

TO: CARR Board

DATE: 5-22-19

FROM: Ann Marie Mulready

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Connecticut General Assembly

At this point in time, legislation related to literacy and teacher preparation for literacy is in Joint Committee. (Education committee members from both the House and Senate). The next step would be to vote it out of committee. My reports have included to entire title and some text, but in the interest of clarity, I will summarize the major intent. These Bills include:

- HB5090 requires an 8th grade reading level for high school graduation
- HB5178 and 6224 establish a task force to determine evidenced based reading and writing strategies for the early detection of dyslexia
- HB6819 extends the current K-3 literacy requirements to grades 4-HS
- HB6830 requires 12 credits in the science of reading for teacher certification
- HB 6831 in conjunction with SB 1019 establishes a Center for Literacy Research and Reading Success at the University of Connecticut (UCONN) and requires retention of students at grade 3 if they do not achieve grade level reading, requires the State Department of Education

SB1019, the final version of which incorporates HB 6819, HB 6830 and HB6831, engendered the strongest testimony. Of the seventy-six statements, 3 were in support. They were Michael Coyne, Center for Behavioral Education and Research at the Neag School of Education, Margie Gillis, President of Literacy How and Research Affiliate of Haskins Lab, and Darci Burns, Executive Director of HLL Center for Literacy.

Those who did not support the legislation, parents and education professionals, cited the multitude of studies showing retention to be ineffective at best, and harmful at worst. In particular, testimony came from Gladis Kersaint, Dean of the Neag School of Education, who noted that the University has not received budgetary support for the proposal, Diane Wentzell, Commissioner of Education, who noted that the SDE has not received funding in the current state budget, and Fran Rabinowitz, Director of CAPSS, and Robert Hannifin, President of AACTE CT, both of whom who cited the negative outcomes related to retention.

Finally, though not directly related to literacy, SB1018 is of interest. It requires withholding of "certain educator grants from certain school districts that are not experiencing academic improvement." Because the data used by the State is SBAC, literacy achievement, would, by implication impact the distribution of state grants.

Connecticut State Board of Education

Commissioner Diana Roberge Wentzell has officially resigned to take a position at the University of Saint Joseph, but the Governor Ned Lamont has not nominated a replacement. Since the election, most of the Board work has been related to Charter School Renewals, Discipline Data, and Minority Teacher Recruitment/Graduate Education and Certification.