



Enclosure 2a
May 14, 2019

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION
April 23, 2019

COUNCIL ON ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

Chair McConaghy welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education. He noted for the record that Board Chair Cottam, and Members Davis and Field would not be joining the meeting, declared a quorum present, and called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

Present: Amy Beretta, *Christopher Bove, Colleen Callahan, Jo Eva Gaines, Marta Martinez, Daniel McConaghy, and **Lawrence Purtill

Absent: Barbara Cottam
Karen Davis
Gara Field

[*Ex-officio, non-voting member]
[**Arrived at 5:40 p.m.]

1. ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA

On a motion duly made by Amy Beretta and seconded by Colleen Callahan, it was

VOTED: That the Rhode Island Council on Elementary and Secondary Education accepts the agenda for the April 23, 2019, Work Session

Vote: 5 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Jo Eva Gaines, Marta Martinez, and Daniel McConaghy

NAYS: 0

[Lawrence Purtill arrived after the approval of the agenda]

2. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES

a. Minutes of the March 5, 2019, Meeting

On a motion duly made by Jo Eva Gaines and seconded by Colleen Callahan, it was

VOTED: That the Rhode Island Council on Elementary and Secondary Education accepts the minutes of the January 29, 2019, Meeting

Vote: 5 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Jo Eva Gaines, Marta Martinez, and Daniel McConaghy

NAYS: 0

[Member Purtill arrived after the approval of the minutes]

b. Minutes of the March 26, 2019, Meeting

On a motion duly made by Colleen Callahan and seconded by Amy Beretta, it was

VOTED: That the Rhode Island Council on Elementary and Secondary Education accepts the minutes of the March 26, 2019, Meeting

Vote: 5 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Jo Eva Gaines, Marta Martinez, and Daniel McConaghy

NAYS: 0

[Member Purtill arrived after the approval of the minutes]

Before moving on to the Commissioner's report, Chair McConaghy took a few minutes to acknowledge a couple of matters.

He briefly addressed the press release that Governor Raimondo and Mayor Elorza's released earlier in the day calling RIDE to commission a review of Providence Public Schools. He shared that a team is being established to conduct the review and that a public report is expected to be publicly released sometime in June.

Next, Chair McConaghy took a moment to acknowledge that today was Commissioner Wagner's last Council meeting as well as his last week as Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education. Council Members expressed their appreciation and respect for the way in which Commissioner Wagner managed the often complex work, his ability to collaborate with people, and thanked him for his service to education over the last four years.

3. REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER

Commissioner Wagner began his report by thanking Council Members for their support over the last four years and shared that he is thrilled that the incoming Commissioner will continue to support the ongoing work, while bringing her own perspective and voice to make it even better.

Next, Commissioner Wagner shared that earlier in the week RIDE released the graduation rates with numbers being generally flat in some areas, and with the EL numbers continuing to go down, partly due to dramatically increases in the number of students who are multi-language learners. He called-out the fact that moving forward, RIDE will shift to simultaneously release the four-year graduation rate with a "Graduate Proficiency" measure to show, by school and district, the percent of students demonstrating proficiency, and distinguish between high school completion and preparedness for college readiness.

Commissioner Wagner ended his report by sharing that tomorrow RIDE will be releasing the Educator Course Network, an online platform that allows educators to easily explore and learn more about professional learning opportunities available statewide. This initiative was inspired by educators, who in the 2018 SurveyWorks, the state's school culture survey, reported the lack of challenging, relevant, and sustained professional learning in their schools. This became the impetus for the state's comprehensive update to the teacher certification regulations, approved by the Council at the end of 2018.

4. DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. Chair of the Student Advisory Council – Presentation of Captstone Project

Christopher Bove, Chair of the Student Advisory Council and student representative on the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education, presented his Senior Capstone Project, on the services provided to, and the challenges faced by, blind and visually impaired students in Rhode Island.

In his presentation, Christopher highlighted the academic services and accommodation as well as the orientation and mobility services that schools are liable to provide blind and visually impaired students, as well as the vocational rehabilitation services aimed at ensuring student success after high school. He also shared national and state comparison data on graduation rates, unemployment rates, and highest education level obtained by students with visual disabilities.

