

**RHODE ISLAND BOARD OF REGENTS FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
MINUTES OF MEETING – JUNE 4, 2008**

A meeting of the Rhode Island Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education was held at the Shepard Building - 255 Westminster Street, Providence, RI 02903 & convened at 4:10 p.m.

In Attendance:

R. Flanders, P. Guida, C. Callahan, A. Beretta, R. Camara, A. Cano-Morales, F. Caprio, A. Davis, K. Forbes.

Recognition of Rhode Island's Excellent Teachers

Judge Flanders congratulated the following Rhode Island Excellent Teachers as follows: 2008 District Teachers of the Year, Michael N. Browner, Jr.; Cynthia J. Meagher; Debra Sgambato; Kelly Vocatura; Elizabeth G. Ferguson; Naomi Schick; Michael Coggeshall; Carolyn M. Martin; Regina Kilday; Ann L. Sullivan; and Frank Bergren. 2008 Rhode Island Teacher of the Year, George E. Goodfellow and 2007 National Milken Educator, Janine Napolitano.

Public Remarks

-**Monica Teixeira de Souza**, RI Legal Services, addressed the Board with concerns regarding NECAP requirements in the proposed secondary regulations and provided the group with her written comments, as attached.

-**Rep. Steve Smith** talked to the group about agenda item # 5—the approval of the waiver to certification regulations; specifically the waiver to superintendent certification for Providence Superintendent, Thomas Brady. Mr. Smith told the group that it would not be fair to all of the Providence teachers that are working on maintaining their certificates and obtaining their administrator certificates not to have had the opportunity to apply for this position. Representative Smith urged the Regents to consider this waiver carefully before making a decision to approve.

Chairman's Remarks:

Chairman Flanders commented on the recent release of new graduation rates for the class of 2007 – 70% or 1/3 of Rhode Island's children “are not making it”; which is similar to the national rate – it is a national problem that needs to be addressed. As part of this discussion, the group also talked about the number of kids that graduate from high school and go to college and how many of them actually graduate from college.

Approval of Minutes of the Board of Regents Meeting of May 7, 2008

MOVED AND SECONDED: That the Rhode Island Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education Approves the Minutes of the Meeting of May 7, 2008 as Presented.

VOTE: Approved Unanimously.

Approval of Waiver to Certification Regulations

Commissioner McWalters briefly reviewed the actions taken by the Providence School Board to search and hire a new Superintendent. He emphasized that the Board of Regents and Department of Education does not have a role in the selection, with the exception that any candidate coming from the outside needs to apply for a Rhode Island certificate and if the candidate does not meet all of the Rhode Island requirements, the district can ask the Board of Regents for a waiver. The Commissioner explained that because Providence wanted to be sure that the new Superintendent, Thomas Brady could begin his duties as soon as possible, and because the Board of Regents only meets once in June, Providence requested a waiver before the department had an opportunity to

review Mr. Brady's credentials. The members of the Board discussed various reciprocity agreements between Rhode Island and other states and then requested that the Commissioner come back to the Board for approval after Mr. Brady's credentials have been reviewed and there is a clearer picture of where his credentials might be lacking.

MOVED AND SECONDED THAT: The Rhode Island Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education Table the Approval of Waiver to Certification Regulations.

VOTE: Approved Unanimously.

Discussion of Commissioner's Search

Co-chairs of the Board of Regents Commissioner search committee, Regents Angus Davis and Amy Beretta spoke to the group about the process for the search for a Commissioner. The group discussed the steps of the process: define what kind of Commissioner the Board is looking for; reach out to constituent groups to form a search committee that will report back to the full board on a monthly basis; determine what funding is available to hire a "headhunter" and for search and interview expenses; need to do an RFP to hire a "headhunter" [maybe involve NASBE?]. The details of the process will be outlined by the end of June and a meeting will be scheduled for a discussion by the full board. Regent Guida suggested that the search firm "headhunter" be hired up front to assist the board in developing a profile for a new Commissioner. He also suggested that stakeholders be involved in the process.

Budget/Personnel Update

RIDE Director of the Office of Finance, Carolyn Dias briefed the group on the FY'09 budget. RIDE achieved \$600,000 in savings through cuts to school construction, mathematics professional development, PBGR work, work on a statewide curriculum and civics education, and no hiring.

Strategic Update

Commissioner McWalters gave the group an update on the "strategic" work of the department, i.e., Educator Quality – evaluation design elements, local contracts, incentive structure/teacher salaries, alternative certification, testing, leadership standards; PS&I/Woonsocket, Pawtucket, Central Falls, and Providence - local contracts, incentive structure, teacher salaries, access to time, flexibility, accountability; adult education and career & technical education; High School restructuring; Testing - NECAP work; Special Education regulations – bill introduced which will counter the Board of Regents regulations on privately placed students; formula funding work; data warehouse/Info Systems.

Committee Reports

There were no committee reports.

Commissioner's Reports

No Commissioner's report.

Executive Agenda

No executive agenda.

Adjournment

With unanimous consent, the meeting adjourned at 6:00p.m.