

INTERAGENCY COUNCIL FOR ENDING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP  
Hartford

**Draft** Minutes of Meeting  
(Subject to Revision)  
April 5, 2018

**Call to Order**

The Honorable Nancy Wyman, Lieutenant Governor, State of Connecticut, called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. The meeting was held in Meeting Room Plaza North D, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Hartford, Connecticut

Member agencies  
represented by:

Jeffrey Beckham, Staff Counsel and Communications Director, Department of Administrative Services  
Nachiketa Bhatt, Education Consultant, Department of Children and Families  
Michael Carone, Legislative and Regulations Analyst, Department of Social Services  
Steven DiLella, Director, Individual and Family Support Programs Department of Housing  
Leah Grenier, Principal Budget Specialist, Office of Policy and Management  
Bonnie Koba, Arts in Education Program Manager and Director of Higher Order Thinking (HOT) Schools, Department of Economic and Community Development  
Charlene Russell-Tucker, Chief Operating Officer, Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE)  
Dianna R. Wentzell, Commissioner, Connecticut State Department of Education

Guests:  
Judy Carson, Connecticut State Department of Education  
Shana Hurley, Connecticut State Department of Education  
Jennifer Johnson, Office of Early Childhood  
Anne Meade, Danbury Public Schools  
Russell Sills, Windsor Public Schools  
Kari Sullivan, Connecticut State Department of Education

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

The Honorable Nancy Wyman, Lieutenant Governor, State of Connecticut  
Dianna R. Wentzell, Commissioner, Connecticut State Department of Education

**II. Introduction to the Commissioner's Roundtable on Family and Community Engagement in Education (Roundtable)**

Dianna R. Wentzell, Commissioner  
Connecticut State Department of Education

Charlene Russell-Tucker, Chief Operating Officer  
Connecticut State Department of Education

The presentation provided an overview of the purpose of the Roundtable, makeup of its membership and topics addressed to date. The purpose of the Roundtable is to inform the Commissioner regarding policies and programmatic priorities, including:

- Advise the CSDE on issues and policies related to family and community engagement in education.
- Bring an authentic parent and community voice to CSDE products and initiatives.

- Review and make recommendations on implementation of the Connecticut State Board of Education's Five-year (2016-21) Comprehensive Plan regarding school-family-community partnership initiatives.
- Review and recommend effective practices to increase school and district capacity to develop successful partnerships and families' capacity to support their children's education and determine the feasibility of carrying out those practices in Connecticut.

Membership reflects a balanced representation of major constituent groups and Connecticut's geographic, economic, and ethnic/racial diversity.

A variety of topics have been discussed at the Roundtable meetings including:

- Minority teacher recruitment
- New EdSight Data Portal
- Every Student Succeeds Act
- Family Engagement Framework
- Next Generation Accountability System
- Emergent issues in education: students displaced by disasters; standards for students who have been expelled, attendance awareness campaign and immigration matters.

#### **IV. District Stories of Family Engagement: Steps Toward Full and Equal Partnerships**

##### **Danbury Public Schools**

Anne Mead, Administrator of Early Childhood Education, Extended Learning Programs and Family and Community Engagement

##### **Windsor Public Schools**

Russell Sills, Director of School, Family, and Community Partnerships

Dr. Mead and Mr. Sills provided an overview of successful parent engagement models in their communities. Danbury Public Schools created a welcoming Family & Community Engagement **(FACE)** Center to centralize a number of programs and services for families. The center houses a range of programs including central school registration, Free and Reduced Lunch application, the Danbury Family Learning Center, play groups, and before and after school programs. The center strives to develop trust with all families; stress the important of early educating and attendance; engage parents as partners; and serve as a one-stop information and referral hub for families. Dr. Mead provided a virtual "walk-through" of the Family & Community Engagement Center.

Windsor Public Schools implemented the Parent Teacher Home Visit Project to build powerful family/school partnerships with the goal of increasing student outcomes through improved family partnerships. Training was provided by the National Parent Teacher Home Visit Program ([www.pthvp.org](http://www.pthvp.org)) and funding was provided by the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving. In 2016-17, 111 home visits were conducted and 150 home visits are expected to be completed in the current school year. Outcomes include:

- 100% of parents and teachers said they would recommend home visits to peers;
- 95% of parents indicated they had a better relationship with their child's teacher as a result of the visit; and
- 81.8% of teacher indicated they see improvement in the student's academic and/or behavioral performance after the home visit.

**IV. Connecticut Blueprint/Framework for High-impact Family Engagement**

Judy Carson, Education Consultant  
Connecticut State Department of Education

Jennifer M. Johnson, Director  
Office of Early Childhood

Dr. Carson and Ms. Johnson provided an overview of “The Framework Project,” a project of the Connecticut State Department of Education, Office of Early Childhood, and the Early Childhood Funders Collaborative (a project of the Connecticut Council for Philanthropy). The objectives are to:

- co-create a clear, useful definition of *high-impact* family and community engagement in children’s learning and development;
- co-develop a Framework for using the definition that includes core values, effective strategy examples, and user-friendly tools; and
- co-promote the definition’s integration into policy and practice across the state.

The proposed Framework was shared with the group and is being reviewed by the Commissioner’s of Education and Early Childhood for approval.

**III. Member Roundtable**

A roundtable discussion was conducted and provided an update for members on the work of the participating agencies on behalf of children and families.

**IV. Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, October 11, 2018, 9 to 11 a.m., 450 Columbus Boulevard, Plaza North Meeting Room D

**V. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 a.m.