



**Enclosure 2a**  
**November 15, 2017**

**MINUTES OF THE JOINT MEETING OF THE COUNCIL ON  
POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION AND BOARD OF EDUCATION  
August 2, 2017**

**RHODE ISLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION**

The Rhode Island Board of Education met in a joint meeting of the Council on Postsecondary Education on Wednesday, August 2, 2017, at the Community College of R.I., 400 East Avenue, Warwick, Rhode Island.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Cottam welcomed everyone, declared a quorum present, and called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

**Present:** Barbara Cottam, William Foulkes, Daniel McConaghy, \*Maria Chavez Blanco, Colleen Callahan, Vivian Caruolo, Karen Davis, Timothy DelGiudice, Dennis Duffy, Jo Eva Gaines, Rachelle Green, \*Mike Grey, Thomas Izzo, Marta Martinez, \*Thalia Philippe, Lawrence Purtill, Jeffery Williams

**[\*Ex-officio, non-voting members]**

**Absent:** Amy Beretta  
Heather Crosby  
Gara Field  
Stefan Pryor - ex-officio, non-voting member

Board Chair Cottam welcomed everyone to a special joint meeting of the Council on Postsecondary Education and the full Board of Education for the purpose of giving the full Board an opportunity to approve the appointment of the next Rhode Island Commissioner of Postsecondary Education.

Chair Cottam explained that in accordance with R.I.G.L. §16-60-60, the Council on Postsecondary Education is the employer of the Commissioner, and as such, both the vote to appoint the position and entering into an employment agreement with the Commissioner are the purview of the Council, not the full Board. As Board Chair, she felt it was important that the full Board benefit from hearing the Council's discussion with the finalist.

Next, Chair Cottam introduced new members of the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education to their first meeting of the full Board of Education: Karen Davis, Senior Vice-President for Global Philanthropy, Social Impact and Employee Engagement at Hasbro, Inc., and Gara Field, Director of Global Education at Moses Brown School. She also introduced Thalia Philippe, the new Chair of the Student Advisory Council and the new student representative on the Council.

Chair Cottam also recognized outgoing Council on Elementary and Secondary Education members, Karin Forbes and Joyce Stevos, and thanked them for their wisdom, dedication and service over the years on behalf of Rhode Island students.

**2. ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA**

On a motion duly made by Jeffery Williams and seconded by Vivian Caruolo it was

**VOTED:** That the Rhode Island Board of Education accepts the agenda for the meeting of August 2, 2017

Vote: 14 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Barbara Cottam, Williams Foulkes, Daniel McConaghy, Colleen Callahan, Vivian Caruolo, Karen Davis, Timothy DelGiudice, Dennis Duffy, Jo Eva Gaines, Rachelle Green, Thomas Izzo, Marta Martinez, Lawrence Purtill, and Jeffery Williams

NAYS: 0

**3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

**3a. Minutes of the May 31, 2017, Meeting**

On a motion duly made by Timothy DelGiudice and seconded by Rachelle Green, it was

**VOTED:** That the Rhode Island Board of Education approves the minutes of the November 16, 2016, meeting

Vote: 12 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Barbara Cottam, Williams Foulkes, Daniel McConaghy, Colleen Callahan, Timothy DelGiudice, Dennis Duffy, Jo Eva Gaines, Rachelle Green, Thomas Izzo, Marta Martinez, Lawrence Purtill, and Jeffery Williams

NAYS: 0

**[Members Caruolo and Davis had to recuse themselves from the vote as they did not attend the May 31, 2017, quarterly meeting of the Board of Education]**

**4. OPEN FORUM -**

Chair Cottam reported that no one had signed up to speak at Open Forum.

**5. DISCUSSION ITEM - Rhode Island Board of Education**

- a. Discussion with and regarding the Commissioner of Postsecondary Education Appointee, Dr. Dann-Messier, for the purpose of approving her as Commissioner of Postsecondary Education.

At this time, Chair Cottam invited members of the full Board to ask questions of Commissioner Dann-Messier. Board members acknowledged Dr. Dann-Messier's wealth of experience and commended her for accomplishments at both the local and national level, her capability to collaborate and lead, as well as her ability to always place students at the forefront of her work. They also emphasized the need for continued collaboration between the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner.

