



Enclosure 2a
May 27, 2020

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
February 5, 2020

RHODE ISLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Rhode Island Board of Education met on Wednesday, February 5, 2020, at the Community College of Rhode Island, Warwick.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Cottam welcomed everyone to the quarterly meeting of the R.I. Board of Education and called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m. She thanked President Hughes and her staff for hosting the meeting, noted for the record that Members Beretta, Duffy, Field, Grey, Martinez, McConaghy, and Purtill, would not be joining the meeting, and that Dr. Barbara Mullen had resigned from the Board as she accepted a position with the Providence School District.

Present: Barbara Cottam, Colleen Callahan, Karen Davis, Timothy DelGiudice, Jo Eva Gaines, Rachelle Green, *Lauren Griffiths, Thomas Izzo, Marianne Monte, and Jeffery Williams

* Ex-officio, non-voting member

Absent:

Amy Beretta
Dennis Duffy
Gara Field
Mike Grey
Marta Martinez
Daniel McConaghy
Mike Mello
Stephan Pryor
Lawrence Purtill

1. ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA

On a motion duly made by Jo Eva Gaines and seconded by Karen Davis, it was

VOTED: That, the Rhode Island Board of Education accepts the agenda for the meeting of February 5, 2020

Vote: 9 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Barbara Cottam, Colleen Callahan, Karen Davis,
Timothy DelGiudice, Jo Eva Gaines, Rachelle Green,
Thomas Izzo, Marianne Monte, and Jeffery Williams

NAYS: 0

ABSTAIN: 0

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

2a. Minutes of the November 13, 2019, Meeting

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

VOTED: That the Rhode Island Board of Education approves the minutes of
the November 13, 2019, meeting

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

YEAS: Barbara Cottam, Colleen Callahan, Karen Davis,
Timothy DelGiudice, Jo Eva Gaines, Rachelle Green,
Thomas Izzo, and Marianne Monte

NAYS: 0

ABSTAIN: 1 (Jeffery Williams)

[Board Member Williams had to abstain as he did not attend the November 13, 2019, meeting of
the Board of Education]

3. OPEN FORUM

Andrew Bramson, The College Crusade of Rhode Island, shared an infographic showing the
results of The College Crusade's net fiscal impact on Rhode Island's economy.

4. REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

Commissioner Infante-Green began by reporting that a week ago today, she announced the
beginning of the new Providence Turnaround Team:

- Harrison Peters, as the Providence Sate Turnaround Superintendent

- Dr. Barbara Mullen, as Chief Equity Officer
- Nick Figueroa, as Chief of Family and Community Engagement; and
- Dottie Smith, who currently serves as Interim Superintendent, and will assume the role as Senior Adviser to the Superintendent

Commissioner Infante-Green noted that Superintendent Peters has more than two decades of experience as an educator, having served as a classroom teacher and a school principal before taking on senior leadership roles in three of the 10 largest school districts in the country. She expressed that every week, as she meets with students and teachers, she realizes how important and deep the work in Providence is and how much students have been shortchanged over the years.

Next, Commissioner Infante-Green shared that last week, RIDE and the Providence School District (PPSD), in partnership with the public institutions of postsecondary education, announced an effort to significantly increase the number of teachers trained to serve multilingual students. This initiative, which will serve up to 125 participants, will aid PPSD's efforts to comply with a recent agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice, which made clear that the district must increase its number of ESL-certified teachers. With this effort, PPSD teachers will be eligible for reimbursement up to \$3,200 in educational expenses for enrolling in an English as a Second Language certification or master's degree program in the 2020-21 school year.

Commissioner of Postsecondary Education

Acting Commissioner Cavallaro began his reported by sharing that last month he had the privilege of joining the RIDE team at a wonderful event at Hope High School to encourage and help this year's graduating class fill out the FAFSA. This event follows the Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner's work last year with the FAFSA completion portal, an online tool that was developed by the Colorado Department of Higher Education, which updates FAFSA completion in real time.

Acting Commissioner Cavallaro ended his report with the transition of the University of Rhode Island. He shared that pursuant to legislation that was passed by the General Assembly last year, as of February 1, 2020, the University is now under the guidance and supervision of a new Board of Trustees as well as under a new system of higher education that is specific to the University. The University and the Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner have been meeting to put a list together of all of the areas that will be affected by the change and have already begun discussions to address some areas - personnel and benefits, retirement plans, payroll, retiree health insurance, tuition waivers, existing bonds, insurance coverage, joint purchasing agreements. In addition, there are some academic policies and programs that affect all three public institutions of postsecondary education, which are also subject to discussion and planning. Based upon the recent discussions, it is clear that most of these areas will be addressed through agreements among the parties, without any disruption in services.

5. DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. Governor's Education Budget Overview

Kevin Gallagher, Governor's Senior Deputy Chief of Staff, gave a high-level overview of the Governor's proposed Fiscal Year 2021 budget, and began by thanking Board Members on behalf of the Governor, for their dedication and service. He stressed that this a state and federal funds budget of more than 10 billion dollars, which will go to both the state's Finance and Senate Committees for review and hearings.

Mr. Gallagher gave an economic overview, highlighting that the state's economy has been expanding at a rapid pace for the past several quarters, but that it started with a projected \$200M deficit, largely driven by significant increases in local aid. He went over the revenue changes and modifications that the state is looking into to resolve the deficit for Fiscal Year 2021, which will go through a legislative process.