Christopher ended his presentation by reciting a quote from Governor Raimondo - "I believe that if you have the talent, you should have the opportunity."

b. Requirements and Supports for the Teaching of Reading

Lisa Foehr, RIDE's Chief of Teaching and Learning, began the presentation by sharing that many National Research and Policy Groups have been calling on states, including Rhode Island, for not doing enough to prepare both elementary and elementary special education candidates on the science of reading. She went over some research on why reading by grade three matters, student data results on the recent RICAS assessments, including data on students with disabilities, and conversations that RIDE has been having with local superintendents around what is happening with reading instruction in the classrooms.

Next, Lauren Matlach, Director of the Office of Educator Excellence and Certification Services, shared a visual of the many factors that contribute to reading proficiently by grade 3, emphasizing that focusing only on instruction, isn't going to be enough. She shared that the Governor's third-grade reading benchmark has been a topic of discussion at meetings of the Children's Cabinet and a collaborative effort by various state agencies. She also went over the components of literacy that current and future teachers need to have a strong handle on, as well as possible action steps necessary to prepare, recruit, certify and hire, and support and grow, educators.

c. School Construction - Overview of Current and Future Projects

Christine Lopes-Metcalf, Chief Executive Officer, School Building Authority, gave a status update on the School Construction Program (statutory changes, regulations, and statewide school construction bond) as well as an overview on the Necessity of School Construction projects that are up for Council approval in May.

For context, Ms. Lopes-Metcalf began the presentation by sharing that in 2015 the state lifted the school construction moratorium and created the School Building Authority. During the 2018 legislative session a proposal for a \$250M statewide Construction Bond to help support school

construction work was created, and several new requirements (annual maintenance requirement, prequalification and review process for prime contractors, architects and engineers, prevailing wage/minority business enterprise (MBE) requirements, site selection process, and public school construction progress reports) were introduced, which require RIDE/SBA to create systems and implement changes either immediately or by June 30, 2019.

Council Members questioned whether RIDE has the personnel capacity to take on all of this additional work while meeting the required project timelines, and whether any consideration has been given in providing incentives to districts that consolidate schools and/or regionalize with neighboring districts.

d. 2018 Charter Annual Reports and Preview of Fall 2019 Charters

Stephen Osborn, RIDE's Chief of Innovation, introduced the topic by stressing that this year is the first under ESSA, that RIDE is using the new statewide accountability or school star rating system to evaluate a charter's academic performance.

Next, Paula Barney, RIDE's Charter School Coordinator, gave an overview of the charter school portfolio, and went over the summary of performance for the five schools (Academy for Career Exploration, The Green School, New England Laborers Construction & Career Academy, RISE Prep Mayoral Academy, and Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts) that are up for Council authorization in the fall. She stated that each of the schools up for renewal are in the process of going through in-depth RIDE site visits due to their academic results (Tier 4 rating), or no Tier designation, such as the RISE Prep Mayoral Academy.

e. Wangari Maathai Charter School - Update on Authorization to Operate

Commissioner Wagner explained that the Charter School Regulations require that after the Council issues a preliminary approval to a charter school, the final approval is contingent upon the school meeting a punch list of requirements. The Wangari Maathai Community School has met all of the necessary conditions, except, securing a facility. He shared that the Wangari Charter School Operators thought they had a deal with the John Hope Settlement House, however, that has become quite politically controversial. If the school secures a facility by June 1st and the lease gets finalized, the Council will be asked to formalize the final approval at its June 18th meeting, and the school can operate in the fall.

Council Members expressed concerns with the fact that the school that hasn't been able to secure a facility. They also recapped their original concerns from when the school first came to the Council for preliminary approval in 2017, such as whether or not the school had reached out appropriately to the community from all of the catchment areas about the proposal and lottery, as was listed in the application.

5. ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

On a motion duly made by Jo Eva Gaines and seconded by Colleen Callahan, it was

VOTED: That the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education adjourns.

Vote: 6 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Amy Beretta, Colleen Callahan, Jo Eva Gaines, Marta Martinez, Daniel McConaghy, and Lawrence Purtill

NAYS: 0