**6. ACTION ITEM - Rhode Island Board of Education**

- a. **Approval of the appointment of Dr. Brenda Dann-Messier as Commissioner of Postsecondary Education as recommended by the Council on Postsecondary Education**

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

**VOTED:** That the Rhode Island Board of Education approves the appointment of Dr. Brenda Dann-Messier as Commissioner of Postsecondary Education

Vote: 14 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Barbara Cottam, Williams Foulkes, Daniel McConaghy, Colleen Callahan, Vivian Caruolo, Karen Davis, Timothy DelGiudice, Dennis Duffy, Jo Eva Gaines, Rachelle Green, Thomas Izzo, Marta Martinez, Lawrence Purtill, and Jeffery Williams

NAYS: 0

**7. ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION ITEMS - Board of Education**

7a. Update on PK-12 Education Key Initiatives

Commissioner Wagner began his presentation by sharing that with the kick-off of a new school year, the arrival of a new permanent Commissioner of Postsecondary Education and several new members to the Councils and the Board of Education, it is a great opportunity to build on some of the strong work that took place over the last few years and map-out a vision going forward.

Commissioner Wagner then went over a one-page handout mapping out the priorities for the year ahead:

- **Strong foundation** provided by high-quality early childhood education;
- **Shared responsibility** through school and district-based leadership;
- **Career pathways** through personalized and work-based learning opportunities; and
- **School infrastructure** by investing in 21<sup>st</sup> century school facilities

Commissioner Wagner expressed that going forward there is a need to revisit rigor and the standards and truly challenge students to ensure that in all of the work that was accomplished over the last few years; we have not lost sight of preparedness.

Next, Commissioner Wagner gave an update on the year-long public engagement of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Plan. He shared that the Draft Plan recently went through an additional 30-day public review and comment period and is currently with the Governor for her review and signature. He voiced that public feedback made the plan stronger, including input from Board Member Duffy to add a goal to the state part of the plan around increasing the percentages of students who achieve beyond proficiency. By adding this goal, Rhode Island is only one of only six states across the country that have taken up that challenge.

Board members expressed concern with the lack of diversity in the teaching profession and questioned whether the state's certification requirements are preventing individuals from choosing to become teachers.

### **7b. Update on Postsecondary Education Key Initiatives**

Commissioner Dann-Messier began by thanking everyone for the kind words and support and reassured Board members that she understands the magnitude of the work ahead and that it will take everyone working together to strengthen the system and the opportunities for all students.

Next, she highlighted the key priorities for RI Postsecondary Education, which are in support of the Governor's very ambitious attainment goal to reach 70% of Rhode Islanders having some form of postsecondary education by 2025:

- Close equity gaps;
- Make postsecondary education more affordable;
- Increase graduates in high-demand, high-wage fields;
- Implement innovation and effectiveness models;
- Align work across systems and with partners.

Commissioner Dann-Messier emphasized that in order to reach the Governor’s attainment goal, the postsecondary system needs to be cognizant of the changing student demographic. There needs to be a focus not only on the youth, but also on the adult population; youth who disengaged from the system and who are not working; supporting and encouraging veterans to come into the system; as well as the immigrant community. She is optimistic that with everyone’s support, a plan to implement that attainment goal will be rolled-out by the first of year.

Commissioner Dann-Messier concluded by encouraging Board members to join the conversations and shared that she has already been working with the various state departments on joint priorities to ensure that there is much broader stakeholder engagement and involvement in all of the work that needs to be accomplished.

**8. ADJOURNMENT :**

On a motion duly made by Karen Davis and seconded by Colleen Callahan, it was

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

Vote: 14 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Barbara Cottam, Williams Foulkes, Daniel McConaghy, Colleen Callahan, Vivian Caruolo, Karen Davis, Timothy DelGiudice Dennis Duffy, Jo Eva Gaines, Rachelle Green, Thomas Izzo, Marta Martinez, Lawrence Purtill, and Jeffery Williams

NAYS: 0

The Rhode Island Board of Education meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.