

**CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION FOR READING RESEARCH**  
**Summary of the Connecticut State Board of Education (CSBE) Meeting**  
**July 14, 2020**

Attending: Bonnie Bauer, Erin Benham, Miguel Cardona (Commissioner), Eric Clemons, 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: Allan Taylor (The meeting was chaired by Vice-Chair Lopez.)

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The public submitted statements via the online portal.

The following provided written statements in support of a full Fall school reopening:  
Karen Coquillin,( parent), Tracey Godbout (parent)

The following provided written statements objecting to a full Fall school reopening:  
Joanna Charbonneau (parent) Andrew Shaw (parent), Brian Springstein (teacher), Chris Freiden(teacher), Kristina Stasiatis (teacher), Joanna Teodosio (teacher).

The following parents and guardians provided written statements in support of the 6-8 expansion of Stamford Charter School for Excellence: Paulo Becerra, Teresa Brivett, Sandra Carrillo, Casey Conetta, Anny Guartatanga, George Johnson, the Lestrade family, Nidia Lopez, Christian Martinez, Desreen Mitchell, Armida Ocampo, Subha, Guiermo Valle.

**ITEMS REQUIRING ACTION**

Material Change to Stamford Charter School for Excellence (SCSE)

Desi Nesmith, Chief Academic Officer, presented the SCSE request to amend their Charter approval to expand from a grade configuration of PK-5 to PK-6, with the intention of adding grades 7 and 8 next year. There was extended discussion on the inability of the state to fund more seats at this time after previous attempts by charter representatives to fund increased capacity after additional students had been admitted. Charter representatives responded with the promise to remain at the current student cap of 392, with current 5<sup>th</sup> grade students entering 6<sup>th</sup> grade in the fall. The attorneys for the Board suggested tabling the motion to rewrite it such that the PK-8 configuration was denied, while allowing for the addition of grade 6 and the leasing of a new building for the development of an Early Childhood building. The motion was rewritten and approved

Approval of Limited Waiver of School Sessions for COVID-19 Re-entry Planning and Training

The Board approved the Commissioner's request to provide 3 days prior to the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year for planning and reorientation of faculty and staff, thereby changing the minimum number of instructional days to 177.

**REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER**

The Commissioner updated the Board on the Departments extensive work with the Governor's Reopening Task Force, collaboration with the Department of Public Health and the Resurgence Task Force. And regular contact with CASS, CABE, AFT and CEA, and district superintendents. He reported on the use of the CARES funding in addressing the digital divide and the work on best practices for pre-school education and special education given the current pandemic constraints.

## REPORT OF THE CHAIR

No report

## CONSENT AGENDA

(A) Appointment's to Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) Program Approval Review Committee. (B) Charter Renewal Period Extensions.

The agenda was approved

## ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

### Connecticut's Plan for Reopening

The Commissioner reported on the CSDE webinar, ADAPT, ADVANCE, ACHIEVE (available [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u42l8\\_856-8&feature=emb\\_rel\\_](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u42l8_856-8&feature=emb_rel_)). The webinar was open to the public and addressed the three district requirements for the 2020-2021 school year. Each district must submit a plan for in person, hybrid, and full distance learning. He also reported on the Learning Hub available on the CSDE website with curated materials across grade levels and learning domains and available to students and teachers on the CSDE website.

The Commissioner turned the report over to Charlene Russell Tucker, Chief of Staff, who described the work being done to support the physical, emotional and social needs of students. She reported on the SDE's work with the American Academy of Pediatrics and consultations with public health officials. She announced the future availability of virtual office hours with a pediatrician that will be available to parents and caregivers across the state.

Desi Nesmith reported on the CSDE use of CARES Act funding that has been used to provide additional digital devices and connectivity to students, with special attention to the Opportunity Districts of the state.

### Report on Student Participation in Distance Learning

A statewide survey of participation in remote learning revealed the following

- Over 90% of students participated through technology based online learning. Ten percent (10%) used other methods—packets, etc.
- Identified barriers to participation were
  - Limited or no access to home devices—10% (50,000 students)
  - Internet access in home—6% (29,000 students)
  - Family, health, and trauma issues—17% (
- Opportunity Districts (lowest socio-economic demographic) reflected the greatest challenges with all barriers defined above
- Effective strategies to counter identified barriers are contacting students and families, delivering technology, providing tech support, case management and family intervention, live lessons and interactions

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Marie Mulready