



RHODE ISLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION

A Rhode Island Board of Education work session was held on Thursday, December 5, 2013, at the Department of Education, Room 501, 255 Westminister Street, Providence, RI 02903. Vice Chair Patrick Guida welcomed everyone, declared a quorum present, and called the work session to order at 4:10 p.m.

Present: Antonio Barajas, Michael Bernstein, Karin Forbes, Jo Eva Gaines, Michael Grande, Patrick Guida, Lawrence Purtill, and Mathies Santos

Absent: Eva-Marie Mancuso, Colleen A. Callahan and William C. Maaia

1. ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA

On a motion duly made by Jo Eva Gaines and seconded by Karin Forbes it was

VOTED: That the Rhode Island Board of Education accepts the agenda for the work session of December 5, 2013.

Vote: 8 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Antonio Barajas, Michael Bernstein, Karin Forbes, Jo Eva Gaines, Michael Grande, Patrick Guida, Lawrence Purtill, and Mathies Santos

NAYS: 0

2. DISCUSSION ITEMS

Item 2a – Update on the Funding Formula

Commissioner Gist gave a brief presentation on the Funding Formula beginning with its history. She indicated that in November of 2009, the Board of Regents charged the Department of Education with developing specific calculations for an education aid funding formula to be presented to the legislature. At that time, Rhode Island was one of only two states in the country without a funding formula.

With the pro-bono support of Brown University's Education Department Chair, Dr. Kenneth Wong, the Board of Regents worked with the General Assembly to develop a Funding Formula on a research-based data-driven methodology for distributing education aid.

The Funding Formula which was successfully passed in the legislative session of 2010 included:

- District capacity and student need;
- That money will follow the student;
- Based on the actual cost of educating a student in Rhode Island;
- Funds the core instructional amount;

- Based on most recent data available; and
- Being phased in over a ten-year span through 2021.

Commissioner Gist turned the meeting over to Deputy Commissioner David Abbott, for a power point presentation on the Funding Formula.

Mr. Abbott explained that the funding formula was ultimately based on how much things actually cost, versus how much should be spent. The Formula is a living document based not only on Rhode Island data but New England data as well, and is designed on student needs. Mr. Abbott provided a power point presentation to the Board which included key Formula components, a Formula update, and the next steps.

Commissioner Gist and Mr. Abbott then answered Board members' questions on the Funding Formula.

Item 2b – Report from the Ad Hoc Committee on Assessments and the Diploma System

Vice Chair Guida presented the purpose of the Ad Hoc Committee on Assessments and the Diploma System as:

1. Regular forum for discussion of Assessments and the Diploma System;
2. Review of Diploma System information, student access to rigorous instruction and student outcomes.
 - a. Collective feedback from stakeholders;
3. Review of LEA support for students in accordance with regulations, particularly around the state assessment, focusing on four components:
 - a. Were the appropriate students that are in need of support identified? Were students, parents and families informed?
 - b. What types of interventions and supports offered?
 - c. Did identified students participate?
 - d. What were the known outcomes for these students?
4. System for reporting back to the full board, as necessary.

Member Grande questioned the level of detail the Board is involved in, and expressed his concern that the Board may be seen at fault for the students who are not granted a diploma.

Vice Chair Guida explained that the work being done by the Board should be looked at as supportive of the districts and not a burden. He would like to see the individual districts work with the Board, and would like the districts to be encouraged to take advantage of the opportunities which are offered.

Andrea Castaneda explained the type of information being collected. She added that the Committee is looking at this as a way to understand implementation, communicate it back to the Board, and the community on understanding state-wide trends and patterns.

Item 2c – Awarding of Tenure at the Community College of RI

President Di Pasquale presented to the Board for approval all of the faculty members who have achieved tenure criteria. A packet containing candidate names and credentials was provided to the Board. There were no questions posed by Board members at this time.

