

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford**

Minutes of Meeting
December 3, 2008

Pursuant to notice filed with the Secretary of the State, the State Board of Education (hereinafter "Board") met on Wednesday, December 3, 2008, at the State Office Building, 165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut.

I. Call to Order

Chairman Taylor called the meeting to order at 8:40 a.m.

Present: Allan Taylor, Chair
Beverly Bobroske
Donald Coolican
Janet Finneran
Theresa Hopkins-Staten
Christine Larson
Patricia Luke*
Brandt Smallwood
Jay Voss
Michael Meotti, Ex-Officio*

Absent: Lynne Farrell

II. Public Participation

1. Dr. Philip Streifer, Bristol Superintendent of Schools, spoke to the Board regarding a proposal to form an Ad Hoc Committee on the Budget. A written copy of Dr. Streifer's prepared remarks can be found in the official file of this meeting.

[Mrs. Luke arrived at 8:42 a.m.]

2. Cal Heminway, Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE), urged the Board to establish a state standard and a vigorous approach regarding BEST assessment and evaluation. Mr. Heminway also stated CABE's opposition to unfunded mandates, especially in-school suspensions. This proposal should be delayed until funding is available.

[Mr. Meotti arrived at 8:45 a.m.]

3. Dr. Joseph Cirsuolo, Executive Director, Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS), spoke against reductions to state education grants in this year or next year. A copy of Dr. Cirsuolo's written comments can be found in the official file of this meeting.
4. Patricia Keavney, Vice President of State Vocational Federation of Teachers, spoke in opposition to the Board's budget proposal concerning suspension of operations of J. M. Wright Technical High School. A copy of Ms. Keavney's written comments can be found in the official file of this meeting.
5. Kachina Walsh-Weaver, Senior Legislative Associate, Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM), shared CCM's concerns regarding the budget proposals and urged the Board to make a statement against reduction of funds to education. Ms. Walsh-Weaver asked the Board to be mindful of the impact that any new unfunded mandates would have on the local districts.
6. John Yrchik, Executive Director, Connecticut Education Association (CEA), urged the Board to make a strong statement against budget cuts. A copy of Mr. Yrchik's prepared comments can be found in official file of this meeting.

IV.A. Consideration of Minutes of the October 21, 2008, Special State Board of Education Budget Workshop

Mr. Coolican moved, Mrs. Luke seconded, that the Board approve the minutes of the October 21, 2008, Special State Board of Education Budget Workshop.

VOTE: In Favor: Bobroske, Coolican, Luke, Hopkins-Staten, Finneran,
 Taylor, Voss
 Opposed: 0
 Abstained: 0
 Absent: Farrell

Motion carried unanimously.

IV.B. Consideration of Minutes of the November 5, 2008, State Board of Education Meeting

Mr. Coolican moved, Mrs. Luke seconded, that the Board approve the minutes of the November 5, 2008, State Board of Education meeting.

WHEREAS, over 92% of the approximately \$2.8 billion current services budget of the State Department of Education consists of grants to local municipalities and school districts, the largest of which is the Education Cost Sharing (ECS) grant; and

WHEREAS, the Connecticut Technical High School System (CTHSS) represents the next largest portion of the SDE budget, at just under 5%, and OPM has specifically directed the Department to identify budget reduction options of at least \$3 - \$5 million in the budget of the CTHSS; and

WHEREAS, in light of the high percentage of the SDE budget represented by funds designated for local districts and municipalities, it is impossible to identify cuts of the required magnitude without reducing those funds, which we recognize to be nothing more than a transfer of the fiscal crisis from the State to local districts and municipalities that will not be able to make up the lost funds without curtailing their support for education; and

WHEREAS, the State Board of Education also recognizes the extraordinary fiscal problems faced by the State and the difficult choices faced by the Governor and the General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the State Board of Education believes that the SDE and the State Board are duty-bound both to comply with OPM's directive and to advise the Governor and the General Assembly that the identified budget reduction options will be harmful to the educational interests of the State, to its economic future, and to the well-being of its children, whose growth and need for an appropriate, challenging education will not pause until the economy recovers;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED

