

CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION FOR READING RESEARCH
Summary of the Connecticut State Board of Education (CSBE) Meeting
November 4, 2020

Attending: Bonnie Bauer, Erin Benham, Miguel Cardona (Commissioner), Karen Dubois-Walton, Elwood Exley, Janet Gates (for Marc Ojakian, Ex-Officio), Estela Lopez (Vice-Chair), Donald Harris, Martha Prou, Awilda Reasco, Malia Sieve, Robert Trefry (Ex-Officio).

Absent: Eric Clemons

The Commissioner began the meeting by introducing Terrance X, graduate of Sheehan High School in Meriden and winner of the nationwide Broadway Star Competition. He sang the *Star-Spangled Banner* to open the meeting.

The Board also dedicated a moment of silence to honor the passing of Eric Clemon's wife, Sharon, and in remembrance of former Commissioner Gerald Terrazzi.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Joan Venditto, president of the Connecticut Chapter of AACTE and Director of the teacher preparation program at Albertus Magnus College, thanked the CSBE for its support of teacher preparation in the states' public and private universities.

Ruben Filipe, Executive Director of the CT Charter School Association, wrote an objection to the delay of the proposed grade level expansion from PK-5 to PK-8 at the Stamford Charter School for Excellence. The expansion was tabled at the school's five-year renewal hearing. In order to preserve the school's future plan, the CSBE granted approval to provide for rolling grade expansion limited to its current students.

Mr. Felipe noted that due to the closures of other city charter schools, SSE is now the only charter serving Stamford.

ITEMS REQUIRING ACTION

No items

REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER

Commissioner Cardona reported on his internal, external, and Legislative activities. He introduced a video produced by the department to celebrate the four Connecticut Blue Ribbon Schools honored by the United States Department of Education. He elaborated on his participation as a panelist in multiple celebrations of National Hispanic Heritage Month.

The Commissioner also informed the Board that responsibility for data collection related to outbreaks of COVID 19 in schools is being moved to the Department of Public Health (DPH), though communications between the two agencies remains very close. Districts will continue to have the responsibility of tracking attendance and school closures, with the CSDE closely monitoring attendance and the instructional models—remote, hybrid, in person—employed by the schools and districts. Currently, 53% of districts are utilizing fulltime, in person models.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

No report

CONSENT AGENDA

A. In the Matter of RV, Certification Action. The agenda was accepted

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

A. Agency Update

- Ajit Gopalakrishnan, Chief Performance Officer, updated current enrollment and attendance model data. The data is being collected by a new attendance software system that allows the department more real-time information. The system allows for asynchronous instruction to be reported as valid attendance. As of October 31st, attendance data reveals:
 - 3% drop in overall enrollment in CT schools
 - 50% of that 3% is at the PK-K grade levels
 - 10% of the 3% is at the Grade 1-2 levels
 - Homeschooling increased by 3,000+ students
 - 2/3rds of the total are in Alliance Districts
 - 84% of students with low attendance have more than one high needs identification (i.e. ESL with disability).
- Desi Nesmith, Chief Turnaround Officer, and Charlene Russell-Tucker, Deputy Commissioner, reported on the support being provided by the CSDE to address issues around models of instruction--both virtual and in-person, daily attendance, technical difficulties and monitoring child health and safety.

B. CTEC Report

EX-Officio Board Member Robert Trefry and Superintendent of CTEC, Jeff Wihbey, presented the Board with the District's annual report. (The final report was designed and printed by the CTEC students.) Currently, the system is composed of 20 schools and locations with a total of 10,870 students. The system is organized around 12 career clusters with 31 trades. Highlights include:

- 97% graduation rate
- 1000 students enrolled in college courses
- Significantly stronger industry alignment and collaboration with regional employees
- A 3.3% increase in student generated workforce revenue totaling \$134,767, despite the pandemic.
- Significant redesign of all operating systems

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Marie Mulready