

## CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Remote Learning Commission Meeting

October 18, 2021

1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

- Present:** Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Commissioner of Education, Chairperson  
Doug Casey, Connecticut Commission for Educational Technology  
Katharine Dias, Connecticut Education Association (CEA)  
Dr. Karen DuBois-Walton, Connecticut State Board of Education  
Dr. Charles Dumais, RESC Alliance  
Katharine Gabrielson, ConnCASE  
Tim Larson, Connecticut Office of Higher Education (OHE)  
Michelle Levy, Connecticut Office of Early Childhood (OEC)  
Frances Rabinowitz, Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS)  
Dr. Evelyn Robles-Rivas, Connecticut Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (CALAS)  
Lon Seidman, Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE)  
Dr. Rose Anne O'Brien Vojtek, Assistant Executive Director (CAS)
- Absent:** Ed Klonoski, Charter Oak State College  
Lauren A. Mancini-Averitt, American Federation of Teachers-Connecticut (AFT)  
Amy Wiltsie, State Education Resource Center of Connecticut (SERC)
- Facilitator:** Ingrid Canady, Executive Director, SERC
- Staff:** Ajit Gopalakrishnan, Chief Performance Officer, Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE)  
Irene Parisi, Chief Academic Officer, CSDE
- Guests:** Julie Goldstein, Principal, Hartford Magnet Trinity College Academy (HMTCA)  
Elissa Brauman, Virtual High School Coordinator, HMTCA  
Donald Schels, Principal, Region 12  
Joan Temple, Virtual High School Coordinator, Region 12  
Dana Paredes, Principal, West Haven High School

### I. Call to Order

Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Commissioner, CSDE called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

### II. Welcome

Ingrid Canady, Executive Director for SERC welcomed attendees and reviewed the meeting's objectives as the facilitator of the Commission.

Irene Parisi, Chief Academic Officer, CSDE conducted rollcall. New member Dr. Rose Anne O'Brien Vojtek, Assistant Executive Director, CAS briefly introduced herself.

Ingrid Canady, Executive Director for SERC reviewed the group norms and decision-making process.

### **III. Review the Purpose and Specific Tasks of the Commission**

Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Commissioner, CSDE shared the purpose of the Commission and reviewed the Commission's charge according to PA 21-2 and the timeline for deliverables.

### **IV. Consent to accept Minutes and Follow-up from Last Meeting Discussion**

The Commission consented to accept the minutes from the September 27, 2021 meeting.

### **V. Operationalizing Current Legislation**

Irene Parisi, Chief Academic Officer, CSDE and Ajit Gopalakrishnan, Chief Performance Officer, CSDE reviewed the definitions of "virtual learning" and "remote learning," underscoring the distinction between the two, and reviewed current legislation around graduation requirements.

Commission members asked clarifying questions.

### **VI. The Local Context**

Ajit Gopalakrishnan, Chief Performance Officer, CSDE introduced representatives from Hartford Magnet Trinity College Academy (HMTCA): Principal Julie Goldstein and Virtual High School Coordinator Elissa Brauman. Ms. Brauman reviewed the growth of the school's virtual learning opportunities, examples of courses, support for students, and her role as Virtual High School Coordinator. Principal Goldstein added that the Virtual High School program aided in the transition to remote learning due to the pandemic.

Ajit Gopalakrishnan, Chief Performance Officer, CSDE introduced representatives from Region 12: Principal Donald Schels and Virtual High School Coordinator Joan Temple. Principal Schels shared anecdotal data he has gathered using the Virtual High School Program. Ms. Temple expressed that Virtual High School allows students to take more diverse coursework and shared a high-level overview of the district's protocols for students enrolling in Virtual High School.

Ajit Gopalakrishnan, Chief Performance Officer, CSDE introduced a representative from West Haven High School: Principal Dana Paredes. Principal Paredes shared the district's reasoning for offering blended learning and its current uses: credit recovery, flexible learning schedules, and enrichment. Commission members asked questions of the presenters.

### **VII. Identification of Work Groups for the Development of Commission Tasks**

Ingrid Canady, Executive Director for SERC reviewed possible work groups: Research and Design, Focus Groups, Teaching and Learning, Infrastructure, and Content and Curriculum. She informed Commission members that more information on each group will be available at the next meeting.

### **VIII. Future Meetings/Calendar**

The next meeting will take place on November 22, 2021, from 1:30-3:00 p.m. Future meetings are scheduled to take place on December 13, 2021, from 1:00-2:30 p.m. and January 10, 2022, from 1:00-2:30 p.m.

### **IX. Adjourn**

Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Commissioner, CSDE opened the meeting to final questions.

Member Katharine Dias stated she wonders how virtual platforms would serve K-8 students and how they may be motivated.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.