That the State Board of Education, pursuant to the directive from the Office of Policy and Management, accepts the submission of the Budget Reduction Options for Fiscal Year 2010 and approves the Budget Expansion Options for Fiscal Years 2010 and 2011, if sufficient funds are available, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the State Board of Education directs the Commissioner to inform the Office of Policy and Management, the Governor, and the General Assembly of the Board's firm belief that education is the basic infrastructure on which the future rests, and that cutting aid for education should be the last budget option considered; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the State Board of Education directs the Commissioner to inform the Office of Policy and Management, the Governor, and the General Assembly that while the Board believes the recommended suspension of operations at J.M. Wright Technical High School is the least harmful option for effecting reductions of the requested magnitude in the budget of the CTHSS, implementing that option will, during the period of the suspension, deprive students in the Stamford area of a promising alternative high school model that has been received with considerable enthusiasm in the Stamford community; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the State Board of Education directs the Commissioner to inform the Office of Policy and Management, the Governor, and the General Assembly that it believes that if cuts are implemented in ECS and other forms of aid to local districts and municipalities, which the State Board urges not be done, it is essential to maintaining the integrity of the State's commitment to the equal protection principle embodied and enforced in the Connecticut Supreme Court's opinion in Horton v. Meskill that those cuts be applied on a per student basis, not as a uniform percentage cut in the amount of aid flowing to each district or municipality.

Dr. Voss stated for the record, that in consideration of the extensive work that the Ad Hoc Committee on Secondary School Reform Committee had done, he is disappointed that many of the secondary school reform initiatives will have to be delayed. He added, however, that he is pleased that we will continue to plan to fully implement the plan over time.

VOTE: In Favor: Bobroske, Coolican, Luke, Hopkins-Staten, Finneran,
 Taylor, Voss
 Opposed: 0
 Abstained: 0
 Absent: Farrell

Motion carried unanimously.

V.B. Adoption of 2009 Legislative Proposals

Mrs. Luke moved, Ms. Finneran seconded, that the Board adopts the Legislative Proposals for 2009, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

Mrs. Bobroske moved, Mrs. Luke seconded, to table this resolution.

VOTE	In Favor:	Bobroske, Coolican, Luke, Hopkins-Staten, Finneran,
TO		Taylor, Voss
TABLE:	Opposed:	0
	Abstained:	0
	Absent:	Farrell

Motion carried unanimously.

By unanimous consent, the Board recessed its meeting at 10:46 a.m. The meeting reconvened at 10:52 a.m. Present: Mr. Coolican, Mr. Taylor, Mr. Smallwood, Mrs. Luke, Ms. Finneran, Ms. Larson, Mrs. Hopkins-Staten, Dr. Voss, Mr. Meotti and Mrs. Bobroske. Dr. Farrell was absent.

V.C. District Improvement Plan: Hartford

Mrs. Luke moved, Mrs. Bobroske seconded, that the Board, pursuant to Section 10-223e of the Connecticut General Statutes, approves, and directs the Hartford Board of Education to implement, the District Improvement Plan for the Hartford Public School System, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

VOTE:	In Favor:	Bobroske, Coolican, Luke, Hopkins-Staten, Finneran,
		Taylor, Voss
	Opposed:	0
	Abstained:	0
	Absent:	Farrell

Motion carried unanimously.

V.D. District Improvement Plan: New Britain

Mrs. Bobroske moved, Ms. Finneran seconded, that the Board, pursuant to Section 10-223e of the Connecticut General Statutes, approves, and directs the New Britain Board of Education to implement, the District Improvement Plan for the New Britain Public School System, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

VOTE: In Favor: Bobroske, Coolican, Luke, Hopkins-Staten, Finneran,
 Taylor, Voss
 Opposed: 0
 Abstained: 0
 Absent: Farrell

Motion carried unanimously.

V.E. District Improvement Plan: Bridgeport

Mrs. Luke moved, Ms. Finneran seconded, that the Board, pursuant to Section 10-223e of the Connecticut General Statutes, approves, and directs the Bridgeport Board of Education to implement, the District Improvement Plan for the Bridgeport Public School System, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

VOTE: In Favor: Bobroske, Coolican, Luke, Hopkins-Staten, Finneran,
 Taylor, Voss
 Opposed: 0
 Abstained: 0
 Absent: Farrell

Motion carried unanimously.

