Draft Minutes of Meeting
(Subject to Revision)
May 9, 2018

I. Call to Order

Dr. Judy Carson, Program Manager for School-Family-Community Partnerships, Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), called the meeting to order at 9:20 a.m. The meeting was held in Plaza North Meeting Room C of the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) offices at 450 Columbus Boulevard, Hartford, Connecticut.

Members present:

Abie Benitez, President, Connecticut Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (Representing Connecticut Association of Schools)

Paige Bray, Associate Dean for Research and Community Education, Associate Professor of Early Childhood Education, University of Hartford (Representing Deans of Schools of Education)

Jeana Bracey, Director of School and Community Initiatives, Child Health and Development Institute

Mary Lou DiPaola, ESL Teacher, New Haven Board of Education (Representing Connecticut Federation of Educational and Professional Employees (AFT-CT))

Mario Florez, Director of School Climate and Culture, Hartford Public Schools (Representing Commission on Women, Children and Seniors)

Matthew Geary, Superintendent of Schools, Manchester Public Schools (Representing Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents)

Paula Gilberto, CEO, United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut (Representing United Way of Connecticut)

Jennifer Lussier, Parent Consultant, Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center

David Scata, Director of Education, Mohegan Tribe

Robert Smoler, President, Fairfield Education Association (Representing Connecticut Education Association)

John Taylor, Executive Director, Booker T. Washington Academy (Representing Northeast Charter Schools Network)

Athena Wagner, Outreach Coordinator, State of Black Connecticut Alliance/Connecticut Parents' Union

Dianna R. Wentzell, Commissioner, Connecticut State Department of Education

Beresford Wilson, Executive Director, FAVOR

Members absent:

Jeffrey Bianco, Co-Chair, Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network (GLSEN) Connecticut

Audrey Brown, Parent (Representing African Caribbean American Parents of Children with Disabilities (AFCAMP))

Elizabeth Brown, President, Waterbury Board of Education (Representing Connecticut Association of Boards of Education)
Clifford Dudley, Principal, Orchard Hills School, Milford Public Schools (Representing Connecticut Federation of School Administrators)
Derby Egin, Student, Windsor Locks High School (Representing State Student Advisory Council on Education)
Lisa Fair, Parent, Achievement First
Jennifer Falotico, President, Connecticut Parent Teacher Association
Natasha Harris, Director of Workforce Quality Assurance, Urban League of Greater Hartford
Aggie Kurzyna, Parent, CT Parent Power (Representing Connecticut Parent Power)
Tamara Lanier, Chief Probation Officer, Connecticut Judicial Branch, Court Support Services Division (Representing Connecticut State Conference of NAACP)
Nikitoula Menounos, Principal, Norwich Technical High School (Representing Connecticut Technical High School System)
Giancarlo Isotti, Student, Suffield High School (Representing State Student Advisory Council on Education)
Chemay Morales-James, Educational Equity Coach, My Reflection Matters and Bridge to Success (Representing Commission on Equity and Opportunity)
Bryan Randall, Personnel Officer, U.S. Naval Submarine Base (Representing State Council for Educational Opportunities for Military Children)
Sara Sneed, Director, Education Investments, Hartford Foundation for Public Giving
Donna Thompson-Bennett, National Coordinator, National Parent Leadership Institute
Tynima Toney, Parent Coach, Hartford Parent University
Mirellise Vazquez, Executive Director, Tauck Family Foundation (Representing Connecticut Council on Philanthropy)

Guests:

Jennifer Benevento, AFT Connecticut
Eric Bergeron, Department of Transportation
Kevin Burns, Department of Transportation
Jennifer Johnson, Office of Early Childhood
Betsy LeBorjous, Capitol Region Education Council
Jessica Lavorgna, Education Development Council
Carol O'Donnell, Connecticut Council for Philanthropy
Michele O'Neill, Connecticut Education Association
Russell Sills, Windsor Public Schools
Paula Smith, Mohegan Tribe
Deborah Watson, Office of Early Childhood

Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) Staff:

Judy Carson
John Frassinelli
Ajit Gopalakrishnan
Glen Peterson
Charlene Russell-Tucker
Peter Yazbak

II. Welcome and Introductions

Ms. Charlene Russell-Tucker, Chief Operating Officer, CSDE, welcomed the group.

III. Important Emergent Issues in Education

Ms. Russell-Tucker provided an update on students and families who have been displaced by hurricanes and are now residing in Connecticut. The CSDE is in the process of applying to the U.S. Department of Education for Emergency Impact Aid, which will provide assistance to local educational agencies and nonpublic schools that have enrolled students displaced during the 2017-18 school year by Hurricanes Harvey, Irma or Maria or the 2017 California wildfires. More information is available [here](#).

Commissioner Wentzell reported on her participation in a forum hosted by the Democratic leadership of the Congressional Committee on Education and the Workforce to examine issues of school climate, school safety and violence prevention. Dr. Wentzell reported that Connecticut continues to elevate the importance of social and emotional well-being and evidence-based preventative measures in schools.

IV. Presentation and Discussion on Department of Transportation's Operation Lifesaver Program

Mr. Keven Burns, State Coordinator for Operation Lifesaver, Connecticut Department of Transportation, presented on the Operation Lifesaver program. Operation Lifesaver is a nonprofit national public safety education and awareness program dedicated to reducing collisions, fatalities and injuries at highway-rail grade crossings and trespassing on or near railroad tracks. Mr. Burns stated that the upcoming launch of the Hartford Line commuter service will dramatically increase train traffic along the I-91 corridor towns. Connecticut's Operation Lifesaver program is starting a pilot program to recruit community members to conduct Operation Lifesaver presentations in their respective communities. Information is available on the [Connecticut Department of Transportation Web site](#) and on the [national Operation Lifesaver Web site](#).

V. Understanding Performance and Accountability

Mr. Ajit Gopalakrishnan, Chief Performance Officer, CSDE, continued the discussion begun in the last meeting about [Connecticut's Next Generation Accountability System](#), the [Profile and Performance Report](#) and the [EdSight](#) data portal using new data from the 2016-17 school year. His [presentation](#) discussed the 12 weighted indicators in the state's accountability system and demonstrated how the data are organized into the Profile and Performance Reports for districts. Mr. Gopalakrishnan explained how each of the 12 indicators are determined individually and how they are summarized into an Accountability Index at the state, district and school levels. He described how the accountability results can then be used as a tool to guide improvement. Members of the group appreciated that the information is easily available and understandable.

VI. Update Regarding Definition and Framework for Family Engagement

Ms. Jennifer Johnson, Division Director, Office of Early Childhood, Ms. Carol O'Donnell, Executive Director of the Early Childhood Funders Collaborative (a project of Connecticut Council for Philanthropy) and Dr. Judy Carson, Education Consultant, CSDE, gave a brief

update on the status of Connecticut's Definition and Framework on Family Engagement. Members were asked to review a draft of the document and consider how their agency or organization could commit to using the principles in their practice.

VII. Meeting Dates for 2018-19

October 17, 2018; January 23, 2019; and May 15, 2019. All meetings are from 9 to 11:30 a.m. Locations to be announced.

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.