

CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION FOR READING RESEARCH
Summary of the Connecticut State Board of Education (CSBE)
Meeting
April 7, 2021

Attending: Bonnie Burr(remote), Erin Benham, Karen Dubois-Walton (remote), Elwood Exley(remote), Estela Lopez (Vice-Chair), Donald Harris, Martha Prou, Awilda Reasco (remote), Malia Sieve(remote), Robert Trefry (Ex-Officio-remote). Charlene Russell-Tucker (Acting Commissioner)

Absent: Allen Taylor, Eric Clemons, Janet Gates (Ex-Officio)

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Dr. Ann Marie Mulready, representing our organization (CARR) addressed the Board regarding the inadequacies in H.B. 6620, An Act Concerning the Right to Read and Addressing Certain Opportunity Gaps and Equity in Public Schools. ([The statement is posted on the CARR website.](#))

Chris Drewery, Treasurer for the AACTE-CT and Dean of the School of Education and Professional Studies at Eastern CT State University, expressed concerns regarding the cost to preservice teachers for assessments and certification fees. AACTE is proposing that the state mitigate this burden by providing retake waiver codes, edTPA submission vouchers, a minority teacher incentive program, scholarships, TEACH grants and school internships, assistantships and residency positions.

Jane Gagne, PhD, sent a statement requesting that the CSBE provide policy to protect students from standardized testing during the pandemic

REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER

Charlene Russell-Tucker highlighted the following actions of the Commissioner's Office:

- Health and Safety Tuesdays continue weekly, averaging over 600 participants.
- The DPH and CSDE partnered to issue the Finish Strong guidance identifying continued priorities for the 2020-21 academic year and into the summer
- Joint DPH and CSDE Guidance on Interim Considerations for Spring 2021 End-of -Year School Events

- Accountability Waiver submitted to USED
- Chief of Staff/Legislative Liaison Laura Stefon has been monitoring 300 proposals for the Agency in 19 legislative committees
- Launched AccelerateCT Education Taskforce
- Launched SEL Assessment System
- Launched Special Populations Roundtable
- Launched an Employee Advisory and Diversity Committee

ITEMS REQUIRING ACTION

No Items

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

While there was no official report from the Chair, Estella Lopez, Vice Chair, announced that Allan Taylor was stepping down as chair, but hoped to serve as a regular member of the CSBE, pending the Governor's Approval. Ms. Lopez noted the extraordinary tenure of Chair Taylor, beginning in 1994, and serving as Chair since 2005.

CONSENT AGENDA

The consent agenda was approved

- A. Approval of Commissioner's Network Extension for Wexler-Grant, Community School, New Haven
- B. Approval of Commissioner's Network Extension for New Britain High School, New Britain
- C. Approval of Commissioner's Network Extension for Windham High School, Windham

REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER

No report

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

- A. CAPSS Blueprint to Transform Connecticut's Public Schools.
 Fran Rabinowitz, Executive Director of the CT Association of Public-School Superintendents, presented the Association's, *Blueprint to Transform CT Public Schools*. The Blueprint provides a comprehensive set of 30 recommendation to transform the State's Equity Cost Sharing Grants and create more equitable funding across the state. The Association claims that the plan is comprehensive and long term, predictable and sustainable, coherent and interrelated,

innovative and efficient, demanding and accountable, and realistic and aspirational. The plan is designed to be fully operational over the course of 15 years in order to provide for a smooth transition from the present system of awarding cost sharing grants.

Following the presentation, members of the Board asked about the Plans consistency with the CSBE Five Year Education Plan, currently being developed. According to Rabinowitz, and Paul Freeman, much of plan is consistent and they offered the cooperation of CAPPs coordinating the plan with the CSDE.

Agency Update,

Kathy Demsey, CFO, provided an update on the requirements for spending the Federal Cares Act Funds and the status of the CSDE support for the distribution of ESSER II funds. John Frasanelli, Department Health, Nutrition and Family Services, reported on the adoption of the Devereaux Strengths Assessment (DESSA) as a screen for Social-Emotional Health. The DESSA was determined to be the most comprehensive instrument and will be available to 100 districts for the 2021-2020 and 200 schools in the 2022-2023 school years at no cost. Chief Performance Officer, Ajit Gopalakrishnan reported that 70% of districts were operating as completely in-person models and that only 5 districts remain fully remote. Lastly, the Department is partnering with CAPPs to provide Professional development for districts to support family engagement.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Marie Mulready