Item 2d – Higher Education Legislative InitiativesUniversity of Rhode Island

As part of the many legislative requests to be brought before the General Assembly in 2014, President David Dooley introduced four of the University's anticipated requests:

- A request by the University and Rhode Island College for their share in a joint venture with Brown University. This request would consist of an annual appropriation in the budget to pay for a lease for occupancy space to be shared by URI and RIC at the Dynamo House. The proposal would be the least expensive opportunity to create that kind of space for advance nursing education in close proximity to Brown University's medical school. The proposed Lease Agreement will spell out all the terms and conditions, including the developer's responsibility for maintenance of the building. At the conclusion of the lease, Brown University will look for an option to possibly purchase the building and the State will likewise have the option to join in.
- The University will also ask the State to review the Purchasing regulations and consider how they may be revised to allow the University more flexibility and efficiency with regard to purchasing. Currently, the University must seek approval for any purchase over \$5,000. The requested change will allow for more efficiency and productivity at the University.
- The University will also seek a minor language change in the way that state positions in the Crime lab are described. President Dooley explained that with the transfer of the State's Crime Lab into the University's budget, there came language regarding the types of appointments that are currently categorized as *limited period* back at a time when many of the appointments in the State Crime Lab were funded by external funds such as grants. This is no longer the case and it creates a personnel/HR issue to continue to characterize said positions in this manner.
- An effort on the part of State Representatives and Senators relating to matching funds to put language into statutes that sees URI as a land and sea grant institution and acknowledges that the University should receive some consideration from the state in terms of matching funds from the federal dollars that flow into URI by virtue of it being a land and sea institution. These are funds that essentially fund the dissemination of research.

Community College of Rhode Island

Anne Marie McMahon, Assistant Business Manager at the Community College of Rhode Island presented the College's draft legislation to be included in the Annual Appropriations Act. Included are:

A request that the Driver's Education courses be exempt from the indirect cost recoveries. The College would propose that language be included that sets a minimum fee for reasonable tuition for the course. The College's requests will also include that the fees charged for Driving While Intoxicated "DWI", Defensive Driving, and Repeat Offender be similar to that in RIGL 31-27-2 that sets a minimum fee for "reasonable tuition for the course in an amount not less than twenty-five dollars." This will allow the flexibility to increase the fee as necessary to cover the costs of running the programs without having to amend the statute.

Board of Education

Anne Marie Coleman, Assistant Vice President at the University of Rhode Island explained proposed legislation to consolidate employees under the same employment classification and the same statute. She indicated that there are currently approximately 4,500 "regular" employees in the system. Of those 4,500 about 2/3 are in the non-classified system (Board employees, or employees covered under the CBA's that are negotiated by the Board), and 1/3 are classified civil service employees (State employees, their terms and conditions of employment are determined by the State and the DOA). In addition, there are about 1,000 part-time faculty that are Board employees, 650 graduate students at the University, as well as several hundred casual and seasonal employees throughout the system, in addition to thousands of students at each campus. We are proposing legislation to modify Chapter 16 to include all employees rather than just specific groups of employees under the jurisdiction of the Board. This request to shift classified employees to non-classified employee status would allow the Board to work off of one policy that would allow for all employees to be covered fairly under the same policies and procedures.

In response to Board member inquiries, Ms. Coleman explained some of the changes that classified employees versus non-classified employees would encounter should such a change take effect.

3. NEXT MEETING

Monday, December 9th, 5:30 p.m.
North Providence High School, North Providence

4. ADJOURNMENT:

On a motion duly made by Jo-Eva Gaines and seconded by Karin Forbes it was

VOTED: That the work session of the Rhode Island Board of Education adjourn.

Vote: 8 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Antonio Barajas, Michael Bernstein, Karin Forbes, Jo Eva Gaines, Michael Grande, Patrick Guida, Lawrence Purtill, and Mathies Santos

NAYS: 0

The work session adjourned at 5:24 p.m.