

**Commissioner's Weekly Field Memo
Friday, November 14, 2014**

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Notes from Commissioner Gist

1. Strategic-plan development process gets under way with statewide survey

Our work toward developing the next strategic plan for elementary and secondary education off to a great start. As you know, the first stage in this process involves our establishing a statewide conversation through which thousands of Rhode Islanders will express their views on the future of public education from prekindergarten through high school. In order to hear from as many voices and viewpoints as possible, we have launched a statewide survey on education and all Rhode Islanders are invited to share their views through this brief (five-minute), anonymous survey. In the three weeks since we opened the survey, we have received about 3,000 responses, and we are well on target toward reaching our goal of 10,000 responses by the end of the year. We are posting weekly updates on the survey responses on our website. We will follow up the survey with interviews and small-group meetings, to examine in greater depth issues people highlighted in their survey responses.

Please continue to encourage members of your community to take part in this survey, and please feel free as well to encourage strong candidates to apply to be part of the team of volunteers that will develop and write the survey over the next seven months.

Information on the development of this strategic plan, as well as a link to take part in the survey and a link to the application to join the design team, are on our website, here:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/BoardofEducation/RI2015-2020StrategicPlanforEducation.aspx>

2. Council endorses standards for financial literacy

At its meeting on Monday, the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education endorsed our first standards for financial literacy. Based on recommendations from a team of students from East Greenwich High School, who worked on this issue with business teacher Pat Page (2014 Rhode Island Teacher of the Year), the Council endorsed the National Standards for Financial Literacy, which the Council for Economic Education, a nonprofit group, has developed and [posted](#). High-quality instruction based on excellent standards will help to prepare our students when they make important decisions about spending, saving, applying for college loans, getting a job, and living independently. As I noted to you in a previous Field Memo, the decision as to whether to offer courses in financial literacy, whether to require that students take these courses, and how you proceed with these courses in our schools remains a local decision.

From RIDE

Career-Technical Education:

3. RIDE to hold informational webinars to explain CTE program-approval process

Last spring, RIDE piloted the process for career and technical education (CTE) program approval, in accordance with the [2012 Rhode Island Regulations Governing Career and Technical Education](#) (CTE regulations), section 4.0. The RIDE-managed review and approval of career-preparation programs is grounded in the [Rhode Island Career Preparation Program Standards](#), found in the appendix of the CTE regulations.

The CTE team thanks each of the pilot participants for their thoughtful feedback on the application and process, which informed improvements we have made to the program-approval process. The purpose of the CTE Program Approval Webinars is to share information about the program-approval process with superintendents, principals, directors, and others interested in earning approval for their CTE programs.

If you interested in learning more about the CTE program-approval, we invite you to participate in one of the CTE Program Approval information webinar sessions, scheduled for November 25 at 2 p.m. and December 3 at 10 a.m.

To register for the November 25 webinar, please use this link:

<https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/630046206>

To register for the December 3 webinar, please use this link:

<https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/788687318>

4. LEAs invited to submit initial intent forms for CTE program

review, approval; deadline is December 12

LEAs interested in positioning their Career-Technical Education (CTE) programs for broadened CTE student enrollment and for CTE funds are invited to participate in the 2014-15 CTE program review and approval process. RIDE will select programs based on a submission of a completed and signed initial intent form *and* on space available. Here is a link to the form:

http://www.ride.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Students-and-Families-Great-Schools/Educational-Programming/Career-and-Tech/2014-15_CTE_PA_INITIAL_INTEREST_FORM.docx

Programs that submit their intent to participate in program approval for the current school year not later than December 12 will be screened to ensure that the program meets the basic criteria:

- students enrolled for a minimum of two years; and
- offering a minimum of three, non-duplicative and sequential CTE courses.

We will notify programs of their selection for participation in the program-approval process no later than **December 19**.

Please submit your signed initial intent form to CTEProgramApproval@ride.ri.gov not later than **December 12**. Please put "PROGRAM APPROVAL INTENT" in the subject line of your e-mail. Any questions about the review and approval process should be directed to the RIDE CTE team, at CTEProgramApproval@ride.ri.gov.

Assessments:

5. Deadlines extended for PARCC student registration

The student-registration (enrollment) deadlines for Spring Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) testing have been extended. The new deadlines will be as follows:

- Performance-Based Assessment (PBA) deadline: **January 7;**
- End-of-Year (EOY) deadline: **February 6.**

As a reminder, this deadline will lock down the enrollment counts for paper materials including paper-accommodated tests; derive the number of paper-based and computer-based manuals that need to be shipped; and derive student information for the pre-printed labels. Please note that student registration can continue within the system to ensure that the registration data is captured correctly, but registration after these deadlines will not affect the things noted above after the deadline has passed.

Please contact Mike Ferry, at 222-8258, if you have any questions or concerns regarding student registration for PARCC testing.

From other organizations

6. Technology educators invite all to participate in information session on college, career readiness and technology

Please see this message from the Rhode Island Society of Technology Educators:

Considering that technology is rapidly changing, are we preparing our students to be college- and career-ready?

Please join the Rhode Island Society of Technology Educators for an information session and a panel discussion, “College and Career Ready – Through a Technology Lens,” on **November 19**, from 4 to 6 p.m., at the New England Institute of Technology, East Greenwich Campus, where we will begin the conversation to define college and career ready, focusing on teaching and learning, critical skills, and envisioning the future in which we are preparing our students. Panelists include:

Ravi Pendse, Ph.D., Vice President and CIO, Brown University, will guide us in thinking about the future of technology: Will we be ready?

Wendy Drexler, Ph.D., Chief Innovation Officer, International Society of Technology Educators, will help us understand and connect to the ISTE student and teacher technology standards, which guide our work in preparing our students.

Robert Littlefield, Principal, Portsmouth High School, will give us a picture of what this school does to prepare students for college and careers.

Dr. Lynne F. Burke, Director of Educational Technology & Information Systems, Coventry Public Schools, will describe their plans and progress.

More information and online registration is available here:

[College and Career Ready - Through a Technology Lens](#)

7. Accelerate Institute seeks nominations for award for principals

Please see this message from the Accelerate Institute:

Do you know an extraordinary principal who has transformed an urban school? The Accelerate Institute is excited to share a unique opportunity created to recognize the important and challenging work of principals across America: The Ryan Award.

The Ryan Award is the first national award honoring transformational school principals in the United States. Awardees are principals of urban schools who have demonstrated accelerated results in underserved schools over a minimum of four years and serve a sizeable percentage of urban, low-income, and minority students. The Ryan Award was established by the Accelerate Institute and made possible by the Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Foundation.

Nominations for The Ryan Award are now being accepted through Friday, **January 30**, at midnight. Ryan Awardees will each receive the following benefits:

- an honorarium of \$25,000;
- an opportunity to lecture at the Accelerate Summer Institute at Northwestern's Kellogg School of Management during the summer of 2015;
- connection to a network of Ryan Fellow Principals leading the transformation of this nation's urban public schools; and

- wide recognition through television, print and social media.

To make a nomination, go to:

<http://accelerateinstitute.org/ryanaward/>

RIDE will post this field memo on Tuesday, at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/InsideRIDE/CommissionerDeborahAGist/FieldMemos.aspx>