Next, Mr. Gallagher presented the Governor's budget proposal as it relates to the life of a student and began with Pre-K Expansion. He commended RIDE staff and other partner agencies for their hard work in securing a \$27M federal grant to support early childhood education - RI is tied with three other states as being #1 in high-quality Pre-K, but falls to #34 in access. The Governor's proposed budget does fully fund the education aid formula at \$34.8M for the 10th year in a row through the funding formula, benefiting every school district; support for multilingual learners; dedicated funding for professional development for teachers to support classroom-based mental health interventions; expansion of the School Resource Officers categorical to incentivize hiring of additional mental health professional staff; additional funding to support growth of the Advanced Course Network; additional funding to expand RIDE's capacity; increase the eligibility of the Stay Invested in RI Wavemaker Fellowship loan forgiveness program for STEM teachers; and additional resources for the Central Falls School Department to offset the financial strain on the district attributed to an influx of new students to the district.

Mr. Gallagher ended his presentation by going over the proposed budget for the postsecondary education system. He shared that a very important aspect of the Governor's proposed budget proposal this year is to ask the General Assembly to eliminate the sunset on the RI Promise program. He commended the success that CCRI is having with the program as last year the college tripled their two-year graduation rate as a result of this investment and was recognized as the best two-year institution in the nation. He noted that the most significant investment that impacts postsecondary education, is the general obligation bond funding that the Governor is proposing to put on the ballot in November, which includes the three public institutions of postsecondary education.

b. PrepareRI

- Data: a 10-year look at College Completion
- College Readiness Project: Mathematics Pilot
- RIDE Readiness Action Plans

Stephen Osborn, RIDE's Chief of Innovation, began by sharing that agency and the three public institutions of postsecondary education started the year off by setting a set of clear goals to ensure that students are able to graduate high school and step into credit-bearing coursework on a path to on-time college completion. He went over progress to date, highlighting that RIDE and the colleges have been working with high schools for the first time to get them clear information on the readiness rates of their students. Some high schools had no idea how many of their students were taking remedial courses nor the areas they were struggling with when getting to college.

Next, Spencer Sherman, Director of the Office of College and Career Readiness at RIDE, went over the data component of the presentation, telling the story of Rhode Island's High School graduates and their postsecondary outcomes over a 10-year period.

Next, Liz Texeira, Education Specialist at RIDE, highlighted the Readiness Mathematics Pilot as a short-term academic readiness strategy. She shared that a readiness working group, consisting of postsecondary faculty, K-12 mathematics teachers from across the State, and RIDE content experts, was established to discuss the issue of mathematics preparation across Rhode Island. This group was instrumental in creating the outline for RIDE's pilot with Rhode Island College (RIC) to specifically address remediation. The pilot launched in January at the start of the second semester across 4 Providence High Schools and Woonsocket High School, serving 233 students. In addition to the RIC pilot, RIDE has also been working with the Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI) in partnership with Central Falls High School, and the University of Rhode Island (URI) in partnership with Cranston East and Cranston West High Schools, on their own pilots to tackle the issue or remediation.

Next, Laura Barnes, Senior Lecturer at URI, spoke about the university's pilot that is happening with Cranston East and Cranston West High Schools, whose goal is to have students take a concurrent college credit-bearing course in pre-calculus before they enter college. She stressed that the students have to take a placement exam to ensure that they are prepared to take the course, and that high school teachers providing the course must have the same credentials as the university's part-time faculty.

Next, Dr. Rosemary Costigan, Provost at CCRI, presented on the college's pilot with Central Falls High School, noting that this initiative precedes the PrepareRI and the RIDE mathematics initiative. The pilot with Central Falls, with funding from the Nellie Mae Foundation, is in its second cohort and targets students who are interested in attending CCRI, but who scored below the benchmark on the ACCUPLACER to take a credit-bearing mathematics course.

In closing, Mr. Osborn noted that with the release of this past year's SAT data, Commissioner Infante-Green called on high schools to create Readiness Action Plans to improve academic proficiency. RIDE began to pull together data from multiple sources to compare proficiency rates, accountability data, and current graduation rates for all high schools across the state in one easy to read school profile, and created and distributed a proficiency survey to collect baseline data about high school-specific improvement strategies. Responses to the survey will be used to develop a repository of strategies to increase high school proficiency rates and RIDE will follow-up with a more robust needs assessment in late spring to help identify ways to support local high schools in a targeted way.

Timothy DelGiudice, Chair of the Council on Postsecondary Education, asked if he could provide a quick update and commended President Sanchez for hosting a fabulous ribbon-cutting ceremony in Central Falls for a new workforce development hub. He also announced that URI will be having a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Brookside Hall, and that CCRI's Raising Opportunities Gala is on April 24.

6. ADJOURNMENT:

On a motion duly made by Timothy DelGiudice and seconded by Jo Eva Gaines, it was

VOTED: That, the Rhode Island Board of Education adjourns.

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

YEAS: Barbara Cottam, Karen Davis, Timothy DelGiudice, Jo Eva Gaines, Rachelle Green, Thomas Izzo, Marianne Monte, and Jeffery Williams

NAYS: 0

[Member Callahan left at 6:30 p.m.]

The meeting adjourned at 7:29 p.m.