V.F. Resolution in Honor of Dr. Alice Carolan

Mrs. Luke moved, Mrs. Bobroske seconded, the following resolution:

WHEREAS Dr. Alice L. Carolan was appointed to the Connecticut State Board of Education by Governor M. Jodi Rell in July 2006; and

WHEREAS Dr. Carolan, as Chairperson of the Ad Hoc Committee on Accountability, provided leadership and advice to school districts responsible for the development of district improvement plans; and

WHEREAS Dr. Carolan served as a member of the Finance and Audit Committee and the Connecticut Technical High Schools Committee; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED That the Connecticut State Board of Education extends to Alice L. Carolan its appreciation for the time, commitment and leadership she dedicated to the Board and to the improvement of public education in Connecticut, and offers best wishes for happiness and success in the future.

VOTE: In Favor: Bobroske, Coolican, Luke, Hopkins-Staten, Finneran,
Taylor, Voss
Opposed: 0
Abstained: 0
Absent: Farrell

Motion carried unanimously.

VI. Consent Agenda

Mrs. Luke moved, Mrs. Hopkins-Staten seconded, to approve the following consent agenda items: VI.A., Approval of Regulations Concerning Restraints and Seclusions in Public Schools; VI.B., Application for Funds: Pathways to Higher Learning Developing Tomorrow's Professionals; VI.C., Application for Funds: Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (Institute of Education Sciences); and VI.D., Adoption of the Position Statement on English Language Arts.

VI.A. Approval of Regulations Concerning Restraints and Seclusions in Public Schools

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education amends Section 10-76b-1 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies by adding new Sections 10-76b-5 to 10-76b-11, inclusive, effective when filed with the Secretary of the State and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

**VI.B. Application for Funds: Pathways to Higher Learning
Developing Tomorrow's Professionals**

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education approves the application for a Pathways to Higher Learning grant from the Nellie Mae Education Foundation, for the period 2009-10, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

**VI.C. Application for Funds: Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems
(Institute of Education Sciences)**

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education approves the application to the Institute of Education Sciences for "The Connecticut State Department of Education Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems Grant Phase II" for the period 2009-2012, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

VI.D. Adoption of the Position Statement on English Language Arts

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education approves the Position Statement on English Language Arts Education and Guidelines for Policymakers dated December 3, 2008, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

VOTE	In Favor:	Bobroske, Coolican, Luke, Hopkins-Staton,
ON		Finneran, Taylor, Voss
MOTIONS:	Opposed:	0
	Abstained:	0
	Absent:	Farrell

Motions carried unanimously.

By unanimous consent, the Board recessed its meeting at 12:27 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 1:10 p.m. Present: Mrs. Bobroske, Mr. Coolican, Mr. Taylor, Mr. Smallwood, Mrs. Luke, Ms. Finneran, Ms. Larson, Mrs. Hopkins-Staton and Dr. Voss. Mr. Meotti and Dr. Farrell were absent.

VIII.A. Report on HIV/AIDS and Higher Risk Behaviors

Charlene Russell-Tucker, Associate Commissioner, Division of Family and Student Support Services and Theresa Hopkins-Staten, Member, State Board of Education, presented an overview of the report. Bonnie Edmondson, Education Consultant, Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, made a power-point presentation. Discussion followed.

[Mrs. Bobroske left the meeting at 2:10 pm]

VIII.B. Integrated Certification

Marion Martinez, Associate Commissioner, Division of Teaching, Learning and Instructional Leadership, and Nancy Pugliese, Education Consultant, Chief, Bureau of Educator Standards and Certification, presented the report to the Board. Discussion followed.

[Mrs. Hopkins-Staten left the meeting at 3:05 p.m.]

V.B. Adoption of 2009 Legislative Proposals

Mrs. Finneran moved, Mrs. Luke seconded, to remove the following resolution from the table.

