



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
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NEWS RELEASE

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Regents' Commissioner Search Committee to Hold Series of Public Forums

The Board of Regents' Commissioner Search Committee has scheduled six public forums in order to hear from members of the public regarding the selection of the next Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education.

"We have been charged with an important task that will have a profound effect on the future of our state," said Amy Beretta, member of the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education and cochair of the Search Committee. "We are directing the search for the candidate who will best drive the initiatives needed improve our public-education system. It is vital that we continue to initiate reforms and to position Rhode Island as a national leader in education."

"To be successful in our search effort, we must solicit input from a broad array of stakeholders from across the state," said Regent Angus M. Davis, cochair of the committee. "The participation of many Rhode Islanders at our forums will inform the committee as we work to determine the essential qualities and qualifications our next Commissioner must possess."

Advance sign-in for members of the public who wish to speak at the forums is not required; the committee will accept written testimony. Sessions will be recorded, and summaries of the testimony will be prepared for all committee members.

Public forums have been scheduled for the following dates and locations:

Thursday, October 16th – Rogers High School Auditorium, Newport
Monday, October 20th – Hope High School Auditorium, Providence
Thursday, October 23rd – East Providence High School Auditorium
Wednesday, November 5th – Westerly High School Auditorium
Monday, November 10th – Warwick Veterans High School Auditorium
Thursday, November 13th – Davies Career & Technical Center Auditorium, Lincoln

All forums are scheduled to run from 4 to 6 p.m.

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The Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education is the executive officer of the Board of Regents and the chief administrative officer of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (RIDE), and as such he or she carries out all of the policies and programs that the Board formulates. The Commissioner is responsible for policy development, budgetary planning, legislative and executive relations, accreditation of schools, certification of educators, liaison with regional and national agencies, and oversight of other aspects of the public-education system in the state. Peter McWalters, the current Commissioner, has served since 1992 and is stepping down as of July 2009.

The Board of Regents has appointed 12 members of the public to a Search Committee that will advise the full Board and will select final candidates for the position of Commissioner. The members of the Search Committee, in addition to the two cochairs, are: Chace Baptista (Young Voices), Elizabeth Burke Bryant (Rhode Island Kids Count), Frederick K. Butler (Textron, Inc.), William Daugherty (National Federation for Teaching Entrepreneurship board member), Dr. Hans Dellith (Pawtucket School Department), Dr. Michael Magee (Cumberland Office of Children, Youth, and Learning), Ramon Martinez (Progreso Latino), Kathleen Mellor (2004 National Teacher of the Year), Meg O'Leary (The Learning Community Charter School), Robert K. Taylor (Partridge, Snow & Hahn), Ronald A. Wolk (founder of Education Week), and Dr. Kenneth Wong (Brown University Education Department).