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education adopts the Legislative Proposals for 2009, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

VOTE	In Favor:	Coolican, Luke, Finneran,
	TO	Taylor, Voss
REMOVE	Opposed:	0
FROM	Abstained:	0
TABLE:	Absent:	Bobroske, Farrell, Hopkins-Staten

Motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Finneran moved, Mrs. Luke seconded, that the Board, adopts the Legislative Proposals, as amended, for 2009, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action.

VOTE: In Favor: Luke, Finneran, Taylor, Voss
 Opposed: Coolican
 Abstained: 0
 Absent: Bobroske, Farrell, Hopkins-Staton

Motion carried.

IX. Report of the Chair – Allan Taylor distributed a written report, including the following: (A copy can be found in the official file of this meeting)

- CABE/CAPSS Convention: November 14 at the Mystic Marriott, "Dialogue with the SBE" well-attended. Sample of conversation topics: financial picture in Connecticut, Education Cost Sharing (ECS) dollars not being directed to education at the local level, concerns about magnet school tuition responsibility at local level and timing of notice to local districts as to how many students they need to budget for; secondary school reform: student engagement as way to reduce drop out rates; concern about potential infrastructure costs associated with the secondary school reform; BEST changes; math requirements of secondary school proposal and value of model curriculum to LEAs.
- Teacher of the Year Ceremony: Brandt Smallwood and Christine Larson joined me at the Teacher of the Year (TOY) ceremony on November 13.
- Recognition Ceremony: A reception honoring outstanding educators will be held at the State Department of Education on January 7th, following our "regular business."
- Meeting with Brian Beisel, Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee (LPRIC), regarding the LPRIC's study of our department's administration of the certification process for experienced teachers.
- Statewide School Health and Mental Health Advisory Council, meeting on December 2 at Rensselaer. Presentation by Commissioner Susan Gendron, Maine Department of Education, regarding the role of a statewide advisory council, and its relationship to student achievement.

- X. **Report of the Commissioner** – Commissioner McQuillan distributed a written report, including the following. (A copy can be found in the official file of this meeting).

- **Comprehensive Plan Priorities**

- **Priority 1: Early Childhood Education**

- Cabinet Policy Council Meetings: Budget Development Options
 - Cabinet Meetings: Preparation of Budget Reductions, Expansions
 - Presentation to Hebron Public Schools on Full-day Kindergarten Programs

- **Priority 2: Academic Achievement, Achievement Gaps**

- Meetings with College Board
 - Meeting with Department of Defense Policy for Military Children and Families
 - Weekly meetings on Mentor Assistance Program or BEST Task Force
 - Meeting with Brian Beisel, Legislative Program Review, and Implementation Committee (LPRIC) regarding Bureau for Educator Standards and Certification

- **Priority 3: Secondary School Reform**

- Manchester Community College Presentation
 - Presentation to Board of Higher Education

- **Sheff Comprehensive Management Plan**

- Search for Executive Director of Sheff Regional School Choice Office (RSCO)
 - Meeting with Plaintiffs regarding Comprehensive Management Plan

- **Operations**

- Budget Workshops, SDE and State Board

- **Statewide Meetings**

- CABA/CAPSS Conference
- Teacher of the Year Award Ceremony
- CAS Elementary School Awards Ceremony
- Southeastern Superintendents' Group
- Litchfield Superintendents' Group
- Meeting with Senator Prague on Home Schooling Legislation
- P20 Organizational Meeting with Commissioner Meotti, Mary Ann Hanley
- Meeting with State Student Advisory Council

XI. Committee Reports

- **Finance, Audit and Department Matters** – Mrs. Luke reported that the committee will be meeting on December 11 at 9:30 a.m., at the State Office Building.
- **Policy Development** – Ms. Finneran reported that the committee meeting originally scheduled for this afternoon is cancelled. Pamela Bergin will arrange for a separate meeting to be held.
- **Connecticut Technical High Schools (CTHSS)** – Mr. Coolican reported that the committee will meet on December 10.

By unanimous consent, the meeting was adjourned at 3:37 p.m.

Prepared by: _____
Mark K. McQuillan, Secretary